BOOK REVIEWS

Robert L. Cord
Separation of Church and State: Historical Fact and Current Fiction
Grand Rapids: Baker Book House
302 pp. n.p., 1988

Robert Cord is Professor of Political Science at Northeastern University and noted scholar of the First Amendment of United States' Constitution. The amendment states:

> "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances" (page 302).

It is this first article of the Bill of Rights and its subsequent interpretation that Cord treats in his book.

Baker Book House has taken Cord's 1982 book *Separation of Church and State* and reprinted it. As nearly as I can determine, this reprint is nearly the same as the 1982 version. With the exception of a small print notice on the book's copyright page, there is no other mention of previous publication. The reason behind this omission makes for interesting speculation, but is outside the parameters of our immediate concern.

Cord's contention, making this the book's only essential claim, is that the first amendment has been historically misinterpreted by the nation's courts and its legal scholars. Further, the legal application derived from such misinterpretations runs counter to the original intent of the Constitution's framers, especially James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. Cord's argument rests upon what he sees as the historic misunderstanding of the "establishment" clause. He argues that neither Madison nor Jefferson intended to build a wall of absolute separation between the state and religion. Cord believes the complete secularization of the state was never the framer's intention.

Instead, as Cord argues forcefully, the founding framers wanted to ensure that no state religion or individual religious group would be given special status through federal statutes. England and the history of Anglicanism give must common-sense support to Cord's argument.

If Cord's view is correct, then 210 years or so of Constitutional law have been founded on a false premise. That is, the underlying assumption, that the framers wanted a strict separation between the state and religion/church, is a false assumption. The framers, according to this view, only wanted for no one group or sect to receive an advantage from the perspective of the national government and its laws. Thus, the states could decide this question themselves, regardless of how the national laws were interpreted. For all practical pur-

poses this is how the most recent Supreme Court decision regarding abortion has been handled.

For many ministers this may be a difficult book to read. It reads like a law book. This should come as no surprise since the thrust of the book is to make one point and then support it by citing all the "establishment" clause cases which have been heard by the United States Supreme Court. This relative difficulty should not dissuade those who have a deep interest in this vital topic.

To be fair, it must be noted that Cord is one of the handful of persons with a good understanding and interpretation of the "establishment" clause. It is also important to say that, though his is the distinctly minority opinion, Cord is nonetheless taken very seriously by the community of legal scholars and political scientists.

By reading this book, in conjunction with Leonard Levy's *The Establishment Clause* and Richard McBrien's *Caesar's Coin*, ministers and theologians will have a broad and thorough knowledge of the issues surrounding the continuing church-state debate. A solid grasp of the facts rarely hurt people's pursuit of the truth.

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C. F. Keil
Introduction to the Old Testament
Peabody, MA: Hendrickson
1092 pp. (2 vol.), 1988, $39.95

C. F. Keil was one of the leading conservative Old Testament scholars in Germany in the last century. He is probably best known for his joint production with F. Delitzsch of the *Commentaries on the Old Testament* now published by Eerdmans. The present volumes are an English translation of a German original, the translation being first published in 1869. It is here reproduced from the original plates.

The work is divided into two main parts, "the origin and genuineness of the canonical writings" and "the history of the transmission of the OT." Some more general discussions, for example that on the OT languages, are quite dated and need supplementation, but other offerings, such as those on individual books, still yield riches to those who spend time in them.

Not only does the book provide an interesting insight into the battles in OT schoarship which were being waged in the mid-nineteenth century. It also can provide help in the current sphere in which the war still seems to be raging, though possibly in some cases in different areas. Some points made by scholars of Keil's vintage and even later, e.g., Finn and Green, have been too often ignored by less conservative scholars, so a reintroduction of Keil's work should be useful to all in search of an understanding of Scripture. While the pastor will most probably get more use from Keil and Delitzsch's commentaries, awareness of this set should also provide assistance in the all-too neglected

field of Old Testament interpretation.

David W. Baker

Lowell J. Satre
All Christians are Charismatic
Mineapolis: Fortress Press
93 pp., 1988, n.p

If one is looking for new theological insights or stunning biblical revelation, *All Christians Are Charismatic* is not the place to look. If, however, one is looking for a solid examination of the biblical concept of "charisma" then this book recommends itself. Lowell J. Satre is Professor of New Testament, Emeritus, at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary. Writing within the "Bible for Christian Living" series, Satre has thoroughly explored Paul's use of this critical New Testament concept.

Few Christians need reminding that throughout the turbulent sixties and milder seventies many congregations were rocked by a phenomenon called "the Charismatic Movement." More than a few churches — Protestant and Catholic — were sorely divided over this charismatic issue. Satre points out that the controversy was often focused on "glossolalia" (speaking in tongues), though confusion was rampant about charismatics and the movement itself as to its true identity.

Sensing something of a communication gap at the heart of the charismatic misunderstanding, Satre labors mightily to define terms.

> "This is no mere word battle but a crisis in vocabulary that involves fundamentals and continues to disturb individuals and congregations of many denominations, both their lay members and their pastors" (p. 8).

