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# Book Reviews

**THE READER'S BIBLE** condensed from the Revised Standard Version  
edited by the **Editors of Reader's Digest**  
Hodder & Stoughton 1983 799 pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 276 00099 4

'Blessed Lord, who has caused sixty per cent of Holy Scripture to be written for our learning...'—a glance at this version might suggest such a revised collect. Lord Coggan writes the foreword, but on the cover it is a Roman Catholic who reaffirms that *all* Scripture is inspired by God.

This potted version retains far more than 60 per cent of the facts, and much of the RSV's dignity; when God and man converse, 'thou' and 'you' coexist. Not all of its indentations survive; the loss of chapter and verse can be liberating, but solid blocks of print make Romans (for instance) harder to digest in such concentrated form.

The NT loses less than the Old; most books are reduced proportionally, though John gains at Luke's expense, and the shortest letters remain intact. Prophets suffer less than law, but apocalyptic is savaged, and Chronicles comes off worst.

In order to preserve all the main people and events, nouns often become pronouns; verbs, adjectives, and conjunctions are pruned; echoes and emphases deleted. But some of the underlying AV rhythms depend on just such tiny links; remove the little shops from the high street, and the cathedral will not look the same.

The psalms fare differently; half have gone altogether, and the survivors are more kindly trimmed. I feared censorship here, with cruelty or complaints removed, but that has not happened.

The book's intended users will, however, see what is there rather than what is not—who decides the vital words? 'We may eat fruit', says Eve to the serpent, as if she is dieting; 'addressing one another in psalms', writes Paul to the Ephesians, as if they are all puritans. Abraham has an easier time pleading for Sodom; and Revelation no longer bids us 'hear what the Spirit says to the churches'.

Surprisingly, the Reader's Digest dislikes even quotable quotes; Hebrews and 1 Peter lose not only their arguments from Psalms 102 and 34 (dropped earlier) but even 95 and 118, which survived the purge.

Repetition is allowed in the gospels; elsewhere it is the great enemy. But would we tolerate 'The Three Bears' without its patterned refrains? Scripture too is for reading aloud, and many narratives owe their appeal to this device. Where the lions failed, Daniel is devoured by editors; as for Elijah on Carmel, 'He had them do it a second time, and a third' (is anyone still listening?)

Genealogies, including Matthew's and Luke's, are too technical for inclusion, and other details too ordinary; but both provided vital clues to what made Israel tick. I miss the Parthians at Pentecost, and if our generation tires of lists, suppose the next wearies of parables, or crucifixions?

This book may drive us to re-examine our attitude to inspiration and the canon, and our private choice of purple passages. It may help newcomers to discover the real thing, though it needs the motivation of academic interest or religious stirrings. It is useless for close study, and could cause disquiet even in general reading because it cannot be altogether trusted.

Limehouse Rectory, London E14

CHRISTOPHER IDLE

**THE NIV COMPLETE CONCORDANCE: The Complete English Concordance to the New International Version Anglicised edition**

**Edward W. Goodrick and John R. Kohlenberger III**

Hodder & Stoughton 1983 xxi + 1208 pp. £14.95

ISBN 0 340 28080 8

The qualities of the NIV need no commendation here. The value of a concordance of an English version is the greater when the version is widely used and when it is verbally close to its original. Verbal correspondence is not itself necessarily the mark of a good translation, especially now that the principle of 'dynamic equivalence', rendering meaning for meaning irrespective of the wording, is in vogue. But the growing popularity of the NIV and its relatively conservative treatment of language make this venture both timely and useful.

This computer-based concordance is 'complete' but not 'exhaustive': that is, it lists in a brief context all occurrences of every word treated, but not all the words occurring in the British edition of the NIV. It is said to contain over 12,800 words and 250,000 references (the figures including proper names and inflectional derivatives). Over 900 excluded words are tabulated at the end of the volume: they comprise not only the recurring conjunctions, particles and auxiliaries, but most numerals, some of the commonest nouns, verbs and adjectives, and apparently all adverbs, including those which express significant concepts. There may then be no representation of ideas expressed in the English by phrasal verbs, even where they render forcible terms in the original. Thus neither English component of 'saying indignantly' (Mark 14:4) is listed, and 'get even' (Judg. 15:3) is entered only under 'get', and the phrase truncated so that the cited context ends with 'get'. Conversely, the word 'circumstances' is listed, though invariably supplied in the NT to complete the sense in rendering an adverb or neuter plural, and 'friends' is often inserted in the NIV where Paul addresses 'my dear friends' (Gk. simply 'beloved'), although the 'friendship' word group is notably absent from Paul's terminology of Christian relationships. Different senses of homonyms are usually distinguished, and the separation of 'LORD' (Heb. *Yahweh*) from 'Lord' (Heb. *Adonai*, and NT refs.) reproduces the NIV printing conventions.

It would be easy to pick on many trivial details of this kind. It really amounts to saying that the accuracy of a computerized project is, in the nature of the case, mechanical rather than always discriminating. That is no criticism; it is the computer which makes possible the rapid production of a tool which would have cost many years of personal labour. Of course it should be used with sensible discernment. We warmly welcome this timely aid for students of the NIV.

**A CONCORDANCE TO THE APOCRYPHA/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS OF THE REVISED STANDARD VERSION**

derived from the Bible Data Bank

foreword **Bruce M. Metzger**

Eerdmans, USA 1983

Collins Liturgical 1983 479 pp. £16.00

ISBN 0 8028 2312 2

ISBN 0 00 599714 3

This strongly bound quarto volume supplies a real need. The standard concordances to the English Bible, Strong and Young, do not include the Apocrypha, and one of the continuing values of Cruden is that he does. However, Cruden is not as complete as Young, and falls still further short of the completeness of Strong, and this is equally true when it comes to the Apocrypha as it is with the Old and New Testaments. So all those who value the Apocrypha, not as Scripture but for the light that it throws on the intertestamental period and the background to the NT (which ought to mean all students of the Bible), could do with a fuller concordance such as this volume now supplies. It even extends somewhat outside the English Apocrypha by including 3 and 4 Maccabees and Psalm 151, items from the Septuagint which have recently been added to the RSV translation of the Apocrypha. The material for the volume has been computerized by the Bible Data Bank at the Abbey of Maredsous, Belgium (an example of how Roman Catholic biblical scholarship is now serving all churches).

Cruden, Young and Strong are of course based on the AV, and there is value today in having available, in addition, concordances which are based on a modern translation, and so take account of modern developments in interpretation and textual criticism. Of the many modern translations, the Revised Standard Version has a certain uniqueness, both as being one of the most literal and as having perhaps the widest interdenominational acceptance. Its relative literalness, and the fact that it is a further revision of the Revised Version (itself a revision of the AV), are especially important for the users of concordances, because the effect is that a particular word in the original is usually represented by the same English word on its various occurrences, and that it is easier to correlate a concordance to this version with a concordance to the AV than otherwise it would be.

At the same time, it has to be admitted that the Apocrypha of the RSV has sometimes incurred sharp criticism, as being an inferior translation to the RSV Old and New Testaments. No concordance, of course, can be better than the version on which it is based. However, the other modern versions of the Apocrypha are not without their faults either, and the greatest defect of the RSV Apocrypha is perhaps its failure to follow the text in Codex Sinaiticus for the Book of Tobit. This has long been suspected to be a better text than that used for the AV and RV, and the Aramaic fragments of Tobit from Qumran have now confirmed that it is closer to the original. Certainly, therefore, the RSV translators ought to have followed Codex Sinaiticus here, as the translators of the NEB and Jerusalem Bible have done.

Two other defects of the new concordance have to be mentioned. First, to reduce the bulk of the volume, seventy-seven English words are totally omitted. Earlier concordances have given less full coverage to the definite and indefinite article and to certain pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions which occur with great frequency, than they have to other words. But to omit totally an important word like 'do' is hard to justify. Disarmingly, we are told

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that scholars interested in further information about these seventy-seven words are encouraged to apply to the Bible Data Bank!

The other defect is that no indication is given of the different Greek (and, in the case of Ecclesiasticus, Hebrew) words which the English words represent. This is something which we have rightly come to expect of concordances.

One is tempted to add a word about the title. The Council of Trent ranked most of the Apocrypha with the OT, and Roman Catholics therefore prefer to call them the 'Deuterocanonical Books', meaning (as the foreword points out) books 'added later to the canon'. Yet the chief Roman Catholic writers on the canon (such as Movers, Mullen and Zarb) deny that these books were added later, and claim, however mistakenly, that they were an original part of the OT canon which Jews, and afterwards Protestants, suppressed!

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

### **PSALMS 1-50 Peter C. Craigie**

**Word Biblical Commentary Volume 19**

**Word Books, USA 1983 375pp. US\$18.95**

**ISBN 0 8499 0218 5**

All contributions to Word Biblical Commentaries follow the same pattern: the author's translation, textual notes, a section on form/structure/setting, a comment, and an explanation defined as 'a clear exposition of the passage's meaning and its relevance to the ongoing biblical revelation'. A limited sample (Philippians and, now, Psalms 1-50) suggests that the general editors should either think again about the explanation or edit them more critically or redefine the terms of reference they give to their authors. It would be far better to extend the 'comment' sections than to give us material often no better than what the Interpreter's Bible calls 'exposition' though, so far, we have mercifully been spared improving stories drawn from the lives of defunct American presidents.

Peter Craigie is (as one gratefully expects) at his best in the sections on translation and textual annotation. He could have spent less space on noting the opinions of Dahood (for a quick sample suggests that he dissents from over 75 per cent of them); possibly he need not have adopted some proposed alterations of the Massoretic Text, but this part of his book is illuminating and satisfying. The sections on structure have moved far from the days when Briggs was dating all the psalms in the Maccabean period or when Kirkpatrick was finding their setting in recorded biblical history. The former is no loss; the richness of the latter is sadly missing in the present work. The classification of psalms reigns supreme—and quite often with a sense of scholarly mumbo jumbo rather than an illumination of what the psalm is about. The fault may be that classification is not allied to a detailed analysis of each psalm, and the same air of generalization hangs over the comments. Here we find the 'broad brush' treatment familiar to readers of Weiser, as contrasted with the detailed concern for individual words and phrases for which Anderson is rightly prized. This is a great pity, in the light of Craigie's linguistic mastery.

The fifty-two pages of introduction are helpful, specially the long section on 'The Psalms and Ugaritic Studies'. The excursus on 'The Translation of

Tenses in Hebrew Poetry' is a model of learning. Fine bibliographies throughout make this volume a useful reference for the student, but in what is after all quite a large book on fifty psalms, there is a sad impression of generalization where we have some right to expect a more detailed commentary.

Christ Church Vicarage, Westbourne, Dorset

ALEC MOTYER

**THE DAILY STUDY BIBLE** general editor **John C.L. Gibson**

**Jeremiah** Volume 1 **Robert Davidson**

165 pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 7152 0526 9

**Psalms** Volume 2 **G.A.F. Knight**

368 pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 7152 0524 2

Both published by the Westminster Press, USA and the Saint Andrew Press 1983

These volumes continue the series which is aimed to do for the OT what William Barclay's series did for the New. So far Genesis (2 vols), Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Samuel, Psalms (vol. 1), Ezekiel and Daniel have been published, and these two volumes add to their company.

