

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bq\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php)

# Reviews

## BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS

Every minister is familiar with the problem of being asked to guide somebody's reading when he is not quite sure what he ought to recommend. Similarly, every scholar who engages in a piece of research faces the difficulty of knowing where to find his material; when he has found, he often faces the further difficulty of discovering whether what he has found has been exploded or substantiated in other places. During the last few months we have received a number of books which seek to meet these problems, and we propose to discuss them together.

First, from the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, comes *A Guide to Christian Reading*, edited by A. F. Wallis (price 6s. 6d.). It is a revision, one might almost say a re-writing, of a similar work published in 1952, and is intended to be an aid to finding a profitable path through the jungle of books, the production of which seems an endless process.

Some 1,500 titles, all of them in English, are listed, and often explanatory notes are appended. The list clearly stands in the evangelical Protestant tradition and is rooted in the Scriptures, though books of various theological outlooks are included, and apart from the frequently recurring comment that a book is not written from the conservative standpoint, the notes are balanced and helpful. Some are particularly succinct, as for instance the one on G. A. Smith's *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, which reads: "Always lucid, sometimes rich, often wayward."

Because the book is directed at the general reader some scholarly works are quite rightly omitted, though in each section there is a fair proportion of books for the advanced reader as well as for the beginner.

One sympathizes with the editor in his problem of selection and realises that a halt had to be called somewhere. It is regrettable, nevertheless, that works like E. W. Heaton, *The Old Testament Prophets*, R. H. Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel*, C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus*, are not mentioned; they might with profit have replaced titles like Matthew Henry's *Commentaries*, A. B. Davidson's *The Theology of the Old Testament*, and F. Delitzsch, *The Psalms*.

The difficulties of producing such a volume and having it up to date are considerable and here and there one or two cheap editions have recently been published and are not here noted,

though their more expensive counterparts are. Here and there, too, a book seems to have been inadvertently repeated. The Biblical section, as one might expect, is the most thorough; the section on the church and the sacraments, by comparison, is feeble, and the one on biography seems somewhat arbitrary; the one on the Last Days, on the other hand, gives one the impression it might almost go on until they arrive.

In spite of these imperfections, however, the work is of real value and the price incredibly low.

A similar work, though on a much larger and broader scale, is *A Theological Book List*, edited by Raymond P. Morris (price 45s.), and published in this country by Blackwell's. It contains over 5,000 titles and was prepared on behalf of the Theological Education Fund of the International Missionary Council to assist in its efforts to strengthen and improve the theological colleges and seminaries training students for the Ministry in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The editor states that he sought advice from some eighty scholars (including G. Henton-Davies and H. H. Rowley) so that the work reflects the judgments and critiques of many people from various view-points.

Most of the titles are in English and are of three kinds: First, those for the help of the teacher; second, specialist works and reference books; third, more popular books. They are divided into four classes: First, the Bible; second, church history; third, doctrine; fourth, practical theology. The work is, however, heavily weighted on the Biblical side and particularly on the New Testament.

Full names of authors are given and often a short note or comment is added to a title. Some books are listed in two places, with a suitable cross reference, and there is a good author's index, though it is strange to have two sections covering theology, sometimes repeating the subjects and even the books, without cross references.

It is impossible to comment in any detail on the selection. Suffice it to say that the section on Old Testament theology is particularly comprehensive, listing 23 titles; that it is hard to find a book of importance omitted in the section "The Prophets—General Studies"; that the books on the Dead Sea Scrolls are too few (15 titles), though well chosen; and that those on the Sermon on the Mount are, by comparison, too many (nine titles). The section on the ecumenical movement is brilliant, covering some 70 titles, but those on the ministry, worship and the sacraments are thin in the extreme.

Some provision, however, ought to be made for this book to be revised, say every five years, and in future it ought to be issued with a stronger binding.