Revealing what a variety of terms actually mean in light of their New Testament usage, is Satre's method of pursuing a helpful theological discussion. A catalogue of such misunderstood terms is provided in the preface (see p. 8).

Terms discussed are found in three major Pauline (or psuedo-Pauline?) passages: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; and Ephesians 4:7-12. Satre does a fine job of defining terms within these three passages. His method is intentionally self-limiting and he focuses his efforts admirably on a project of manageable scope.

The "gifts of the spirit" are grouped into two parts: gifts of speaking and gifts of serving (p. 40). Satre is quick to point out these categories are not mutually exclusive. Gifts of speaking include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, exhortation, and so on. Gifts of serving includes serving, helping, administering and contributing. Satre makes the helpful comment several times that Paul's use of lists are meant to be suggestive and not exhaustive (pp. 52, 85, etc.). This observation is most instructive where New Testament interpretation slides toward legalistic tendencies. As Satre says,

"Ever since Adam and Eve, and Abraham and Sarah, God has been calling a people, not merely an elite within a people" (p. 50).

This book is marked by balance and fairness. It also remains very near the biblical texts within which most of the discussion takes place. Satre takes advantage of what he calls "a different, more open spirit" betwen Christians. He asserts on a number of occasions that "Paul places his teaching on the Spirit in a christological setting" (p. 58). This keeps charismatic thinking from running amok. Satre helpfully reminds the reader,

> "Paul had a way of putting things in perspective. As he began his discussion of the Spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12-14), he pointed to the fundamental gift from God's Holy Spirit: faith that confesses, 'Jesus is Lord' " (p. 79).

This kind of solid orthodox thinking recommends this book to all Christians.

David N. Mosser

Philip J. King
Amos, Hosea, Micah — An Archaeological Commentary
Philadelphia: Westminster Press
176 pp., 43 illustrations, 1988, $13.95

Dr. King is Professor of Biblical Studies, Boston College and has served as President of the American Schools of Oriental Research, the Society for Biblical Literature and the Catholic Biblical Association. He is well known also for his commentaries on the eighth century prophets as well as his experience and interest in biblical archaeology. This book arises from his conviction that insufficient attention is paid by conventional commentators to archaeological data, so he sets out to provide an up-to-date synthetic work to bring that information to bear on these biblical books.

King's method is first to give a very brief survey of Palestinian archaeology and to argue cogently that an ongoing dialogue between that discipline and biblical studies is essential. The emphasis on American contributions does not directly include work further afield.[1] A Britisher, Flinders Petrie, whose centenary is celebrated next year introduced fundamental methods which remain basic, though with modifications now needed according to site and to the increasingly 'new' emphasis on the recovery of the socio-economic history of the region. Archaeology is here limited to the artifactual evidence and the author professes to omit that of contemporary written documents. In practice this is impossible and is essential for any full cultural comparison. When he does include it, as in his note on "pledged garments" (Amos 2:8) it is with enlightenment.

The references in these prophets to their background or to specific categories of information; weights and measures, architecture, fortification and warfare, the cult, agriculture, plants and animals are taken to group useful short essays which cover information for many sources. Where this is concentrated on the

discussion of particular passages such as the oracles against the nations, the dirge of Micah (1:10-15) and the revelry and high living exposed by Amos (6:4-7) it brings information not readily avaiable to the average reader. In effect we are given archaeological commentary to about half the 436 verses in thes prophets. The book is therefore an excellent supplement to any reliable standard commentary.

The reviewer, however, questions the principle of such "archaeological commentaries." The idea has been tried before, usually with selected notes on consecutive biblical verses or incidents.[2] Archaeological data is accumulative, progressive and sometimes subject to varying interpretations which require full discussion and cannot be isolated from other written evidence needed for a balanced reconstruction of the whole cultural setting (as here in chapters 2-3 which do this in a form commonly found in "traditional" commentaries). Inevitably the author needs to move further afield as in discussing the "ivory bed" or house (Amos 3:15) which is better illustrated from the finds of compete objects at Nimrud, Assyria than from the few fragments from Samaria. Moreover, to cover the Bible in this manner a major series of detailed commentaries will be required. With but few additions this volume could have been made to cover the contemporary prophets Isaiah and Joel. Otherwise such commentaries will need to include repetitive material. While this special volume is to be welcomed as helpful and convenient, will not Biblical studies be better served and more economically if all teaching and commentary on any book be required to include all relevant archaeological data just as it does the literary, linguistic, historical, theological and other evidence? Dr. King is doubty fighter for the understanding of the Old Testament who has declared that "faith is my favorite biblical virtue."[3] His concern is to make the prophets speak as the living word of God and the Bible to address the contemporary situation. In all this we should be grateful to Dr. King for enlightening as well a challenging Old Testament scholars and readers to this end.

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[1]See however the author's *American Archaeology in the Mideast: A History of the American Scholls of Oriental Research*, (Philadelphia: ASOR, 1983).
[2]Cf. recently, G. Baez-Camargo, *Archaeological Commentary of the Bible*, New York: Doubleday, 1984.
[3]*Bible Review* III/1, (1987), 4-5.