Under the general editorship of John C.L. Gibson, of New College, Edinburgh, eleven contributors will be responsible for covering the whole of the OT, with the same twofold aim of introducing the reader to 'some of the more important results and fascinating insights of modern Old Testament scholarship' and of enabling men and women (as Barclay put it in his NT series), in the words of Richard of Chichester's prayer, 'to know Jesus Christ more clearly, to love him more dearly, and to follow him more nearly.'

As in the earlier series, the text is set out in full in manageable sections followed by comment; unlike Barclay, who provided his own translation, the authors reproduce here the text of the RSV. Robert Davidson's book (the author is professor of biblical studies at the University of Glasgow) covers the first twenty chapters of Jeremiah and expounds the prophet in contemporary terms: the prophet is 'the son of a country manse' (p.8), and 'a faithless, unrepentant people cannot simply turn to God as if he were some benign sugar daddy...' (p.37).

G.A.F. Knight, now in retirement after a distinguished career as a teacher of OT and first principal of the Pacific Theological College at Suva in Fiji, is already known for his commentaries on OT books (notably in the Torch Bible Paperbacks series). This commentary on the psalms covers the last three books of the psalter, Psalms 73-150. In spite of the varied authorship, there is an evenness of quality in the material (and 369 pages at this price is remarkably good value). As with Davidson's volume, the OT does not offer the author the same facility to illuminate the events described from the contemporary secular background as his knowledge of Greek and Roman culture and literature enabled William Barclay with the NT. Like Barclay, however, they frequently cite modern literature and events to bring OT situations home to the modern reader.

Again, as was the case with Barclay, their theological approach to the Bible is a 'liberal' one: the editor of Exodus 14:21 is claimed to have edited in Psalm 78:13, thereby introducing a poetic idea into a story reported as an

incident in history. So it is claimed that Cecil B. de Mille, in presenting this as a miracle on the screen, 'made stronger rather than weaker the view of so many today that the Bible is "just a lot of fairy tales"' (Psalms p.33).

Both writers remind us, in the words of the general editor, that Jesus himself was raised on the OT, and that when read reverently and imaginatively the OT can become a living and relevant force in their everyday lives. For this we are grateful to them.

Oak Hill College, London N14

DAVID H. WHEATON

### **THE COURAGE TO DOUBT: Exploring the Old Testament Theme**

**Robert Davidson**

SCM Press 1983 241 pp. £6.95

ISBN 0 334 01967 5

The kind of doubt with which Davidson is concerned in this book is defined by him as 'any questioning of, or protest against the adequacy of inherited faith' (p.12). The theme of the book is in effect the tension between what the inherited faith of Israel traditionally affirmed, and the reality observed or experienced by the nation or the individual.

The various responses which this tension evoked are traced in the psalms, the patriarchal narratives, the Moses traditions, the Wisdom literature, the prophetic material, the Deuteronomic history and the work of the Chronicler. The different types of literature are not strictly compartmentalized but are often juxtaposed (e.g. Jeremiah is contrasted with certain of the psalms in ch. 8; Job with the historians of the monarchy in ch. 9), and it is from this that many of the book's most useful insights emerge.

The material receives a sensitive and sympathetic treatment, and the impression emerges powerfully from the book that the kind of doubt which Davidson discusses, far from being the antithesis of Israel's faith, was in fact a facet of it. It is a variety of doubting which takes place firmly within the context of faith and which can lead to an enrichment of it.

The final chapter argues that, among ancient Near-Eastern religious literature, the OT is distinctive in exhibiting this theme, and finds the reason for this distinctiveness in Israel's belief in Yahweh's sovereignty and her expectation that he would be morally consistent. Other ancient religions of the region largely avoided doubt-creating tensions because they focused on the more or less predictable patterns of nature, or on deities whose acts were outside of history. One would have liked to see this developed further, and it is regrettable that Davidson devotes only ten pages to it.

The book will be of interest not only to students and teachers of the OT, but also to pastors. As Davidson remarks in his introduction, many people today 'even within the believing community, find themselves forced to question and doubt, and often do so with an unnecessarily guilty conscience.' Davidson himself says little of how we may benefit from the OT's approaches to distressing uncertainties (though he raises important questions about the church's worship when discussing psalms of lament, pp.12-17), but it is not difficult to see the pastoral implications of his theme. There is much to be

learnt from the insight that cries of 'Why?' and 'How long?' can be as proper and important as 'Hallelujah!' in the way we relate to God.

Trinity College, Bristol

JOHN J. BIMSON

### **OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

**G.L. Archer and G. Chirichigno**

Moody Press, USA 1983 167 pp. US\$21.00

ISBN 0 8024 0236 4

This handsome volume is, as its authors claim, a useful tool. It sets out all the 312 explicit citations of the OT in the NT. In the first column is the text in Hebrew (Stuttgart 1969 & 1977), in the second the Septuagint (Rahlfs, not Göttingen), in the third the NT in Greek (Nestle-Aland 26th ed.). In the fourth column is a commentary, which pinpoints the differences and justifies the changes made by the NT writers. Gleason Archer, the senior partner in this enterprise, is Professor of OT Semitic Languages at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. He is an excellent linguist and has been at the heart of the debate in the USA on biblical inerrancy. The book is directed towards this controversy.

The authors show that inexactness of quotation is no more evidence of disbelief in inerrancy by the apostolic writers than it would be in the case of modern inerrantist preachers, who might quote inexact translations or be verbally imprecise in their quotations, either deliberately for purposes of emphasis or unintentionally through imperfections of memory. They argue that when writing for mainly Greek-speaking readers it was most helpful to quote the Septuagint version which they knew. In the case of Matthew and Hebrews, on the other hand, many of the first readers would have known the scriptures in the original, so there is a tendency to approximate to the Hebrew in these books.

In the commentary the quotations are graded into five main categories, ranging from those which cause no difficulty (the majority) to those (thirteen in number) which seem to take questionable liberties with the OT original, whether in wording or in application. The comments are mostly factual and technical, but some of them throw light on the problems which present themselves to the ordinary reader. There are helpful remarks, for instance, on Ephesians 4:8 where the Masoretic text 'Thou hast received gifts among men' becomes 'he gave gifts to men', and at Matthew 27:9 where a prophecy from Zechariah is prefaced by a reference to Jeremiah. One is surprised, however, to find that Isaiah 7:14 is treated as a passage of no difficulty and the question of 'young woman' or 'virgin' is not even discussed. It may be of no difficulty to Professor Archer, but it has kept many commentators busy! This seems to be the weakness of the book, that it does not help greatly in understanding the rationale of NT exegesis of the Old. The fact that the order of entries is that of the OT does not make it easy to follow through the quotations of a particular NT author and understand his thought. All in all it is a useful presentation of the facts, but somewhat disappointing as a tool for exegesis.

Oxford

JOHN WENHAM



Churchman

### **GOSPEL PERSPECTIVES**

**Volume III Studies in Midrash and Historiography**

edited **R.T. France** and **David Wenham**

JSOT Press 1983 299 pp. £8.95

ISBN 0 905774 56 6

This is the third volume in the valuable series produced under the auspices of the Tyndale House Gospels Project. David Wenham, who has been overseeing the project, and his joint editor both deserve the warmest thanks of the church for what they have achieved; and when the three further volumes of *Gospel Perspectives*, currently being prepared, have also appeared, our debt to them will doubtless be even greater. The project is concerned with the relation of the gospels to history, and, in the light of modern investigation, it aims both to refine evangelical understanding of the historicity of the gospels and to demonstrate the groundlessness of current scepticism about their historicity.

The present volume considers the claim that the gospels (or some of them) are to be considered as Jewish midrash. Three of the chapters, useful in themselves, stand rather aside from this main purpose: two of these (by Leon Morris and C.L. Blomberg) expose the weaknesses of the contention that the gospels are governed by Jewish lectionaries, while the other (by D.S. Greenwood) deals with the rather loose use of the term 'midrash' in a 'post-structuralist' work by Frank Kermode, a professional literary critic who makes excursions into biblical studies. Two of the other chapters, on exegesis at Qumran (by F.F. Bruce) and on exegetical material in the *Biblical Antiquities* of pseudo-Philo (by Richard Bauckham) are models of what such studies should be.

The volume does not have as high a degree of unity as might be ideal, and two essays are contributed by R.T. France in a not-unsuccessful effort to bring the material together more and draw out its lessons; but a careful reading of the whole should sow deeply rooted doubts in every reader's mind about both the main ways that the concept of midrash is currently being applied to the gospels. 'Midrash' means interpretation, and Jewish midrash on the OT often includes among its details edifying speculation and fiction; but to suppose (with Goulder) that a great part of the narrative of Matthew arose out of speculative interpretation of its OT quotations and related OT passages, or (with Drury) that it arose out of speculative interpretation of Mark, is something unparalleled in Jewish sources, and strains credulity to breaking-point.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**JESUS SON OF MAN: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research**

**Barnabas Lindars SSF**

SPCK 1983 244 pp. £15.00

ISBN 0 281 04016 8

It may seem astonishing that there is anything new to be said about the 'Son of Man' problem, which has puzzled and stimulated NT scholars for so long.

But this is a book which, following hard on the heels of several other significant contributions to the subject in recent years, raises hopes that a satisfactory solution to the problem may at last be in sight. I do not think it quite succeeds in providing such a solution, and I am sure it will fuel, not quench, the debate, but it is a work of major importance which deserves the closest consideration.

In the first place, it offers a relatively new proposal as to Jesus' own use of the phrase 'Son of Man'. Lindars stands within that recent trend of 'Son of Man' scholarship which was largely pioneered by G. Vermes and followed also by M. Casey, which takes as the clue to Jesus' usage the examples of *bar nash(a)* as a form of self-reference in later Jewish Aramaic. But he rejects both Vermes' claim that there are examples in which *bar nasha* is an exclusive self-reference (= 'I') and Casey's view that all such examples are examples of a properly generic use (*bar nasha* = 'mankind', 'each and every man', including the speaker), and argues that there are examples of 'the idiomatic use of the generic article, in which the speaker refers to a class of persons, with whom he identifies himself (*bar nasha* = 'a man in my position'). Using this idiom as a criterion, Lindars then identifies nine 'Son of Man' sayings in the gospels as authentic sayings of Jesus, because they can be interpreted as examples of this idiomatic use of *bar enash(a)*.

This is a brilliantly argued attempt to use the Aramaic evidence to illuminate Jesus' usage more satisfactorily than Vermes and Casey have done. Unfortunately, it fails at crucial points: 1) The two rabbinic passages which are alleged as evidence for the idiom do not at all require such an interpretation. 2) Less than half of the 'Son of Man' sayings which Lindars judges authentic seem at all convincing examples of the idiom, which has to be considerably stretched to accommodate all nine sayings. Much of Lindars' exegesis of these sayings tends to point towards a simple indefinite use of *bar enash(a)* (= 'someone') rather than a generic use. The exegesis, however, is frequently of great interest.

The book is not only concerned with Jesus' authentic use of 'Son of Man', but also with 'Son of Man' in Q and the four gospels. Lindars shows, I think convincingly, that there was never a 'Son of Man' Christology in the early church: the use of 'Son of Man' was purely a feature of the literary editing of the sayings of Jesus. He also demonstrates that, although in the gospels 'Son of Man' becomes at least quasi-titular, it is not a true messianic title but a self-designation of Jesus, which not even the evangelists (except perhaps Mark) regard as everywhere carrying an allusion of to Daniel 7:13. These conclusions, with their implications for the question of authentic 'Son of Man' sayings, seem to me a major advance, and more secure than the proposal about Jesus' usage.