To E. J. Brill, publishers in Leiden, we are indebted for the

first volume of a new series, *New Testament Tools and Studies*, edited by Bruce M. Metzger; it is entitled, *Index to Periodical Literature on the Apostle Paul* (price 14 gld.). This book is more specialised and learned, and therefore more for the library and the scholar than for the general reader.

Some twenty students of the editor went through about sixty periodicals for articles on Paul. The editor himself combed another fifty. This index lists about 3,000 articles in fourteen languages including Lithuanian, Russian and Serbian. Each periodical listed has been surveyed from the date of its inception until 1957, or until it ceased publication.

The sections cover bibliographical articles, historical studies on the life of Paul (15 sections), critical studies of Pauline literature (a separate section for each Pauline letter), Pauline apocrypha, theological studies (18 sections) and the history of the interpretation of Paul and his work.

All in all, this is a most useful guide to scholarship, and succeeding volumes will be eagerly anticipated by those who are engaged in research. The "cloth" binding is very good and the price excellent.

At the same level of scholarship, but on a still wider basis, we have received the sixth volume of *Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete*, (Patmos-Verlag, Düsseldorf, price £4), a guide to current periodical literature which has now been running for nearly ten years and has well and truly established itself. This volume lists over 2,000 articles, accompanied in nearly every case by short notes in German, from some 400 periodicals published in 1958-59.

Articles cover mainly the Bible, the world of the Bible, and the early church. Whilst each issue of this work is a guide only as to what was written in any one or two years, a collection of all the volumes gives the research student the widest possible coverage. One could wish that each issue were a little more up-to-date, but in view of the vast field covered we must rather be thankful that it appears at all.

Two other works which cover these same fields similarly are worthy of mention. The quarterly publication, *Biblica* (price £2 7s. 6d. per annum), lists annually some 3,000-4,000 articles and books that have appeared on Biblical topics all over the world. Even book reviews are listed and the indexing is excellent. The Society for Old Testament Study also publishes annually a *Book List* of books relevant to the Old Testament, together with a brief review of each title by one of a most distinguished panel of Old Testament scholars. Professor H. H. Rowley edited this for eleven years and these issues have since been published in one volume. Since 1958 the list has been edited by G. W. Anderson. Copies

may be obtained from the Rev. G. Farr, tutor of Manchester Baptist College (price 6s.).

Such bibliographies make one acutely aware of the impossibility of reading all that one would like, but if the essence of wise reading is selection then it is this kind of book which helps us all and enables us to help others.

A. GILMORE

Joachim Jeremias: *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*.  
Translated by David Cairns. (112 pp. 12s.6d. S.C.M.)

More than half of this book is devoted to the New Testament period. The treatment of the next three centuries, though illuminated by scholarly research and enriched by interesting information from tombstone inscriptions is more sketchy.

The purpose of the first two chapters is to show that infant baptism was practised by the church in the first century, both in respect of the children of parents joining the church and in respect of the children born to Christian parents. The weakness of the argument lies in the fact that the inferences made from the evidence are lacking in logical cogency.

First, in regard to the baptism of households in the New Testament, from the fact that "household" in the Old Testament often included children, it is inferred that in the New Testament references it must do so. This is clearly a *non-sequitur*. "Household" would of course include children if there were any, but this cannot be assumed, still less that they were infants. Second, from certain parallels between primitive Christian baptism and the Jewish proselyte baptism it is inferred that as the latter embraced the young children of converts, the former must have done so too. But this does not follow. To prove similarity in some respects is not to prove similarity in all respects.

Equally weak is it to infer the early practice of infant baptism from the mention of "children" in Acts 2, 39, or the description of Christian baptism as a circumcision in Col. 2, 11, where Paul is contrasting the inward significance of Christian baptism ("a circumcision not made with hands") with the merely outward rite of Jewish circumcision. Christian baptism did not replace circumcision: the children of Jewish Christians continued to be circumcised. In the German edition, on the basis of I Cor. 7, 14, Jeremias held that the children born of Christian parents were not baptised. In this edition, the view that "in the Christian Church baptism was the rite which replaced circumcision" (p. 47) has led Jeremias to change his mind, and infer that such children were baptised.