A. James Rudin, Marvin R. Wilson, ed.
A Time to Speak: The Evangelical — Jewish Encounter
Chicago: William B. Eerdmans
197 pp., 1987, $11.95 (paper)

In the *Austin American-Statesman*, September 4, 1989, there appeared the

following excerpt: "The dispute over the Carmelite convent on the perimeter of the Auschwitz [concentration] camp has become a source of growing tension between Jews and Catholics. Jews have protested the presence of a Christian convent and 23-foot wooden cross next to it at a site they consider the central symbol of the genocide carried out against European Jews by the Nazis." And the controversy remains alive despite 2000 years of conflict by religious people.

There is an element of truth in the thought that most religious groups are understood in stereotypic ways by others. When this happens accuracy is lost in the process of simplification. As this is true for Jews and Catholics, then it is true also for evangelical Christians. *A Time to Speak* reflects the great need for both Jews and evangelical Christians to come into a mutually beneficial dialogue. This dialogue should enable the process of self-definition and mutual understanding. This is not to say that it will be achieved, only that an attempt at dialogue is being tried. "Both groups are weary of being the victims of stereotypic caricatures and viewing the respective beliefs and teachings of the other from a distance" (page xi).

The major aim of *A Time to Speak* is to give both groups — evangelical Christians and Jews — a forum where they can hear and be heard. The format of the book grants nineteen scholars an opportunity to turn this ecumenical conversation toward the subject of their particular essay. These subjects range widely, as these title indicate: "Jews and Judaism: A Self-Definition," "No Offense: I Am an Evangelical," "The Place of Faith and Grace in Judaism," and "The Place of Law and Good Works in Evangelical Christianity." Several responses to essays are also included.

The need for this Jewish-Christian dialogue, and for this book, ought to be self-evident to those who work and think in contemporary society. This book focuses not simply upon the abstract theological principles in question, but also upon how these are lived out in the twentieth century. Space does not permit me to go into great detail, but suffice it to say that, in my judgement, the best among all the essays was Hillel Levine's essay "Evangelicals and Jews: Shared Nightmares and Common Cause."

I recommend this collection to all who are interested in theology and ecumenical dialogue. It is pertinent to each of our contexts, and is written with a sensitivity to the religious plurality within which we attempt to live out our faith.

David N. Mosser

Dallas Willard
The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives
San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988
287 pp. cl., $15.95

Dallas Willard has given us in *The Spirit of the Disciplines* a very important book. While Richard J. Foster described in *Celebration of Discipline* (1978,

rev. ed. 1988) how Christians might go about practicing classic spirituality, Willard here addresses a different, prior question: Why discipline? Why spiritual disciplines? If love is unconditional and grace is free, then who should bother with something that could be painful? *The Spirit of the Discipline* provides a rationale for what Foster earlier set out, and Foster has called Willard's work "the book of the decade."

Professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California, Dallas Willard is also a Southern Baptist minister and author of several previous volumes. In this one he sets out a tough-minded case for why we need spiritual disciplines and describes what he means in no-nonsense language. True to his professional scholarship, Dr. Willard has given us a book that comes equipped with footnotes, bibliography, and three indexes. It is serious, but not difficult reading. No Lone Ranger, he is in dialogue with the larger Christian community as references to his favorite conversation partners will show. They are, in order, John Wesley, Egypt's St. Anthony, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Martin Luther.

In the first chapter ("The Secret of the Easy Yoke") Willard points out that following Christ means bringing every aspect of our life into line with him and his over-all lifestyle. In our efforts to avoid the necessary pains of discipline we miss the quality of life that he has to offer. The second chapter ("Making Theology of the Disciplines Practical") continues Willard's analysis of the present scene in North American Christianity. The 'sixties and 'seventies witnessed a startling change: "the complete trivialization of sectarian dogmatism along denominational lines . . . The general effect was to dull the *specific* character of church life" (p. 21). What remains is the challenge of integrating historic spiritual disciplines into the Reformation watchwords *sola gratia* and *sola fide*.

With chapter three ("Salvation Is a Life") Willard reaches cruising speed, declaring that the "great acts" of Jesus' career were only moments in a life completely shaped by such practices as solitude, study, and fasting. "Salvation," says this Baptist, "is not just forgiveness, but a new order of life" (p. 32). Jesus demonstrated the powers of that new order during his short career, and the resurrection validated what he exemplified before his death. Foregiveness from the cross is only one small aspect of salvation; what we need in today's easy-believing church is to recover the power of Jesus' life.

It is a central contention of the USC professor that Christians must take the human body more seriously, for *"That body is our primary area of power, freedom, and — therefore — responsibility"* (p. 53). Spiritual disciplines are "activities of mind and body, purposefully undertaken, to bring our personality and total being into effective cooperation with the divine order" (p. 68). To rephrase the point, *"The disciplines for the spiritual life*, rightly understood, are time-tested activities consciously undertaken by us as new men and women to allow our spirit ever-increasing sway over our embodied selves" (p. 86). Jesus and Paul said little about the necessity for such practices because, in the world of their day, regimens of prayer, fasting, solitude, and study were simply taken for granted by those who would be adept in spirit.