**THE TEACHING OF JESUS Norman Anderson**

219 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 340 33302 2

**THE HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS F.F. Bruce**

268 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 340 27044 6

Both published by Hodder & Stoughton 1983

In the seventies, Michael Green edited the 'I Believe' series. His aim in this new series, 'The Jesus Library', is to foster the production of something similar in the eighties: books written by competent scholars who nevertheless know how to communicate their findings in straightforward prose and a minimum of esoteric footnotes. But whereas the first series was devoted to areas of Christian teaching often neglected or rejected in scholarly writing, this new series focuses more narrowly on various controversial aspects of the life and teaching of Jesus.

Sir Norman devotes the first chapter of his book to a brief examination of how the gospels came into being, and of the authenticity of the record they provide of the teaching of Jesus. As might be expected, the approach is conservative but not combative, elementary but not naive. Of interest to both layman and NT specialist are the comparisons and contrasts Sir Norman draws between the gospel records on the one hand and the *Qu'ran* and *Sunna* on the other, with respect to the descent of their respective traditions. These are deft and full of insight.

The rest of the book is organized around the theme of the kingdom of God. Two chapters are devoted to 'The Summons of the Kingdom', three to 'The Ethics of the Kingdom', and two to 'The Consummation of the Kingdom'. A book that aims to deliver so much lays itself open to numerous criticisms. Specialists will quibble over many details (e.g., Are there really only seven parables in Matt. 13, or are there eight? Has Sir Norman rightly handled, say, Matt. 11:12?); but the criticisms would be largely unfair, for in most disputed matters Sir Norman expresses himself cautiously but firmly, and without resorting to the detailed weighing of opinions that would transform this book into something else. Perhaps a more serious difficulty is the selection of the kingdom as the exclusive organizing principle. Except for a few pages in chapter 3, the fourth gospel consequently receives very short shrift, and useful distinctions are sometimes flattened. Nevertheless, the book largely achieves its aims, and can be confidently placed in the hands of readers who want a responsible survey of Jesus' teaching.

The second book invites comparison with William Neil's *The Difficult Sayings of Jesus* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1975, published in England under the title *What Jesus Really Meant*), and the more recent book jointly written by W. Neil and S. Travis, *More Difficult Sayings of Jesus* (Mowbray, London 1981). The former sought to explain thirty-four gospel texts, the latter thirty-one. Here Professor Bruce sets forth succinct expositions of no fewer than seventy. With one exception (*viz.* John 6:53, whence the title), all are drawn from the synoptic gospels.

Professor Bruce wisely points out that Jesus' sayings can be 'hard' in two quite different ways. Some are hard to understand; others are easy to understand, but hard to take because they call in question our cherished prejudices. The first kind of 'hard saying' needs explanation. Here Professor Bruce's vast learning, lightly worn, leads through scores of thickets to

sensible conclusions, simply stated. By and large he avoids questions of source criticism and authenticity, and expounds the texts in their canonical settings, though on occasion he compares two forms of a saying and seeks to reconstruct an original (e.g., Matt. 11:12 = Luke 16:16, pp.115–18). Doubtless in a few cases some will take leave to hold to another interpretation (e.g., I am unpersuaded by his explanation of Luke 7:28 = Matt. 11:11).

In the second kind of hard saying, the expositor must be careful not to explain it away, but to make the reader feel its weight. Professor Bruce succeeds admirably (see his comments on 'Love your enemies' or 'You must be perfect'), often with very apposite allusions to a wide range of authors. Only rarely does a suspicion arise that this kind of hard saying has been made too easy (e.g. pp.56–62).

Subsequent printing would do well to include the Scripture references in the table of contents.

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, USA

D.A. CARSON

**PHILIPPIANS** **Gerald F. Hawthorne**  
 Word Biblical Commentary Volume 43  
 Word Books, USA 1983 232 pp. US\$18.98

ISBN 0 8499 0242 8

Nothing but very high praise indeed can suffice for this contribution to Philippian studies by the professor of Greek at Wheaton College. It is a resource book for every serious student, teacher and preacher, full in its bibliography and references, as well as thorough and detailed in exploration and exegesis of the text.

Fifty-two pages of introduction lead into six main sections (eighteen sub-sections) of commentary. Each sub-section offers a bibliography, a translation (the author's own), textual notes, a discussion of form/structure/setting, detailed comment and a concluding 'explanation'. The explanations are, as a matter of fact, hard to account for; they are merely a very generalized summary of the passage just examined. Possibly they might have been more helpful as a preface to each subsection, but even this is doubtful for their content is so broad. Oddly, there is no 'explanation' added to the treatment of 3:1–3. But what a minor complaint all this is, when every page brings richness and depth to one's understanding of Philippians.

Hawthorne holds that Philippians was written from Caesarea though, to be frank, his arguments for a Roman location seem much weightier. He opposes every theory that Philippians is in any way composite, and provides sensible and illuminating material on the integrity of (for example) 3:1ff. in its context. His care to establish an exact meaning for *to loipon*, as the NT uses it, is a model of the care for words which pervades his work. One could mention also such words as *epieikes* (4:5, p.182) as indicative of the word-study aspect of this commentary. Hawthorne obviously has an ear as well as an eye for words, but sometimes he seems to allow his linguistic skill to become too subtle—is *morphe* really as problematic as he seems to find it? Will there be many takers for his convoluted understanding of 1:28? Or for the acceptance

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of a lesser text at 2:5? On the other hand, nothing could be more lucid and helpful than the handling of *kenoo* and kenotic theories. With hesitation in saying it, it may be that Dr Hawthorne is on the whole stronger linguistically than theologically. The introductory section on 'Aspects of Christology' is decidedly attenuated, as is also, for example, the discussion of 'we are the circumcision' (3:3). But an occasional semi-precious stone would not hold anyone back from a mine where there are diamonds.

Christ Church Vicarage, Westbourne, Dorset

ALEC MOTYER

### **COLOSSIANS, PHILEMON Peter T. O'Brien**

Word Biblical Commentary Volume 44

Word Books, USA 1982 328 pp. US\$18.95

ISBN 0 8499 0243 6

This is a deeply thoughtful commentary. Here is no mere rehashing of the work of others, but the fruit of a prolonged period of wrestling with the original text, strengthened for the task by deep acquaintance with the secondary literature. He is very prepared to go his own way: for instance, in his suggestion that *ekklesia* in Colossians 1:18 refers to the heavenly gathering around Christ, of which each local congregation is a manifestation—a fascinating idea with the ring of truth about it. He approaches the text with the reverence of a true Christian, and the freedom of the trained scribe who brings out of his store old things and new. It's a lovely combination.

The 'Word' series aims at scholarly commentary on the Greek text, for the benefit of students and ministers throughout the English-speaking world. Peter O'Brien has an excellent pedigree as a scholar, and as a teacher in Britain, India and Australia. One disappointment is that this variety of experience, particularly his Indian, does not seem to have rubbed off on his commenting. I would particularly have expected some pertinent remarks from this source when dealing with the 'household code' in Colossians 3:18–4:1. This is in fact my main disappointment, for while the book models itself structurally and helpfully on recent German commentaries, dividing the material on each passage under 'form/structure/setting', 'comment' and 'explanation', it does not have the usual theological and hermeneutical concern of these German models. Stuhlmacher's slim volume on Philemon, for instance, concerns itself intensely with the history of the application of the message of the book and its relevance to the issue of the Christian attitude to worldly structures—it is so vital for a commentary worth its salt, and especially for one which proclaims on the dust-jacket its commitment to the authority of Scripture and its desire to help readers to a *theological* understanding of the Bible, to give itself to this kind of *hermeneia*. I feel I want to encourage the general editor of the series (R.P. Martin) and its writers to a more than merely historical and exegetical concern.

While I'm on the gripe side—on which I don't want to dwell—I find his style of writing annoying, in that he makes excessive use of parentheses, not just to give bibliographical details, but as a syntactical tool. This really becomes tedious. But gripe is not at all appropriate in reviewing this book. It is based upon enormously wide reading of relevant English, French and

German literature, and the commentary is conducted in constant interaction with other authors. It thus makes high demands of the reader, but will prove itself all the more useful in the long run. Its bibliographies will be useful even to research students. It is a mature, careful work of reverent scholarship, and I know that I shall be consulting it frequently. I hope the rest of the series keeps up the standard set by this volume.

One or two more points: it is equipped with thirty pages of introduction to Colossians, discussing all the main literary and historical problems, supports Pauline authorship, occasionally uses excursuses (which should be listed on the contents page but are not), gives a new translation of both epistles, deals with textual matters separately from the main commentary, and seems to be produced to a very high standard (very few misprints noted).

Albury Vicarage, Herts

STEPHEN MOTYER

### **THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS Donald Guthrie**

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries

Eerdmans, USA 1983

IVP 1983 281 pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 8028 1427 1

ISBN 0 85111 884 4

This latest addition to the Tyndale series of commentaries begins with a useful, though fairly brief, discussion of introductory questions. Dr Guthrie is non-committal on the authorship of the epistle, but so far as the readership is concerned, he inclines (on the basis particularly of 5:12 and 10:25) to the view that the letter was addressed to an intellectual breakaway group of Jewish Christians within a church; those addressed may have lived in Rome (cf. 13:24), perhaps in the 60s, and were most probably in danger of apostasy to Judaism. Hebrews was written to counter this tendency, showing the superiority of Christ as the fulfilment of the OT and stressing the importance of meeting together. Dr Guthrie examines the possible background to the letter—in the Qumran scrolls and in Philo, as well as in the OT and in Paul's epistles—and he concludes his introduction with a description of the book's theology.

The commentary itself is a straightforward verse-by-verse explanation of the text, with comments on word meanings and usage, on OT background, and on many of the familiar problems of the letter: e.g., does it teach that Christians can apostasize? How can the sinless Son of God be tempted in the same way as sinful humans? On such points the commentary has helpful, though not novel, things to say. There are some references, though not very many, to critical views and questions, but readers wanting substantial discussion on questions such as the possible Wisdom background to Hebrews 1 will have to look elsewhere.

Dr Guthrie's views are usually persuasive, but not always conclusive. Some will be unpersuaded by his argument that 5:12 suggests that the letter was addressed to an intellectual group rather than to a whole congregation. Some will feel that he underestimates the sacramentalism of the letter, e.g. in 6:2-5, 10:19-25. Guthrie himself acknowledges that the words of institution may have influenced the wording of Hebrews 9:20, and it is possible to see the tradition of the Last Supper, with its emphasis on 'body' (or 'flesh'),

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'blood', 'covenant' and forgiveness, as lying behind much of the argument of Hebrews 9-13, and also to suggest that the author may have been wrestling particularly with the problem of what might be called 'post-eucharistic apostasy' (cf. 6:6 and 10:29 with 1 Cor. 11:27-32, and note his concern for the meeting together of the church).