From the use of *Kölvö* in a number of baptismal contexts inside and outside the New Testament it is inferred (following Cull-

mann) that its occurrence in Mark 10, 14 (and parallels) is a reminder of the practice of infant baptism. From some similarities in expression between John 3, 5, and Mark 10, 15 (and parallels) it is inferred that the fourth evangelist interpreted the synoptic incident of the blessing of the children in the light of infant baptism. Dependence upon arguments so lacking in logical cogency exposes the weakness of the thesis.

Supporting evidence is adduced from inscriptions and epitaphs; but these are not earlier than the third century, though curiously two of them are included in the section on New Testament times.

From the saying in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (A.D. 167-8), "For eighty-six years I have served Him" it is inferred that Polycarp was baptised as an infant." But this does not necessarily follow. If the son of Christian parents was not baptised till manhood he could regard himself as having served Christ before his baptism. Such were Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssen, Basil, Ephraim Syrus, Rufinus and others. Jeremias regards them as instances of a new and later development and of the superstitious tendency to delay baptism for unworthy reasons. Surely it is more likely that in such instances we have the survival of the baptism of adult believers which we hold was the primitive practice of New Testament times.

A. W. ARGYLE

*Two Early Political Associations: The Quakers and the Dissenting Deputies in the Age of Sir Robert Walpole*, by N. C. Hunt. (XVI + 231 pp., 30s., Clarendon Press, Oxford).

Historians and students of politics are showing interest in "pressure groups," that is, extra-Parliamentary and extra-Governmental groups which have specific ends to attain and are organised so as to enable them to exert pressure on the Government. The constitutional importance of the political associations formed in the late 18th and early 19th century has long been recognised. Dr. Norman C. Hunt, in this interesting and well-documented monograph, argues that the activities between 1730 and 1742 of the Quakers' Meeting for Sufferings and of the Dissenting Deputies made them the prototypes of the later political associations.

The Meeting for Sufferings was constituted in 1675. It was linked with the monthly and County Quarterly Meetings, which were a feature of Quaker organisation from the beginning, and was intended as the spearhead for securing the redress of grievances and changes in the law. The Toleration Act of 1689 gave legal recognition to Dissent, but was far from granting full civil rights to Dissenters. The Quakers, in particular, felt distressed that their conscientious objection to taking oaths was not ade-

quately recognised, and they set themselves at once to petition and agitate for an Affirmation Act. That which was passed 1696 gave relief for only seven years. The Quakers had to be alert to secure its renewal. In 1715 they were able to get it made perpetual and in 1722 a form of affirmation more acceptable to them was agreed. These victories, gained by constant and well-prepared lobbying, gave them the requisite experience for a successful campaign against tithes in the 1730's, in the course of which Walpole skilfully broke with Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, sometimes described as his "pope."

Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists were somewhat slower than the Quakers in learning the art of the political pressure group. But the Toleration Act was for them far from satisfactory. It is true that Indemnity Acts were passed from 1714 onwards, relieving Dissenters of certain penalties in connection with failure to observe the sacramental qualification for office-holding, but these Acts were not passed every year, and there was a widespread and growing feeling that the Test and Corporation Acts ought to be repealed.

The work of Mr. Bernard Manning on *The Protestant Dissenting Deputies* (published in 1952 by Mr. Ormerod Greenwood) is well known. Mr. Hunt's detailed study of the work of the Committee under the chairmanship, first of Samuel Holden (whom Mr. Hunt defends against the charge of betraying the Dissenting Cause) and then Benjamin Avery shows that there remain in its minutes—as in those of the Quakers—considerable stores of important material.

Neither the Quakers nor the Dissenting Deputies secured much in the way of concessions from Walpole, but they could not hope for more help from the Parliamentary opposition. However, in the words of Mr. Hunt, through their activities "the techniques of peaceful political agitation focussed on Parliament were firmly established in English political life at a relatively early date" and this was of great value.

ERNEST A. PAYNE