Central to Willard's discussion are chapters 8 and 9 ("History and the Meaning of the Disciplines"; "Some Main Disciplines for the Spiritual Life"). The modern Western world at large, he maintains, is prejudiced against disciplinary activities as part of religious life largely because of their abuse in the past. We welcome asceticism in Olympic contenders but reject it for spiritual development. What is needed are healthy ascetics — those who enter the training appropriate for development into accomplished athletes of body, mind, or spirit. The key element here is the body, for *"whatever is purely mental cannot transform the self"* (p. 152).

In the book's longest chapter Willard sets out classical training practices which he places in two categories: disciplines of abstinence and disciplines of engagement. This twofold classification may be better than Foster's triplex approach (inward, outward, and corporate), having the advantage of paralleling such basic bodily functions as breathing and heart rhythm. Disciplines of abstinence regulate the intake side of human nature; they counter the "seven deadly sins," each of which concerns a legitimate desire gone wrong. By disciplines of abstinence Willard means practices such as solitude (the most fundamental), silence (we have two ears but only one mouth), fasting, frugality, chastity ("not the suppression of lust but the total orientation of one's life toward a goal" — Bonhoeffer), secrecy (i.e., anonymity), and sacrifice.

Disciplines of engagement are the outbreathing of the Christian life, and they include study (the primary activity), worship, celebration, service, prayer (which has its greatest force in strengthening the spiritual life only as we learn to pray without ceasing), fellowship, confession (the lack of which explains much of the superficial quality often found in our churches), and submission. Which disciplines loom largest for us as individuals will depend on which sins most entice or threaten us from day to day.

Willard concludes with chapters on poverty as spiritual (no, he answers) and power structures (yes, they must be used, especially by those prepared through careful spiritual training). The class of seminarians with whom I recently read the book concluded that, helpful and important as these two chapters might be, they seem out of character with the remainder of the discussion. They could belong in a sequel to this otherwise outstanding work.

Make no mistake — *The Spirit of the Disciplines* is an important book, forcefully argued and worthy of more than one reading. If Richard Foster gave us the "how" of disciplined Christian lives, Dallas Willard has laid out the "why," and his discussion deserves careful study. Whether North American Christianity flourishes into the twenty-first century will depend in part on how we answer the challenge posed in these pages. Foster could be right: this may be "the book of the decade."

Jerry R. Flora

Nahum M. Sarna
The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis
Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society
414 pp., 1989, $47.50

The launching of any new commentary series is a major event, especially one with the caliber of authors enjoyed by this series. Sarna, who is also the general editor of the series, is professor emeritus of Biblical Studies at Brandeis University, and is known best for his two previous works, *Understanding Genesis* and *Exploring Exodus*. He is assisted by Chaim Potok as literary editor.

The most striking feature for a Christian who opens the book is that it reads from 'back-to-front' like Hebrew. That is, you start at what is ordinarily the end of an English book. The introductory material includes a discussion of the title 'Genesis', the role of Genesis, the antiquity of the narratives (Sarna is conservative as to the historicity and reliability of the Genesis traditions), and the Documentary Hypothesis, as well as a glossary, especially useful for those not familiar with the Jewish exegetical tradition, abbreviations and two maps.

The commentary proper includes an introduction to the pericope under discussion. For Gen. 1:1-2:3, this includes allusions to other ancient Near Eastern creation accounts, the religious significance of the passage and something of the literary shape of the unit. A portion of the accented Hebrew text, taken from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* with a few Masoretic notes, is accompanied by the recent JPS translation of the portion. Immediately below there is a word by word or phrase by phrase commentary on the passage. Here Hebrew is transliterated and the meaning of the Hebrew term can usually be drawn from the context. The format is thus something like that of the Cambridge series on the New English Bible. Following the commentary and the collected footnotes there are 30 excurses in which some matters such as the chronology of the flood, the morality of Jacob and genealogies are discussed.

Sarna's commentary is not critical, in that he interacts more with the text than he does with other scholars, though he is aware of scholarly literature, as can be seen in his footnotes. Dealing with the text itself and unpacking its meaning is usually of more interest to the layperson and the pastor, so such a one would benefit from this work. Due to Sarna's stature, as well as to the excellence of the work itself, scholars will also need to consult the volume.

The large-sized volume is beautifully printed and bound, which could to some extent account for its relatively steep price. Unfortunately, it is the price which will probably get in the way of the use of the series among the wider world of textbooks. The Jewish perspective, while evident, should not preclude the use of the book. After all, conservative Christians probably have more in common theologically with conservative Jews than either has with their liberal brothers. The Jewish perspective comes through, for example, in the lack of any messianic interpretation of Gen. 3:15 and parallels with the New Testament in Gen. 22, but since the author's main concern is with the text

itself and not its later interpretations, this lack is not a bad thing.

David W. Baker

Ruth A. Tucker and Walter Liefeld
Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan
544 pp., 1987, $15.95

Tucker and Liefeld's work is a major contribution to the academic study of the history of women in the church. They take seriously the task of presenting women's valuable though often overlooked or neglected contribution to the Christian Church over almost two millenia.

The authors point out that their study of the history of women in the church is neither "feminist" nor "traditionalist." They seek to represent the objective truth of women's contribution as accurately as possible. Their work is a broad spanning of the history of women in the church from New Testament times to the 19th and 20th century. Their efforts demonstrate careful selection within a vast area of subject matter and research material.