The style of the commentary is occasionally heavy going, and Dr Guthrie's own position is not always as clearly stated as one might like. But, although Dr Guthrie says at the start of the book that he finds Hebrews a particularly difficult book, he has provided a workmanlike commentary, which will help many readers to find the book less difficult and to discover in it 'many treasures of spiritual wisdom and theological insight' (p.9).

Wycliffe Hall, Oxford

DAVID WENHAM

## **A NEW DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY**

edited Alan Richardson and John Bowden

SCM Press 1983 614 pp. £19.50

ISBN 0 334 02206 1

This is a replacement for (more than a revision of) the old *Dictionary*, edited by Alan Richardson and published in 1969. Those who have valued the old one are almost certain to find the new one even more valuable.

The *New Dictionary* has a much larger number of contributors than the old—a good policy, because it tends to improve the quality of contributions. The vast majority of contributors are British and North American, together with a few Europeans and one Asian (recruited for an article on 'Indigenous Theology'). Unlike the old *Dictionary*, the new one has a large number of Roman Catholic contributors, and two Orthodox. There are scarcely any evangelical contributors. These facts about geography and traditions explain the fact that, despite a range of theological approaches and viewpoints, the general impression is of a work representing mainstream Anglo-Saxon theology in the 1980s, probably rather less influenced by Germany than in the past, not yet much influenced by Third-World theology, despite nods in that direction, very aware of the hermeneutical problems of cultural and religious relativism. My impression is that the articles tend to be fairer to all positions, less partisan, than in the old *Dictionary*, but there is a clear sense that certain recent theological phases (Barthian and secular theology) have been definitively left behind, while the hermeneutical problems seem to have decreased the biblical input into theology and increased that of philosophy and the human sciences. There are few really radical contributions, even from contributors one expects to be radical. The scholarship is usually impeccable. The theological approach, in sum, is fair-, broad- and open-minded, self-critical, tentative when it steps outside consensus positions, tending to lack a cutting edge.

A deliberate editorial decision has excluded articles on individual theologians (though some get smuggled in as the founders of schools, while the Cappadocian Fathers count as a school in themselves). Almost every significant theological concept is included (though it is odd to find 'Similitudo Dei' but not even a cross-reference under 'Image of God', which one is much

more likely to look up). The attempt to update the coverage includes not only obvious topics (Black Theology, Feminist Theology, Liberation Theology, Political Theology) but also, very usefully, some less obvious recent topics (Basic Communities, Critical Theory, Narrative Theology). Readers of this journal may be interested to know that, alone among the Creeds and Confessions, the Thirty-nine Articles have an entry of their own, but perhaps this merely compensates for the lack of an article on 'Anglican Theology', whereas most other major denominations have a theological entry ('Baptist Theology', etc.). 'Anglo-Catholicism' has an entry, which describes the movement, not its theology, as does 'Friends, Religious Society of': presumably the Quakers are not supposed to have any theology! There is, incidentally, a very good article (within its limits) on 'Evangelicalism'. The balance of space between articles is generally sensible, but there are some oddities. Why does 'Arianism' get twice as much space as either 'Alexandrian' or 'Antiochene Theology'? It is absurd that 'Monoenergism' should get as much space as 'Trent, Council of' and far more than 'Monophysitism'! In my opinion, space is wasted on purely liturgical topics (Chrism, Insufflation) and on mere definitions of terms (Apostasy, Bibliolatry, Chiliasm, Dysteleology, Euhemerism, Koinonia) which belong rather in a theological glossary (most can be found in a good English dictionary). The article on 'Assurance' unpardonably fails to mention Puritanism, but confines itself to Methodism. The article on 'Calling' seems ignorant of the importance of this as a theological concept in Reformed theology. The article on 'Eschatology' manages to forget altogether the rehabilitation of future eschatology in modern systematic theology (Moltmann, Pannenberg, etc.). 'Nestorianism' tells us about Nestorius but not about the Nestorians. Cross-referencing between articles is inadequate and sometimes misleading (try following the reference to 'Symbolism' which is offered at the end of 'Language, Religious'!)

What one really looks for in this kind of reference work is reliable information and (much more difficult to write) really illuminating summaries of large topics. I found plenty of the former here, less of the latter than I should like, but perhaps as much as one can realistically expect. It is no surprise to find many articles which are accurate and adequate, but dull. It is a pleasure to find also some which really interest, stimulate and enlighten with more than mere information.

University of Manchester

RICHARD BAUCKHAM

### **GOD AS THE MYSTERY OF THE WORLD**

**E. Jünger** translated by Darrell L. Guder

first published in Germany in 1976

Eerdmans, USA 1983 414pp. £14.95

distributed by T. & T. Clark in the UK

ISBN 0 567 09345 X

This book is a translation of *Gott als Geheimnis der Welt*, which appeared in Germany in 1976 and was into its third, revised edition within a year. It is from that text that the book has been translated by Darrell L. Guder of Fuller Theological Seminary, who may be known to readers as the translator of Otto Weber's classic *Foundation of Dogmatics*.



Jüngel's latest work to be made available in English tackles the major subject of Theism in a world largely committed to a philosophical atheism, and argues that only the picture of a crucified God can recover the ground lost to doubt and unbelief in the past 150 years. There are clear affinities to the work of Barth and Moltmann, though the latter is scarcely mentioned in the book, but Jüngel pursues his characteristically independent line.

To the Anglo-Saxon reader, he appears first and foremost as a philosopher, and hardly as a theologian at all. This is especially surprising in that he repudiates the customary method of demonstrating the existence of God from external criteria, and chooses instead a method which starts from the principle of God's self-disclosure as the ultimate authentication of his being. One might imagine that this approach would lead to a theology of the Word, replete with biblical references and analyses, but in fact it does not. Jüngel debates with the Greek philosophical tradition and with the classical German philosophers, Kant and Hegel, but says little about the Bible until the last chapter, and then it is not altogether clear how that fits into the overall picture.

The book begins with a long discussion of the 'death of God', both as this has been affirmed by modern atheism and as it has appeared in Christian tradition, notably in Augustine, Luther and the early Lutherans. Jüngel argues that it is the God of metaphysics which has died, to be replaced by the God who comes to us in humanity—Jesus Christ. What Jüngel appears to be saying is that we can no longer speak of God in the language of *nature* (essence, existence etc.) but must see these classical formulations of the divine being as now superseded by personal categories. Our God is a God of faith, of relationship, of personhood; a being we cannot contemplate but must encounter. Jüngel recognizes that the classical Christian tradition has also had its apophatic emphasis, and he deals with this at some length. He rejects it, largely because of the doctrine of justification, which to him is proof that ultimately God must be spoken of in positive terms, not merely in negative ones.

Much of what Jüngel is saying here is certainly true and needs to be said, though it is hardly new. He himself appeals to the spiritual tradition of Luther, though surprisingly he says little about Calvin, who actually holds a doctrine of God very similar to Jüngel's at this point, and who expressed himself with much greater clarity. Yet it must be said too that Jüngel's zeal to be rid of metaphysics would not have appealed to Calvin or to Luther, and it is here that the divide between him and classical orthodoxy lies.

It comes across most clearly in the last section, on the humanity of God. Jüngel states most forcefully that God is Love, and that this love is fully manifested in Jesus Christ, the man for others. The English reader is reminded of John Robinson's Christology, with its latent docetism (Christ empties himself fully in order to let God act through him), though this is not quite what Jüngel says in the end. Rather he maintains the orthodox position that Jesus' person is divine; otherwise he is inexplicable. But although one can certainly agree that God became man in Jesus Christ, there is a world of difference between that and a belief in the 'humanity of God', which for Jüngel is an ontological reality which defines God's being to an extent which the classical tradition would certainly have repudiated.

It seems in fact that Jüngel, like much modern German theology of a conservative type, has responded to the challenge of atheism by what is in

fact a kind of Christomonism, which leaves no room for God above and beyond, as well as on, the cross. His Christology is very moving and impressive, but it somehow seems to lack a deeper foundation which it needs to give it its true value for man.

Having said that, it must be remembered that the book is full of penetrating and valuable insights. The only difficulty is the style in which these are presented. The translator has tried to render his subject as faithfully as possible, and he has succeeded brilliantly—alas! Philosophical German is difficult at the best of times, but in this book it reaches levels which are a hindrance to enjoyment and will undoubtedly put many readers off before they begin. As a sample, try this on page 155:

To clarify this, we refer to the basic character of the singular self-disclosure of God as *address*. The fact that man is *addressed by God* makes him a fundamentally *addressable being*.

This is a clarification? The student of the Bible might prefer to say the same thing in the words of Isaiah 43:1—

Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

What a pity that Professor Jüngel does not have greater recourse to the Scriptures, which so often say in a nutshell what he is trying to express in the convolutions of theological gobbledygook.

Oak Hill College, London N14

GERALD BRAY

### **ON BEING HUMAN: Essays in Theological Anthropology**

**Ray S. Anderson**

Eerdmans, USA 1982 234 pp. £8.10  
distributed by Paternoster Press in the UK

ISBN 0 8028 1926 5

This is a book which I believe will become a classic on theological anthropology. If it does not, I shall be disappointed, because it is one of the most comprehensive, penetrating and interesting books on the doctrine of man that I have ever read.

Such, indeed, is the rich variety of the book that it is difficult to give a succinct outline of Dr Anderson's argument. In thirteen chapters, the author takes us through the doctrine: starting from our creaturely origins, on to such aspects as spirituality, sexuality and death, and culminating in three superb chapters on theological, liturgical and pastoral implications. For my money, the chapter on human sexuality is the outstanding section—it really is a brilliant and convincing presentation of the writer's thought on that subject.

But such a rave review must not be interpreted as complete acceptance of Dr Anderson's approach, or his theology. The author is writing from within the Reformed tradition and, in particular, is influenced by Karl Barth, who is quoted more extensively than any other writer. This has influenced his style so considerably that the text is sprinkled liberally with the theological language we have come to associate with such theologians as Barth, Berkouwer and Bavinck. Another mild caveat is that nowhere is there an examination of the historicity of Genesis 1–3. It is for Dr Anderson such an important theological paradigm that this omission is surprising.

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Nevertheless, this is an extremely rich book, showing clear evidence of much study and reflection on a crucial subject. But Dr Anderson is no ivory-tower theologian; he draws widely from pastoral experience and the book is the better for the way he has blended together academic theology with pastoral insights. In short, this book is worthy of a large circulation and I commend it with the greatest of pleasure.

Trinity College, Bristol

GEORGE CAREY

### **ON CHRISTIAN TRUTH: For Those Who Really Want to Know**

**Harry Blamires**

SPCK 1983 133pp. £1.75

ISBN 0 281 04073 7

This new book by Harry Blamires aims 'to give a lively account of Christian teaching' and to do so without becoming technical theologically even while it faces some of the 'objections which modern sceptics make to that teaching'. It is a mixture of explanation, defence and justification of Christian beliefs.

As always, Mr Blamires writes with clarity, pungency and a rich and interesting style. He does avoid being theologically technical. His thirty short chapters in this book are all very readable, and they are full of a great variety of good analogies and illustrations. The book is never dull, and it does look in a highly intelligent way at some of the difficulties of Christian belief. Thankfully, he does not become bogged down in questions of biblical criticism, nor does he advertise the latest scholarly heresies as some other books of this kind do. His position is that of an orthodox high churchman, though his view of the church and sacraments appears only incidentally. There is, therefore, very little to offend the orthodox evangelical and much with which he will agree.