The work begins with women in the time of Jesus and the early church. It includes women in medieval Catholicism, Reformation Protestantism, and post-Reformation Sectarianism, as well as women in the contemporary church. A special contribution is its inclusion of both women in foreign missions as well as the work of women in the non-Western Church. The book is a wonderful resource for Evangelical Christianity as it lifts up the unique contributions of women in revivalism, reform movements, Pentecostalism and other various Evangelical denominations in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The book has excellent resources for further research and study. It contains over two dozen pages of bibliography in the area of women's studies. Its three appendices offer exegetical notes and commentary on difficult NT passages pertaining to women, as well as discussions on hermeneutics and the issue of women's ordination.

This work is highly recommended. It would be very useful in the classroom for seminary or college level teaching. It could be used and read by church groups as well.

JoAnn Ford Watson

Alister E. McGrath
Justification by Faith: What It Means for Us Today.
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988, 176 pp., $11.95

Does anyone care nowadays about the doctrine of justification or, to title it more accurately, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith unto good

works? For Martin Luther, this idea was so crucial that he termed it the article by which the church stands or falls. But many, if not most, moderns deem it a relic of ancient history, a bit of trivia that is really irrelevant.

Oxford theologian Alister McGrath is out to change all that. He has given us in this small volume a first-rate introduction in lay language to the importance and the excitement of this great doctrine. Coming to theology by way of science (Ph.D. in molecular biology), McGrath has focused his attention on questions of christology and soteriology. The result is that here he can draw upon his earlier technical monographs, *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Blackwell, 1985), *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1986), and *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Blackwell, 1987) together with more than a dozen scholarly articles published on matters related to justification. But this volume, while footnoted and indexed, is not written in technical, academic jargon. It is a straightforward, lucid exposition of justification in two parts: the background of the doctrine (wrongly capitalized on the contents page) and its contemporary significance.

McGrath argues in the introductory chapter that doctrine exists to serve Christian experience. Our faith, he says, is not in some abstract principles but in what God has done for us and in us through Christ and by the Holy Spirit. Theological doctrines attempt to conceptualize and articulate what is experienced, but they can never contain it. The problem is not the doctrines; the problem is that we have not sufficiently contextualized them. The doctrine of justification is not dull — counselors, pastors, and teachers who have missed its point are the problem.

In four swift chapters McGrath sketches what he calls the background of this teaching. He moves from Old Testament to New and then to Augustine and the Pelagian controversy. From those important discussions he proceeds quickly to the equally important Reformation and the Protestant-Catholic "denominational differences" which followed. This survey would be refreshing for any pastor-teacher and may prove enlightening to some for whom justification has not yet come alive.

What the Oxford professor does next is where so many have failed: he devotes more than half of his book to "the contemporary significance of the doctrine." He considers it from four angles: existential, personal, and ethical dimensions followed by an appendix on the dogmatic significance of justification. He attempts in these chapters the contextualization that he spoke of earlier, and with good results. In discussing the existential dimension he suggests that we think of sin along the lines of an addiction model. We can escape the prison of enslavement with its resulting alienation and find fulfilling, authentic existence — this is what justification by grace through faith is all about.

Similarly, in a world where so many people are folded, stapled, or mutilated as objects rather than being cherished as persons, there is good news. The personal God takes human personhood seriously, including our ability to say no even to the Almighty. Experience of God's absence is really experience

of alienation from God, just as we can distance ourselves from other human beings. McGrath writes,

> Human relationships are not fulfilling in themselves but point beyond themselves to the ground of their fulfillment — and the Christian doctrine of justification asserts that the ground of their fulfillment is none other than the living God, who makes himself available to us (pp. 110-11).)

Unlike so many popular self-help movements, Christianity stands human achievement on its head. We cannot clean up our act enough to find new life or real life. Instead, "The Christian affirms that new life leads to personal moral renewal, inverting the [self-help] order" (p. 120). This is what McGrath terms the ethical dimension, by which he means the transformation of us as moral agents. Humanity will never be reformed, he says, until it is first transformed; then ethical renewal will take place from the inside out. The gift of right relationship with God includes the obligation and the ability for a new obedience.

McGrath finishes his treatment of justification's contemporary significance by offering five conclusions: this great truth concerns an experience, a paradox, personal humility, an overturning of secular values, and the very future of Christianity. In an appendix the author discusses the dogmatic significance of the doctrine, connecting it systematically with other loci in the structure of Christian belief.

Here is an excellent handbook (the author calls is a primer) on one of the most important, exciting concepts in all of theology. Workers engaged in almost any form of Christian service should steal the time to study it carefully until the grandeur and surprise of God's grace begin to dawn. Speaking of another of McGrath's books, Michael Green summed up my feelings about this one when he wrote, "In a word, this is a book to buy — and fast."

Jerry R. Flora

David A. Rausch, Professor of Church History and
Judaic Studies at Ashland Theological Seminary
Building Bridges: Understanding Jews and Judaism
Chicago: Moody Press
251 pp., 1988

Building Bridges is Dr. Rausch's eighth book overall and the fifth in his specialty area of Jewish studies. It is the author's second book published by Moody Press and is addressed to those Christians sensitized to Jewish people through the former book, *A Legacy of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust*. Its goal is to help Christians who want to learn how to relate constructively to Jewish poeple.

The book is addressed toward the average North American Christian. It is an introductory level book on the topic of Judaism, but even those who have

considerable acquaintance with Jewish people will find much that is profitable. The fact that the book is into its third printing, within a year of its release, suggests that many readers are finding it a book they have wanted and needed. Written and published with a conservative evangelical audience in mind, the book virtually stands alone as a unique contribution to the growing literature of Jewish studies.

There are three major divisions to the book. The first part introduces the reader to Judaism through chapters which cover basic Jewish concepts and walk one through the annual and life cycles of the Jewish person. Holidays, worship and ceremonies are carefully explained in terms the reader will understand. It is miniature reference work which will answer frequent questions gentiles have about Jews.

The second part introduces the Jewish people and their history, summarizing their experiences in the Western world where Christianity has been the dominant religious culture. Many will find chapter 5, American Jewry, to be particularly helpful, but chapter 6 on "The Israeli Jew" is also enlightening. Here one comes to appreciate the historical issues which have shaped the Jewish people and their perceptions of life.

Part three introduces the various groups within Judaism. While not as fragmented as the Christian denominational scene, there are various expressions of Judaism (such as Orthodox, Reformed, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Jews). Dr. Rausch summarizes the history of each group, along with its key representatives, its theology, and its institutions.

Dr. Rausch is to be commended highly for this book. As his *A Legacy of Hatred* made Christians aware of the role Christianity has played in the persecution of Jews in the past, *Building Bridges* teaches them how to understand Jewish people as friends and neighbors. Together they equip Christians to interact with Jews in an informed way that respects their religious heritage, their history, and their sense of peoplehood.

I have only two criticisms of the book, both of them minor in comparison to its overall strengths. In writing about any minority group, an author must explain them in terms of their own self-understanding, seen in their best light, as all of us would like to be evaluated. This is necessary in order to overcome prejudice and stereotyping. Sometimes a fine line is crossed in this process that makes the minority group appear to be unrealistically good. There were times I felt *Building Bridges* crossed this line.

Secondly, a major accomplishment of the book masks a weakness as well. Dr. Rausch succeeds well in cautioning the Christian against unrestrained evangelism. He shows how centuries of Christian prejudice and persecution have turned off most Jewish people to the message of Christ. He insists that Christians must build bridges of understanding with Jewish people, letting them initiate the dialogue of faith, and earning the right to verbalize a faith which has learned of Jesus how to love people in their own right. Muted in this discussion, however, is the question of evangelism, which is so germane to evangelical faith. Since the book is primarily intended for such an audience, the theological

issue of salvation for all through Christ connot be permanently avoided. The book warns against bad evangelism; it does not offer a program beyond bridge-building. I suspect many evangelical readers will want some direction for faith-sharing once bridges of understanding and acceptance have been established.

These criticisms notwithstanding, I highly commend the reading of *Building Bridges*. It is a most necessary book, and it is a splendid accomplishment in helping Christians to understand Jews.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Alister E. McGrath
Understanding the Trinity
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988. 154 pp.

In the decade of the eighties a new name has emerged in British theology: Alister E. McGrath. Born in Ireland in 1953, McGrath is presently lecturer in Christian Doctrine and Ethics at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and a member of the Oxford Faculty of Theology. He has published numerous articles and several major technical monographs, among them *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Blackwell, 1985) and *The Making of Modern German Christology: From the Enlightenment to Pannenberg* (Blackwell, 1986). His scholarly articles have appeared in some of the world's best academic journals, and at the same time he has written a handful of books for lay readers.

His skill in communicating to nonexperts has drawn special attention, for he combines encyclopedic learning, a gift for concrete illustration, and what some have called brilliant simplicity. Well-known evangelical Anglican Michael Green writes of McGrath, "He believes pasionately that theology is too important to be left to the theologians, and he is determined to make the unlearned understand." In the pursuit of that goal McGrath has recently published *Understanding Jesus: Who Jesus Christ Is and Why He Matters* (1987) and *The Mystery of the Cross* (1988) — both released in this country by Zondervan Publishing House. *Understanding the Trinity* follows up the earlier book about Jesus and contains ten chapters of about 15 pages each with no footnotes, bibliography, or index.

This volume commences with modern criticisms of the very idea of God: God is a projection of human ideas and desire (Feuerbach, Freud) or the opiate of the masses serving society's vested interests (Marx, Lenin). After rebutting such arguments McGrath moves to the important point that God is to be known, not just known about: God is to be encountered, not just experienced. Thinking about God, he points out, is similar to using scientific models or studying roadmaps — models and maps are real, but they fall short of the reality that one intends to encounter. There are biblical models of God such as shepherd, spirit, parent, light, and rock, and the author takes a quick look

at all these before moving to the most important one: God is personal. In the latter discussion he raises the question of anthropomorphisms (e.g., the jealousy of God) and draws a steady bead on the concept of universalism in soteriology.