Nevertheless I do not think I shall lend it to my friends, for several reasons. In his earlier book, *The Christian Mind*, Blamires defines the Christian mind as 'a set of notions and attitudes'. That describes very well his view of being a Christian believer. The 'set of notions' concept of Christianity runs through the book. The first chapter on 'Faith' does describe 'trust' as its 'most crucial aspect', but such trust is not in any high degree to be hoped for from the beginner. 'Trust' here is not particularly trust in Christ. There is also in this book no clear indication of the meaning of the cross, although it is mentioned as the basis, in an undefined way, of our forgiveness. The chapter on the crucifixion hardly deals with the doctrine of the atonement at all. The chapter on original sin does say that 'all sin is disobedience to God', but this remains a notion rather than a ground of personal guilt. The early Christians are said to have 'preached the resurrection', as 'the great new truth', but it is the idea of our resurrection, and not the resurrection of Christ, that he seems to mean here. There is hardly any direct quotation of biblical verses or phrases as if the Bible was authoritative.

In short then, this is a book from which the discerning reader may well pick some good analogies and illustrations, but which in its overall impact is disappointing. It is not an evangelical book and lacks the kind of emphases

that an evangelical would hope for. Presumably the author would not expect to write that kind of book. It does, however, avoid sowing doubts and unnecessary problems, as some other recent books with similar aims seem to do. It may be that some readers who would not read Michael Green or John Stott would be willing to read this. Nevertheless, one is bound to feel that C.S. Lewis, whom Blamires so much admires, would be far better for that purpose.

Leicester

O.R. BARCLAY

### **CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY TODAY** Stephen Sykes

first published in 1971

Mowbray 1983 (revised) 153 pp. £3.25

ISBN 0 264 66979 7

This book was commissioned for the benefit of the man in the street who wants to know what the academic theologians are up to. The first chapter gives a lucid exposition of liberalism in theology and shows how much difference the Enlightenment has made to theological thought—it has destroyed belief in any infallible authority for the content of theology, so that Christian theology can no longer supply an interpretative framework for reality. Chapter 2 shows the need for conservatism if any content is to be retained for the concept of Christianity—there must be some continuity with ‘the whole event of Jesus Christ’. Critical study, however, shows that this means pluriformity, not unity, of belief. Chapter 3 tells us that when we try to determine norms for the content of Christianity, there are no very satisfactory alternatives to the traditional appeals to the final authority of Scripture or church, but declares that, since we have only had 200 years of trying, we must go on trying and resist the temptation to over-simplify. Chapter 4 deals with some objections to Christianity and points to Karl Barth as a key figure in showing the way ahead.

Up to this point the basic argument is clear, but thereafter it becomes strangely difficult to follow. It is one liberal theologian’s honest, even laboured, attempt to be true to his liberal principles and to retain a Christianity that has some roots in the unparalleled self-disclosure of God in Jesus. In this respect it is somewhat misleading to call the book *Christian Theology Today*, since it does not even consider the possibility that the Enlightenment may be wrong and that some form of infallible authority may in fact exist. There are certainly many able theologians who think this is so. One cannot help being suspicious when a theologian who shows himself capable of lucid writing lapses into obscurity; it suggests that there is something wrong with the case that he is trying to expound. Christian theology will serve the church today only if it can get back to that degree of God-given simplicity which we find in the New Testament.

Oxford

JOHN WENHAM

**THE FIRST CHRISTMAS: What Really Happened?**

128 pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 264 66975 4

**THE MIRACLES OF JESUS: What Really Happened?**

126 pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 264 66971 1

**THE FIRST EASTER: What Really Happened?**

119 pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 264 66976 2

All three written by **H.J. Richards** and published by Mowbray 1983

Before I read these books, I had a sneaking suspicion that they were unlikely in fact to be about what their titles state. For in the present theological climate it is unfashionable to probe the historical facts that underlie Christmas, Easter and the miracles of Jesus—rather, it is the theological meaning of these stories that matters. Sadly, my suspicion was correct. These three books show only minimal interest in the question of ‘what really happened’. When the question is raised, it is done so that it may be dismissed as being not only unanswerable but also not worth answering anyway. Since Richards’ concern is not ‘What really happened?’ but ‘What does it really mean?’, I wish he could indicate as much in his titles.

That said, these three books, all similar in style and approach, are well written. Richards self-confessedly writes as a popularizer of modern theological scholarship, with a concern to remove what he considers unnecessary obstacles that keep some people from faith. But although there is much of value for a theological understanding of the gospels, I could not recommend these books without substantial reservations.

First, Richards’ exegesis is sometimes far-fetched. For example, in his account of the feeding of the five thousand, does John really intend his readers to see Jesus as ‘the new Moses, the new Joshua, the new David, the new Elisha’? When I reread the story, using Richards’ analysis heuristically, I remain unpersuaded.

Secondly, Richards gives a misleading picture of the state of NT scholarship. He formally acknowledges diversity of opinion among scholars, but in fact presents his case—that miracles do not happen and that the historicity of the Easter tradition is unimportant—as though this were universally agreed. It is a one-sided and oversimplified picture that emerges.

Most seriously, Richards’ fundamental weakness is a limited concept of divine action. A twin appeal to modern scientific understanding and the implications of the incarnation, leads to the unwarranted conclusion that God works *only* in natural and earthly ways. Such an appeal is obviously at its weakest in discussion of the resurrection. ‘Jesus never recovers from his death. His resurrection is nothing other than that death seen with the eyes of God. Jesus died into that mystery that we call God... He lives on... wherever God is, which is everywhere.’ Moreover, Richards shows no real understanding of the traditional view of the resurrection. Those who believe that the tomb was empty and that the body of the risen Jesus, though glorified, was yet continuous with his earthly body, will be irritated with Richards’ insistence that this means belief in a ‘revivified corpse’.

Richards writes not only with clarity but also with real pastoral concern to remove obstacles from the way of Christian faith. It is sad that the faith he

commends is so dilute a version of the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Knowle Parish Church, West Midlands

R. W. L. MOBERLY

**THE SHADOW OF CALVARY** Hugh Martin

first published in 1875

Banner of Truth Trust 1983 298 pp. £2.45

ISBN 0 85151 373 5

Writing an appraisal of Dr Hugh Martin, in his work *Scottish Theology* (1946), John McLeod complained that *The Shadow of Calvary*, 'a volume of very profound character', was not easy to get hold of. Nearly forty years later, the Banner of Truth Trust has remedied this, and at a very suitable moment. 1984 is both the year of Oberammergau and the York Mystery Plays, and very many Christians will be finding their way to one or the other. This Scottish masterpiece, a meditation on the atonement, will make an excellent companion for them, as it brings the full impact of related biblical doctrine to focus on the events surrounding the crucifixion in a most profound and searching way. The reader is shown how the sovereignty of divine providence is worked out moment by moment from Gethsemane to Calvary. He is brought to reassess the meaning and purpose of prayer. And he finds himself under the same scrutiny and examination which every person experienced who came into contact with Christ in those last moments. For instance, Christians in responsible positions will do well to ponder over chapter 9, 'The Character of the Judge', which becomes an essay on expediency and principle:

The fear of man and the fear of God in their opposite requirements come into collision: and the fear of God is set aside. Principle and expediency demand opposite courses of action; and principle is thrown over board.

That is the way of the world—is it not so often also the way of the church?

The book does not make easy reading; it needs unpacking in short meditative sessions. Although firm in the Calvinist tradition, Dr Martin does not grip the reader like a Thomas Goodwin, nor does he have the sparkle of a Thomas Brooks. He writes with a certain sombreness from which the Bonars, or C.H. Spurgeon—an admirer of his—would have been free, despite the seriousness of the subject. Always, however, does Martin remind the reader that in this life he stands on the threshold of eternal condemnation or salvation, and that only by total commitment to Christ can he be sure of the latter. So he sets out to demonstrate just what total commitment involves.

St Andrew's Vicarage, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire

PETER COOK

**VISIONARIES AND THEIR APOCALYPSES** edited Paul D. Hanson

Issues in Religion and Theology Volume 2

Fortress Press, USA 1983

SPCK 1983 162 pp. £3.50

ISBN 0 8006 1765 7

ISBN 0 281 04057 8

This volume belongs to a new series (the cover and title pages show confusion as to whether it is volume 2 or volume 4 in the series) which aims to present in

each volume a collection of previously published studies on a major issue. The series is likely to be of most value as student textbooks for use in higher education, and the present volume, on ancient Jewish and Christian apocalyptic, is well-suited to that purpose. There is an introductory essay by the editor, which comments interestingly on the current appeal of ancient apocalyptic and on the present state of apocalyptic studies, but rather uninspiringly on the future of apocalyptic studies. Eight essays, written between 1970 and 1980, are included, well illustrating the renaissance of apocalyptic studies during that decade. A variety of approaches to Jewish apocalyptic are usefully juxtaposed, and some of the leading scholars in the field (K. Koch, P. D. Hanson, J. J. Collins, M. E. Stone) are represented. Unfortunately, the two essays on NT apocalyptic are disappointing choices. Perrin's survey seems to me reasonably sound (though it perpetuates some out-dated clichés about apocalyptic) but pedestrian: it breaks no new ground and opens up no new perspectives, as the other essays do. Gager's piece on the book of Revelation was perhaps worth including because it is provocative, but in my opinion it is also very largely mistaken. It is a pity that the volume was completed too late to include reference to, or extract from, C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, which now offers an important fresh approach to both Jewish and Christian apocalyptic.

University of Manchester

RICHARD BAUCKHAM

### **THE POWER OF THE POWERLESS**

**Jürgen Moltmann** translated **Margaret Kohl**

first published in Germany in 1981

SCM Press 1983 166 pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 334 01278 3

Collections of sermons by doyens of the theological world form a rather curious literary genre, which is now largely extinct in England. In Germany the tradition survives, often in one of two forms. Such collections can be what they set out to be: books of sermons proper, attempts to let the Bible come alive to the people of God in a particular situation—here one immediately thinks of the published sermons of Bultmann, Barth and Thielicke. Or they can be a kind of 'soft' theology, not so much expositions of Scripture as popular accounts of a particular theological viewpoint in which the biblical text is pressed into service. This book by Moltmann falls into the latter category, and that is at once its strength and its weakness. As an easily assimilated account of some of the main themes of Moltmann's theology, it could hardly be bettered; but as a sermon collection it leaves much to be desired.

My dissatisfaction lay partly with the rather formal rhetoric of most of the pieces. Much of the application is generalized and abstract, and—like so much 'public occasion' preaching—these sermons, mostly from the Tübingen *Stiftskirche*, have an uncertain grasp on the details of the human scene. Partly I became increasingly dissatisfied with the somewhat undifferentiated account of the message of the Bible. A small number of themes—liberation, powerlessness, the poor and oppressed, hope—were treated with such consistency that the content of the biblical witness was made bland and

monochrome, and a good deal less surprising than it in fact is. As I read, I could not shrug off the suspicion that Moltmann was too familiar with what he perceived to be the Bible's themes, and so unattentive to the spread of its concerns and challenges. This is bound up with the rather naive exegesis and the easy routes taken to move from the text to the situation of the hearers.

There are memorable parts to the book, notably the sermons for Advent and that on the transfiguration. But in general I found it a thin collection, unlikely to offer a substantial aid to preaching or spiritual reflection. At his best and most serious, Moltmann can write with energy and conviction. This is not by any means his best.

St John's College, Durham

JOHN WEBSTER

**THE GODLY ORDER: Texts and Studies Relating to the Book of Common Prayer** **Geoffrey Cuming**

Alcuin Club/SPCK 1983 200 pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 281 04089 1

The famous description of the *Book of Common Prayer* in the 1551 Act of Uniformity as 'a very godly order ... agreeable to the word of God and the primitive Church' gives its title to this valuable collection of papers by that veteran student of Anglican liturgical history, Geoffrey Cuming. There are ten papers in all, and most of them are published here for the first time. Nine relate to the period up to 1662, but the last stands alone as being a study of the various stages in the preparation of the consecration prayer of the deposited Prayer Book of 1928. Two of the other papers are a comparison of texts in parallel columns, showing the sources of the 1549 consecration prayer and the revisions of the consecration prayer from 1549 to 1662. The remaining ones deal with Cranmer's earliest draft revisions of the daily offices, the source material in the Primers, Cranmer's treatment of some of his sources, Hermann's *Consultation* and its influence, John Cosin, the Savoy Conference and the work of Convocation in preparing the 1662 revision. Most of the material in this book is strictly factual, and none the worse for being so, but some of the papers are rather brief in consequence, and could serve as texts for a very long commentary.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**THE EVANGELICAL AND OXFORD MOVEMENTS**

edited **Elisabeth Jay**

CUP 1983 219 pp. hardcover £18.50  
paperback £6.95

ISBN 0 521 24403 X  
ISBN 0 521 28669 7

This volume, in the series Cambridge English Prose Texts, is of quite an unusual character. The primary concern of the work is literary—the nature of early Victorian prose style. Yet the authors from whom the extracts are taken are not primarily known for the literary quality of their work, good though that sometimes was. It was their importance as protagonists in the religious controversies of the nineteenth century that brought their names before the



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public, and it is for the continuing value of their writings as learned or popular theology that they are mainly of interest today. In some cases, as the editor concedes, this continuing value is not high, but she wished to make her selection reasonably representative of the period on which she concentrates, which is the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The evangelicals included are Charles Simeon, Francis Close and William Goode, and the Tractarians included are Isaac Williams, John Keble, J. H. Newman and E. B. Pusey. Rather curiously, one militant Nonconformist, Edward Miall, is also included. There is a brief introduction to each author, and a general introduction, and these deal with religious as well as literary matters. There are also notes. From a religious point of view, the statements of the editor are sometimes open to question, but as a teacher of English her knowledge of religious matters must be remarkably good.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

### **CHURCHES AND ROYAL PATRONAGE: A History of the Royal Patronage in the Churches of England and Wales**

**W. A. Salmon**

D. Brown, Glamorgan 1983 84 pp. £7.50

ISBN 0 905928 24 5

Colonel Salmon, who for fourteen years after his retirement from the army looked after the patronage of parishes in the Queen's and Lord Chancellor's gift, has written a book which must be almost unique. He is an enthusiast for his subject, and anyone who wants information on the subject will certainly need to consult his book, which is attractively produced and well illustrated. It does not, however, except in passing, deal with the royal patronage of bishoprics, deaneries and crown canonries, which is nearer the centre of the church's contemporary attention. Sometimes the author is less precise than one would wish. He tells us what is current practice in the patronage of crown livings, but he does not detail the special features of legislation on the matter. As a church historian, he writes in a slightly amateurish manner, and (what must have been rather a serious drawback in his administration of patronage) he shows no appreciation of differences of churchmanship. For his part, he has no doubt about the Protestantism of the Church of England, he condemns Gregory the Great as an imperialist, and he defends Henry VIII as a patriot. He shows a refreshing independence of mind, but not everyone would see it as entirely judicious.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

### **WITHIN THE ROCK OF AGES: The Life and Work of Augustus Montague Toplady** **George Lawton**

James Clarke 1983 249 pp. £12.95

ISBN 0 227 67836 2

How could such a man write such a hymn? That is the recurring question: the hymn, an evangelical masterpiece; the man, notorious to Wesley-lovers for his obsessive vilification of the great evangelist.

Many are content to love the hymn and forget the man; '... a biographer he has not found', claims Dr Lawton, and proceeds to fill the gap with a wealth of careful detail which puts flesh and blood on one who remains hard to love, but may now be easier to understand.

Psychology apart—and Wesley, too, is a prime subject for that—Toplady was above all a Church of England man. Not without reason, he was convinced that the established church was unmistakably Calvinist; the Arminian Wesley inevitably appeared as the apostate churchman, the betrayer of Anglicanism. But both men pursued their doctrines to lengths of logic where Scripture did not lead them.

In his fatal lack of self-knowledge, Toplady was not alone, though some less brilliant but wiser minds managed their disputes without the language of the zoo and the lavatory. George Lawton, the philologist, is fascinated by Toplady's vocabulary, and an appendix deals with some gaps in the Oxford Dictionary.

He discusses the hymns in three separate chapters. 'Rock of ages' did not drop from the sky, and while the biographer feels that others have said enough about its matter, his own treatment of its origins is the best I have seen anywhere.

Toplady the editor was also remarkable. For his own Orange Street Chapel hymn book, 'He took the deepest utterances of men good and great, and turned them upside down and inside out.... he so manipulated their language as to make them say what they never meant, and what they did not believe.' All this is finely documented.

The writer corrects many past errors; sometimes more of his homework shows than is strictly necessary, and chapter one, 'An Ill Name', might have been better as an introduction. He touches lightly on Toplady's chronic illnesses and triumphant dying; he warms to his main subject while finding some of the evidence 'chilling'. On one lapse he makes no judgement; how could someone who preached to thousands with such fervent conviction fail to visit the condemned prisoner who asked for Toplady's ministry in his cell?

The enigma, after all, remains. Some of this man's accusers have been far wide of the mark; mercifully, we are not called to judge him. But this discerning book opens equally the richness of the divine treasure and the earthiness of its human vessel.

Limehouse Rectory, London E14

CHRISTOPHER IDLE

**THE UNUTTERABLE BEAUTY G. A. Studdert Kennedy**

first published in 1927

Mowbray 1983 158 pp. £3.25

ISBN 0 264 66980 0

The Revd Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy served as a chaplain in the first world war:

I remember how I reached them,  
Dripping wet and all forlorn  
In the dim and dreary twilight  
Of a weeping summer morn.  
All that week I'd buried brothers

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In one bitter battle slain:  
In one grave I laid two hundred.  
God! What sorrow and what rain!

In his poetry he wrestled vividly with the stark horror of violent death, God's presence (or absence) in suffering, faith, courage and loyalty, birth, love. Perhaps one of the reasons he was so much loved by the soldiers was his abhorrence of cant and platitudes about religion.

Most of the poems in this book bear direct reference to the searing sorrow of wartime experiences, and the relevance of Calvary. But his thinking ranged much more widely than that: '... war is kinder than a godless peace...' Some of the other poems about creation and love reveal a gentle sensitivity which adds poignancy to the pain of the rest.

This poet's graphic style carried me along into the desperate scenes he described, into the mammoth Christian and philosophical problems with which he was confronted, and into the ethos of war that, sixty years later, would be the same—and different.

Chorleywood, Herts

MYRA CHAVE-JONES

### **EVANGELISTIC SERMONS AT ABERAVON**

Banner of Truth Trust 1983 294 pp. £3.95

**D. M. Lloyd-Jones**

ISBN 0 85151 362 X

This excellently produced book contains twenty-one evangelistic sermons all preached on texts from the four gospels. The special interest of this collection depends upon some knowledge of the story behind them, told so wonderfully well by Iain Murray in *D. M. Lloyd-Jones, The First Forty Years* (Banner of Truth 1982). A young 'Barts' physician in his twenties, greatly gifted, already with a seat in Harley Street, recognized as fit to progress to the top of his profession, leaves it all (not quite true since, when needed, he seemingly remains all his life a better diagnostician than anyone else around) to take up the charge of a Mission Church in a difficult working-class district in Aberavon, next to Port Talbot. The year was 1927, with congregations in South Wales diminishing and the Depression just entering a most serious stage. The new pastor had preached hardly half a dozen sermons in his life, and had no formal theological training. From the start of his work, which was to result in a large, close knit, and thriving church, Dr Lloyd-Jones preached evangelistically every Sunday evening, writing out these early sermons in full. After his death, the fortunate discovery of them in a box in the attic led to their publication.

No written sermons, designed only to be spoken, can reproduce the original occasion when God drew near. But these are well worth reading as early examples of that 'logic-on-fire' which the author desired and commended to others. To me, their abiding value lies in the intense seriousness of the preacher. They are worlds apart from the triviality of so much evangelism today. May their publication prove to be another sign of a growing desire for a different preaching and better way.

St Helen's Rectory, London EC3

R. C. LUCAS

**MARTYRS OF OUR TIME William Purcell**

Mowbray 1983 161 pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 264 66702 6

There have been more martyrs in the twentieth than in any previous century. Canon Purcell, well known for his biography of Archbishop Fisher, selects fifteen examples. All suffered since 1945, except for Charles de Foucauld and John and Betty Stam. These have been written up fairly frequently and perhaps form the only weak chapters in the book.

The other thirteen studies are vivid: closely researched, thoughtfully described, with a well-written blend of narrative and analysis. Some are well known, such as Bonhoeffer. As the Dean of St Paul's points out in his foreword, Bonhoeffer was executed for his part in the plot to kill Hitler, but his testimony from prison made his fervent faith (whatever his theological questionings) ring round the world in praise to Christ.

Particularly moving is the chapter on Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish priest who gave his life for another man in Auschwitz. I have seen his shrine in Katowice Cathedral and the place where he suffered, but I never knew about the terrible way in which he died. The man he saved was present, aged 82, at Kolbe's canonization in 1982. Another moving chapter concerns Bishop Wilson of Singapore, for Canon Purcell was with him when he returned to the scene of his torture. In the early church, 'red martyrs' were those killed, 'white martyrs' those who, like Wilson, glorified Christ but lived.

Canon Purcell includes little-known men such as two missionaries in New Guinea, killed by Japanese soldiers, and the thirteen Pentacostalists butchered by terrorists in Rhodesia; and famous, honoured names such as Archbishop Luwum, Amin's victim, and Romero, shot dead at mass as he spoke the words 'This is my blood shed for you'. No martyrs from the Soviet Union are included, to my regret. Also, though Steve Biko, beaten to death by police, has been incorporated into the roll by the South African bishops, he was not a believer, and therefore not a martyr in the early church sense of witness to Christ by life and blood.

Nevertheless, a book for every bookstall.