The infinite, personal God has become incarnate in Jesus Christ. That, says McGrath, is not an appendix to Christian faith — it is the heart of it. The Oxford don admits that at one time he joined Thomas Jefferson in scorning "Trinitarian arithmetic," but now he sees more clearly. "Those who criticise the incarnation all too often seem to end up with a dull, bookish form of Christianity, lacking any real vitality and excitement, incapable of converting anyone" (p. 107). But he adds, the doctrine of the trinity converts no one — that is the work of God through the proclamation of the doing and dying of Jesus together with what follows from it. "The *doctrine* is that the 'God' in question has to be thought of as a trinity if this proclamation is valid" (p. 115). In ordinary life, therefore, trinitarian doctrine is the end, not the beginning; it is the result of faith, not the cause of faith.

The triune God is the cause of all things, and is much more than any of our roadmap doctrines. McGrath is careful to note that, while Jesus was and is identified with God, Jesus is not identical with God, for there is much more to the Almighty just as, on a liner crossing the Atlantic, one may experience the sea, but there is far more to the ocean than that. *"Jesus allows us to sample God"* (p. 125). The doctrine of the trinity, as finally set out in the fourth century, affirms but cannot explain; it makes explicit what in the New Testament is implicit. As light behaves as both waves and particles, and as a river will have both source, stream, and estuary, so the eternal, infinite One is in fact three.

I feared at one point late in the discussion that Dr. McGrath was creating the impression of Sabellianism (modalism), which some seminarians fall into unknowingly: the one God has been self-revealed in three ways at three different times in human experience. But the author was careful a few pages later to refute such an error.

At the end, say McGrath, there still remains the mystery of God. Our experience is that of faith seeking to understand, and "The doctrine of the Trinity is to the Christian experience of God what grammar is to poetry — it establishes a structure, a framework which allows us to make sense of something which far surpasses it" (p. 147).

The author describes his book as laying the foundations for understanding the trinity, and this is a sound, deceptively simple foundation for futher understanding. Among several suggestions he makes for the next steps, McGrath recommends E. Calvin Beisner's *God in Three Persons* (Tyndale, 1984). The suggestion is good, for Beisner deals in greater detail with the biblical material and pushes on through the debates of the early church to the Declaration of Chalcedon (A.D. 451). But the conversational manner of McGrath, his concrete imagery, and his lucid style all combine to create a nearly ideal introduction to this indispensable doctrine.

Jerry R. Flora

Baruch A. Levine
The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus
Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society
284 pp., 1989, $47.50

This is the second volume of this series to be published. The author is Professor of Hebrew and Near Eastern Languages at NYU and has previously published useful work on biblical ritual texts. After a discussion of the Hebrew and English names of Leviticus, Levine summarizes the book and discusses its internal structural patterns and its literary formula as well as the textual witnesses to the book.

In a very important discussion, Levine argues for a 'realistic interpretation' of Leviticus as a text which reflects actual religious practices that were followed at times as part of Isreal's religion. They are therefore not later, idealistic fabrications but real parts of Isreal's national, cultic existance. Levine also spends more time on the history of composition of Leviticus than N. Sarna did on Genesis in his commentary. He opts for the final completion of the book in the post-exilic period in association with the priestly historical work.

The final section of the introduction focuses on the Israelite institutions of community, priesthood, sanctuary, and cult. Following the commentary proper, which follows the form discussed in the review of Sarna's commentary, Levine discusses at length the post-biblical, Jewish use of Leviticus, especially after sacrifices were no longer possible following the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. As well as sexual and dietary applications, he looks at the use of the text in worship. There then follow eleven excurses on such things as the dietary laws and those of the new mother and the scapegoat.

This commentary should prove a ready entrance into this too ignored Old Testament book. Coming from a Jewish author, New Testament references and allusions, and contemporary Christian applications are lacking, as should be expected. These references and applications need to be based on an accurate understanding of the text as applied to its original audience, however, and that is the need to which Levine competently addresses this commentary.

David W. Baker

C. Nystrom
Jenny and Grandpa: What is it like to be old?
Batavia: Lion Publishing
44 pp., 1988, $6.95

This book is the third in Carolyn Nystrom's 'Lion Care' series, the other two being on the topics of divorce and adoption. From this volume, it looks as if the target readership is the 4-6th grade, though it could be read to younger children. The book is in hard covers with color drawings scattered throughout. It will be useful for children to read on their own or to have it read to them

by grandparents! It would also find a useful place in Sunday school and church libraries and would not be out of place in a public library.

David W. Baker

John Bimson
The Compact Handbook of Old Testament Life
Minneapolis: Bethany House
172 pp., 1988, $5.95

John Bimson is a British archaeologist and Old Testament scholar at Trinity College in Bristol, England. He uses this background to bring to life the daily life of the Old Testament period. The coverage of the volume is exemplified by his chapter titles, which are 'the land', 'states and empires', 'pastoral nomads and village farmers', 'the cities', 'water', 'warfare', 'the family', 'Israel's civil institutions' and 'Israel's religious institutions'.

To some extent, Bimson is updating and pupularizing R. de Vaux's *Ancient Isreal*. He is also providing a "little brother" for J. A. Thompson's more recent *IVP Handbook of Life in Bible Times*, reviewed in the last issue of the *Journal*. The volume includes several line drawings, time charts from Mesopotamia and Egypt as well as of OT history, and indices of subjects and Scripture. The style, and price, are directed toward the layman, and pastors should find in the book material of use for preaching and teaching.

David W. Baker

Picture Archive of the Bible
ed. C. Mason and P. Alexander
Batavia, London, Sydney: Lion
192 pp., 1987, $29.95

This book is a must for every church library as well as the home of those interested in not only reading but seeing what the biblical text is about. In a generally chronological arrangement divided into twelve "galleries," the book presents "photographs covering the main biblical places, important artifacts and significant archaeological discoveries which have a direct bearing on our understanding of the Bible."

The photographs are beautifully clear and each has a small description alongside, though at some points it is difficult to be sure which description goes with what picture, since the latter are not numbered. A number of the pictures have a supplementary "archaeological note" written by Alan Millard, a leading biblical archaeologist and epigrapher from Britain, who himself wrote the bestselling *Treasures from Bible Times*.

Lion Publishing has existed in Britain for some time with the purpose of publishing Christian books for the general marketplace. Excellent graphics

and illustrations are one of their hallmarks, and it is good to welcome the company to North America. It is also good to welcome this volume, which will be accessible to all age groups and would make an attractive coffee-table piece as well as a work to study.

David W. Baker

T. C. Mitchell
Biblical Archaeology: Documents from the British Museum
New York: Cambridge University Press
112 pp., 1988, $12.95 (paper)/$34.50 (hard)

Terence Mitchell, an evangelical who is Keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum in London, is also a major contributor to the *Cambridge Ancient History*, specifically on the period of the Israelite monarchy. He is thus uniquely qualified to pen this book illustrating the links between archaeology and the Bible.

The British Museum has good holdings from some aspects of the biblical period, but the fact that this work is restricted to their displays limits the volume as compared, for example, with Lion's *Picture Archive of the Bible*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal*. Mitchell presents sixty separate entries (called 'documents,' though not all are written texts) ranging from a cylinder seal from the third millennium through the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser and Codex Sinaiticus to a Hebrew Pentateuch manuscript from the ninth century AD.

The Museum's holdings are strongest in Mesopotomian, Egyptian and Classical artifacts, so they are well represented. Actual Palestinian pieces are rare, being mainly restricted to the excavations at Lachish and Samaria. Each entry has a detailed, readable description by Mitchell illuminating its historical background as well as its biblical relevance. Also included are black-and-white photos of each item, some hand copies of texts, a helpful bibliography for further reading and indices of general subjects and biblical references. The volume should be of interest to students of biblical backgrounds, but they will find it more limited than other works which have a wider collection of material.

David W. Baker

Paul J. Achtemeier, ed.
Harper's Bible Dictionary
San Francisco: Harper and Row
1178 pp., 18 maps, 1985, $28.50

This work is the fruit of the labors of members of the Society of Biblical Literature, the largest biblical studies professional body in the world. Membership of the Society is broad, including Protestants, Catholics and Jews, so the

entries in this volume show the same diversity. The work therefore represents a wide spectrum of theological opinion, differentiating it, for example, from the more evangelical *New Bible Dictionary*.

All important places, names and biblical subjects are said to be covered, though what is important is relative, since if you want to know about anything it is important. Numberous shorter articles are unidentified as to their author, and these generally do not have any bibliography attached. Longer articles at times do have references for further study, as well as often extensive cross-references to other entries of relevance. The format is generally two columns per page, though some of the longer articles are not divided into columns. The book contains numerous black and white illustrations, as well as some beautifully photographed color plates. There are also both black and white and color maps, the latter having a separate index.

The volume will be of use to students and pastors who want to have a convenient entry into contemporary, main-stream biblical studies. Most readers of this *Journal*, however, would probably prefer the above-mentioned *New Bible Dictionary* (Tyndale House), and all should look forward to the forthcoming publication of the more comprehensive *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, due to start publication in 1990.

David W. Baker

George Carey
The Message of the Bible
Batavia: Lion Publishing
256 pp., 1988, $26.95

This book is an excellent starting point for those who don't know anything about the Bible. It is written by those knowledgeable in their specific areas but for those with no background in the Bible. It is also lavishly illustrated with photos that help draw out the contemporary significance of the topics under discussion.

After an introduction on how to use the book, there are brief sections on hermeneutics (though the word is not used), the nature and origin of Scriptures, maps and the canon of the Bible, and then each biblical book is discussed.

For each book there are sections on the message of the book, placing it in its context and giving a summary of it, on key passages with a brief commentary on these, a discussion of 'belief features,' in which 48 different theological themes are discussed under the headings 'Father, Son, Spirit' (theology *per se*), 'God's answer' (God's relationship with and provision for man), 'the Christian life' (the disciplines), and 'life in society' (ethics). Most books include an outline and also a 'chain reference' section, tracing motifs and themes through Scripture.

This is in no way a full-fledged commentary, nor does it claim to be, but it seems to admirably fulfill its aims. It would make a good gift for a new

Christian and should be in any church library. It could also serve as a text for a new believers' class.

David W. Baker