Rose Ash, Devon

JOHN POLLOCK

**WINDOWS ONTO GOD Robert Runcie**

SPCK 1983 232 pp. £6.95

ISBN 0 281 04076 1

There is a tendency for people in public life to declaim not what they believe to be true, but what they imagine will least upset those to whom they address themselves. Thus the 'middle ground' is well defended, acceptable pressure groups are placated, cosmetic formulae interpose to avoid principles obtruding, those with opinions from beyond the conventional wisdom of the current purveyors of ideas are dismissed as extremists of one sort or another. It is agreeable to discover, however, that the Archbishop of Canterbury's collection of addresses and sermons, while not free from those tendencies—for he is a man of the times—is not particularly characterized by them. The selection itself is a balanced one, arranged under three main heads: 'The Church', 'Responsibilities', and 'Aspects of Experience'. What is less clear is

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the need for the publication of the collection. For these addresses are not really 'Windows onto God', but insights into the thought and attitudes of Dr Runcie. The author himself, in the foreword, acknowledges that this is the case and explains why the addresses are reproduced. 'A newly appointed archbishop emerges from relative obscurity into the glare of media scrutiny', he writes. The book has been published so that those who would know the archbishop's mind on such matters as 'Synodical Government', 'Just and Unjust Wars', 'The Queen Mother', or 'Homosexuality', may here find them conveniently.

What emerges is a man who is extremely conscious of the historical dimension of Anglicanism—whose sense of the importance of the past does not exhaust itself in barren adhesion to traditionalism but is conveyed in an acute sense of discrimination about what is essential and what is ephemeral in received religious ideas and structures. More than many recent church leaders in England, he is aware of the wide contexts of Christianity, and especially of the importance of Orthodoxy. He perceives the dangers of the secularization of western Christianity, plainly regards Anglicanism as part of a greater Christian society while yet defending the utility of the 'via media', and contends for 'the ultimate priority of the spiritual over the social gospel for serious religion.'

Yet the book is also curiously tentative. There is not, as one would expect, a sense of observing the surface ripples of a deep pool, but rather an impression of puddles left after a fall of rain. There are rather frequent references to authorities, and evidences not so much of extensive reading and scholarship as of reliance upon research assistants. 'A modern archbishop', he writes, 'has to be quick to identify those who have more ample experience of particular problems'. The balance and historical judgement brought to bear upon the assembled data are clearly Dr Runcie's, however, and the result in a distinguished mixture of wisdom and expediency which should serve the church as well. His views are in the end conventional, and so are the people he most admires. These are actually listed in the television talk on 'The Cross', as Bonhoeffer, Archbishop Luwum, Mother Teresa, Solzhenitsyn, and Martin Luther King. There are no surprises here, as there are not elsewhere in the collection.

Peterhouse, Cambridge

EDWARD NORMAN

### **RUNCIE: The Making of an Archbishop Margaret Duggan**

Hodder & Stoughton 1983 238 pp. £9.95

ISBN 0 340 32340 X

There cannot be many archbishops of Canterbury who have been honoured with a biography after only three years in office. This account is written in the conviction that 'Robert Runcie is a very remarkable man, and is well on the way to becoming a great archbishop'. Its author is best known for her long journalistic association with the *Church Times*. She seems to be writing for a semi-popular readership, if one judges, for example, by the need she feels to explain the content of services of ordination and consecration. What she has produced is neither a eulogy nor a critical biography, and is perhaps best described as an admiring appreciation. It is an attractive portrayal of the man

who as principal of Cuddesdon and bishop of St Albans won widespread affection from students, colleagues and churchpeople at large. The grounds of this warm popular regard are not hard to identify. He is a truly charming person, splendid company, a wizard mimic, with a remarkably easy way with words, able to bestow such close, sympathetic attention on persons newly met that they have sometimes mistakenly concluded that he has initiated them into a lasting friendship. His verbal dexterity occasionally issues in convolution and blurring of meaning ('I remain to be convinced that any specific amendment has captured my support'), a weakness of the spokesman-diplomatist which Mrs Duggan has failed to note—surprisingly, for her own narrative is most readably lucid.

The archbishop is, moreover, a person who feels deeply in tune with the tradition of the Church of England as he understands it. His marked Catholic proclivity is here presented more as a matter of temperament, almost of romantic instinct, than of precise intellectual conviction. In mental outlook he is a pragmatic liberal. This may explain why there is little theology in this book, and also why, Mrs Duggan hints, he may be in the process of changing his mind about the desirability of ordaining women in the Church of England.

Among the significant experiences that stand out in this story are Runcie's years as an officer in the Scots Guards, during which the 'tyke from Liverpool' was transformed into a polished gentleman with 'a consciousness of upper-class tradition'. More, one senses, than the author acknowledges did this phase of life fashion the demeanour of the future bishop and archbishop. At Lambeth he has pulled off with with courage and aplomb some remarkable coups, from the release of the captive missionaries in Iran to the papal visit, and held the centre of the stage at an emotion-laden royal wedding and a fraught Falklands commemoration service. Thus thrust (as few archbishops) repeatedly before the public gaze, he has been exposed to enormous burdens and pressures, not least from Fleet Street, in which the author shows a strong and frequently critical interest. The modern primate, Mrs Duggan relentlessly insists, is a man ever in deep danger of being overwhelmed by the demands of his office. If Runcie has more than survived, it is as much because of his adeptness in handpicking a team of aides to relieve him of routine duties as because of his own skill in administration and sheer hard work.

Yet it is arguable that, on the national church front, Runcie has still to notch up achievements that challenge the distinction of his service at Cuddesdon and St Albans. In the latter diocese he could build on a strong if unimaginative foundation, but the condition of Cuddesdon was bleak enough to daunt any happily married believer in intellectual rigour. He and his wife immeasurably humanized and stimulated the mind and heart of Cuddesdon, and he was a visionary and energetic bishop of St Albans. (His energies, it seems, did not extend to mucking out a sty. He was a pig-owner rather than a pig-keeper.) In the end of the day, his tenure of the see of Canterbury will be judged on whether he succeeds in transposing to the national level a like flair for spearheading a renewed drive 'towards the conversion of England'. Triumphs in the international and ecumenical arena and a fine touch for state ceremonial occasions will be no substitute for this kind of spiritual leadership. From a vantage-point furth of England, it has seemed in recent

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months that the Roman episcopate bids fair to upstage the Anglican in responding to the needs and mood of the people of England. To this development Runcie may unwittingly have contributed in welcoming John Paul II.

Robert Runcie moved to Cuddesdon from Cambridge (largely through the efforts of Owen Chadwick, whose patronage was more than once significant in his career). As dean of Trinity Hall he had tutored theological students in early church history—among them the present writer, who now earns his living teaching the subject. The dean was persuaded to become principal of another college half-fearing that, if he stayed on at Cambridge, he risked ending up as 'a failed don'. Naturally this is not how I would assess his Cambridge days. If this is no impartial judgement, nor is Mrs Duggan's about the archbishop. The difference is that hers must remain provisional until several more years have passed.

New College, Edinburgh

D. F. WRIGHT

### **THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE: God's Promise and our Response**

The US bishops' pastoral letter on war and peace in the nuclear age

Catholic Truth Society 1983

SPCK 1983 94 pp. £1.50

ISBN 0 85183 540 6

ISBN 0 281 04085 8

In some ways, this is a most impressive document. Amidst the plethora of recent Christian writings and church statements on nuclear weapons, this has few rivals in its combination of biblical faith, respect for past and present tradition, and positive attitude towards the future: e.g., 'It is our belief in the risen Christ which sustains us in confronting the awesome challenge of the nuclear arms race' (p.94). While accepting that there is a valid place today for Christians willing to endorse only non-violent means of resistance, the letter remains rooted in the 'just war' tradition, and indeed provides an intelligent summary of its principles. However, pacifist and 'just war' traditions concur in seeing virtually all possible uses of nuclear weapons as morally inadmissible, since most military targets are close to civilian populations, thereby inviting violation of the 'just war' principles of proportion and non-combatant immunity. Nevertheless the Catholic bishops, in line with recent papal statements, believe that a 'strictly conditioned' policy of nuclear deterrence is acceptable, so long as this is seen only as a provisional stage on the road to disarmament on all sides. The letter's major emphasis is on encouraging such steps, advocating a willingness on each side to take unilateral initiatives in the hope of thereby furthering a multilateral process. The bishops' message to the church, meanwhile, includes timely emphases on educational programmes, reverence for life, prayer and penance.

For a person such as myself, who subscribes to the philosophy of neither Mrs Thatcher nor CND, this mediatory stance, attempting to witness to a dual moral duty *both* to prevent nuclear war from ever occurring *and* to preserve key values of justice, freedom and independence which the West holds dear, is a very attractive one. But I am well aware that a mediatory position is very difficult to sustain, and the letter is weak in thinking through the moral ambiguities inherent in this position. If nuclear weapons are

justified as a deterrent, but their actual use is (virtually) discounted as morally unjustifiable, their possession as deterrents amounts to a bluff. Clearly, however, no government can admit that the weapons are a bluff, because then they would not deter. In fact, if the possessors of political and military power in the West are never prepared to use nuclear weapons, they are also effectively practising deception on their electorates, who are under the impression that they do hold such a conditional intention. More likely is that this impression is correct, in which case the fact that the Catholic bishops and those of us who share their scruples would refrain from use of nuclear weapons in the event of a crisis, is relatively irrelevant! We may make important moral distinction between *possession* and *use*, but what comfort is that if these are not shared by those whose views matter decisively?

My feeling is that the bishops might have renounced nuclear deterrence altogether but for fear of going against official papal and conciliar statements, which are cited frequently. Their authentic voice seems to be represented by the pleas for disarmament, but here they display lack of realism at two key points. First, there is a failure to appreciate the extremely delicate nature of the disarmament task. Ironically, a situation like the present one, where both East and West are ridiculously over-armed, is probably more stable than one where each side has many fewer weapons, but in that situation possesses first-strike capability. Secondly, the expressed hope that a significant reduction in the numbers of conventional weapons would go hand in hand with a diminishing reliance on nuclear deterrence is surely naive.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, I welcome the publication of this letter in this country. It would be nice to think our own bishops could co-operate on something similar from time to time!

St John's College, Durham

RICHARD HIGGINSON

### **HEALING THE HURT MIND: Christian Faith and Psychiatry**

**M. David Enoch**

Hodder & Stoughton 1983 190 pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 340 33897 0

Dr Enoch is a consultant psychiatrist at the Royal Liverpool Hospital and the University of Liverpool. In this book he is addressing the general public. His aims in writing it are to counter the ignorance, fear and prejudice associated with mental illness, and to bridge the gap between Christianity and psychiatry. He admits that there are still a great number of Christian people who find emotional or mental illness unacceptable, as though the sufferers were some kind of inferior person.

In part I, Dr Enoch describes clearly the common forms of neurosis, psychosis and personality disorder, outlines the drugs which may be used in counteracting these states, and discusses the attitude of Christians who have reservations about using drugs. In part II, he considers other therapeutic measures. In referring to behaviour therapy, he goes into detail about some forms of mainstream psychotherapy, tracing its development since Freud.

Having emphasized the effectiveness of modern diagnostic and therapeutic techniques in psychiatry, Dr Enoch admits readily that it has its limitations.



The final part III deals at greater length with man's spiritual needs, which are beyond the scope of, though not unrelated to, psychiatric practice. Having moved along the borderland of faith and psychiatry, Dr Enoch has tried both to clarify some of the problem areas and increase mutual respect.

He is concerned that the church should take a much more active part in positive caring for people who are mentally and emotionally sick. He describes a teaching programme he set up for lay people in his own church in order to improve the standards of care. He encourages other churches to emulate this, while issuing a necessary warning about the dangers of a lay counselling service which does not have access to medical cover.

In this connection Dr Enoch refers to the Westminster Fellowship and the Care and Counselling Society. Does he mean the Westminster Pastoral Foundation or the Richmond Fellowship, and is he referring to Care and Counsel? He also refers to J. Adamson and her book *Competent to Counsel*. (Dear, dear, Dr Enoch! Where have you been all this time?) Mistakes like this are miniscule in themselves, but important in this context because they look like inadequate background work.

The book concludes with two appendices (the first about history-taking and the second about basic principles of lay counselling), a glossary, a list of books for further reading, and an index. It should be helpful for fellowship group leaders or others in a pastoral role. Its slightly 'consultoid' flavour in parts is far outweighed by its factual usefulness.

Chorleywood, Herts

MYRA CHAVE-JONES

## **TWO DANCERS IN THE DESERT: The Life of Charles Foucauld**

**Charles Lepetit**

Dove Communications, Australia 1983

ISBN 0 88924 261 7

Veritas Publications, Dublin 1983

ISBN 0 86217 904 X

Burns & Oates 1983 118 pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 86012 118 6

The two dancers of the title are God and Charles de Foucauld, and the book provides a selective biography illustrated from de Foucauld's writings. In the foreword, Carlo Carretto writes, 'The central image which the author uses to grasp the essential mystery of Charles de Foucauld, is that of an invisible dance of two main characters on the road of life. They are man and God, two partners who are always in search of one another.'

De Foucauld will always remain something of an enigma, even though succeeding generations of this century have formed the companies of 'Little Brothers' and 'Little Sisters' for which he had the vision but whose founding he never achieved. Charles Lepetit is frank in his presentation of the contradictions in his subject's character: the desert mystic who had to live among his beloved Touareg; the aristocrat who yearned for (and found) the simple life; the missionary who, so far as he knew, never brought another person to the feet of Christ; and the patriotic Frenchman and colonialist who called his house the fraternity because 'I chose this name to show that I am their brother, and the brother of all human beings without exception or distinction.'

This book provides a useful introduction to a character who has greatly influenced the contemporary Roman Catholic church and whose spirituality is shown (pp.58–64) to be in the traditions of Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and Thérèse of Lisieux. Its very human presentation (quoting from de Foucauld's own writings to show his 'warts and all') makes it a readable and thought-provoking addition to the range of Christian biography.

Oak Hill College, London N14

DAVID H. WHEATON

**GROWING INTO GOD'S FAMILY** Donald Bridge and David Phipers  
 Hodder & Stoughton 1983 157 pp. £1.25 ISBN 0 340 34250 1

Donald Bridge and David Phipers have become quite an effective combination. We have expected balanced and eirenic contributions from them, and are not normally disappointed. This latest book has many good things about it. The style is easy, and the family theme which runs through it is unobtrusive and effective. There are some lively illustrations, with a particularly helpful chapter on the important theme of holiness. Many ministers would find the book a useful tool, and indeed would benefit from some of the suggestions in it; for example, the idea of a special renewal of vows by those who have been baptized and confirmed before there was any deep personal commitment to our Lord. Some of us have found that suggestion a very fruitful one. It has to be said, however, that there is a strange obsession by the authors on speaking in tongues. The theme may not seem to take up much space in the book, but there are several places where it occurs very controversially.

Many of us would seriously doubt that Paul was primarily thinking of speaking in tongues when he challenged us to 'pray in the Spirit' or 'pray without ceasing'. It is very possible to interpret those phrases without any reference to tongues. Even more dangerous is the encouragement to seek after that gift and almost to practise the mechanics of it. There is an unhelpful suggestion to young Christians to seek some special blessing at renewal meetings when things may be dry spiritually. Many of us have found that in fact the reverse can be true, and the rushing for experiences can actually be counter-productive.

There are one or two other things which jar in places. One or two of the illustrations verge on the melodramatic, and it is important to encourage young Christians to realize that much of the Christian way is very ordinary and yet at the same time very joyful. These blemishes rather mar the book, particularly as one intended for the young Christian. A mature Christian could benefit greatly from so much of the teaching and be able to take the rest in his stride. Some ministers might be less than enthusiastic in commending the book, because of these issues. In a sense this would be a pity because of the very real value of so much contained in it. Perhaps the reviewer makes mountains out of what would be molehills to the average reader!

Christ Church Vicarage, Fulwood, Sheffield

PHILIP HACKING

Churchman

**THE CATHOLIC RELIGION: A Manual of Instruction for Members of the Anglican Communion** **Vernon Staley** revised Brian Goodchild  
first published 1893  
Mowbray 1983 221 pp. £2.95 ISBN 0 264 66944 4

The Bishop of Leicester's qualified commendation of Staley's reprinted work of a hundred years ago is most apt: 'We are assured that he was too wise to believe that he could define the whole faith in a single volume.'

*The Catholic Religion* was written originally as a manual of instruction for Anglo-Catholic laity, and it contains little or nothing that a reasonably well-taught Catholic or evangelical churchman of today would not know. It is in line with so many of the early Tractarians' attempts to reconcile the Prayer Book and Articles with so-called catholic doctrines of apostolical succession by the laying-on of hands, no church without a bishop, the Bible is the child of the church, and the heavy emphasis on the sacraments being the divinely appointed means through which the mysteries of the incarnation and atonement are applied to our souls. Baptismal regeneration and 'real presence' are, of course, insisted upon. And yet in spite of all this, no concessions are made to Rome other than a general regret for the broken body. Somewhat naively, the disunity of the 'One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church' (meaning Rome, the Orthodox, the Old Catholic and the Church of England!) is compared to a broken mirror, each piece reflecting divine truth but all ragged at the edge! The validity of Anglican Orders is strongly defended.

In fact, the chapter on the causes of the Reformation is very blunt about the corrupt state of the church, which comes as a little of a surprise to a modern reader who expected to find a gloss. It certainly dispels the romantic image many Anglo-Catholics have of the pre-Reformation church.

Altogether it is a simple book which breathes an air of genuine spirituality yet hardly makes out a case for a Catholic interpretation of the faith of the Reformed Church of England.

My final impression is that much of what the book sets out to do has been overtaken by Vatican II as well as by the advance of liberal theology among Anglo-Catholics themselves. In other words, it is dated.

Cheadle Rectory, Cheshire

JAMES AYRE

**REFLECTIONS ON THE READINGS FOR HOLY COMMUNION** in the  
**Alternative Service Book 1980** **Dennis Page**  
Mowbray 1983 151 pp. £3.95 ISBN 0 264 66935 5

These reflections by the Bishop of Lancaster aim to 'help readers of worship to attend to what is said in the passages'. They are neither sermon notes nor daily reading notes, but are offered to 'encourage clergy to take greater care in study of the scriptures'.

Each passage is given ten to fifteen lines of comment. The text is not printed, but the versions reflected on are those printed in the *ASB*. Schedule a) passages for Sundays are used; Schedules b), c) and d) of the *ASB* are not

treated. The Collect and 'Theme of the Day' are ignored; this is a pity because to very many worshippers these are no more than words heard in the distance, not personally discovered, and so carrying less conviction and prompting less response than could be.

So what is a reflection? That depends who looks in the mirror—and who looks over one's shoulder. The author acknowledges the stimulus of von Rad, Westermann, Skinner, Jeremias and Barrett. If the resulting reflections do not dazzle, the mirror is neither cracked nor distorting. The OT reflections come with such phrases as 'dreams or aspirations', 'a continual reinterpretation'; those on the NT with 'difficult to resist the thought that in this passage we have some true reflection of the personal integrity and authenticity of Jesus', 'cluster of legendary stories', 'this beautiful story was written to help faith', 'the resurrection stories in the gospels are proclamation rather than history'. Yet from these theological limits surprisingly helpful comments come. If I wanted to give detailed exposition of the readings, I would not start here; if I wanted scattered sermon- and prayer-seeds I would find these in abundance, often strikingly phrased; if I wanted to be set thinking, meditating or praying, I would find plenty of help in this volume.

Abbotsbury, Dorset

PETER R. AKEHURST

**MINISTRY TO THE SICK (ASB 70) Authorized Alternative Services**

**MINISTRY TO THE SICK CARD (ASB 71)**

SPCK 1983 ASB 70, 62 pp. £1.00 ASB 71, card 25p

The controversial nature of these services, when first proposed, was so acute that the idea of printing them in the *Alternative Service Book* was abandoned. As a result, a form for private confession was rejected and a form for episcopal blessing of various oils was also lost. What we now have is a form of 'Communion with the Sick', 'The Laying on of Hands with Prayer, and Anointing', 'A Commendation at the Time of Death' and 'Prayers for Use with the Sick'. The first two forms are also available on a card.

'The Communion of the Sick' should prove useful pastorally as it includes a form of personal preparation. The eucharistic prayer is in two forms (Rite A and Rite B) but there is no provision for the ASB 'Prayer Book in Modern English' form. The distribution of communion to those not present at a celebration includes a brief statement that 'The Church of God ... has taken bread and wine and given thanks over them according to our Lord's command....'

'The Laying on of Hands with Prayer, and Anointing' is provided in two forms—for use at the eucharist and at morning and evening prayer. It is to be hoped that more churches will begin to obey St James' injunction. 'The Commendation at Time of Death' is a most beautiful service which it would be hard to better, and the selection of 'Prayers for Use with the Sick' and 'Psalms and Readings' are excellent.

Altogether, the Church of England seems to have provided something first-rate which can be used by a wide variety of ministers. We must hope that it will soon be available in a pocket-sized edition.

St Barnabas' Vicarage, London E9

JOHN PEARCE

**LION BOOK OF FAMOUS PRAYERS: A Treasury of Christian Prayers through the Centuries** compiled by **Veronica Zundel**

Lion Publishing 1983 125 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85648 131 9

Albatross Books, Australia 1983 Aust.\$9.95

ISBN 0 86760 460 3

This is the best, so far, in a series of Lion gift books which began with 'Favourite Hymns' and continued with 'Christian Poetry'. The prayers (not all famous) are illumined with brief introductions which blend readably with them, and are rightly generous to their hundred or so subjects, passing over the failings of Calvin, More, and Newman alike. The illustrations are outstanding, and most are identified.

The *Book of Common Prayer* is not represented, though this is not immediately obvious; there is no *Gloria* or *Benedicite*, and while it is good news to have the *Te Deum* (which was not allowed in 'Favourite Hymns!'), the bad news is to be given the inferior and banal 'You are God and we praise you'.

Veronica Zundel has wrestled with the question of modernization; the Bible texts are NIV, and translations are in 'you' form, but consistency seems to end here. Newman and Coverdale are modernized, John Donne and Thomas Ken are not, and John Wesley has some of each. Most regrettably, Cranmer is not Cranmer at all, but rather the *ASB* rewriting of two of his Collects, with the language updated and the rhythm broken. Some acknowledgement of this is surely called for.

Any selection must be personal. I miss Dr Johnson, Bishop Frank Houghton, and some genuinely modern liturgical texts. There is almost nothing from the Eastern churches, and no litanies; the choice is global and non-partisan, but pages labelled 'Negro' or 'Third World' are unhelpful. The twentieth-century 'Prayer of an Ageing Woman' is misplaced among older ones, and 'The Lord bless us' should point to Numbers 6. The Oxford photograph could have been Oriel or St Mary's; Coverdale's Psalms deserve a mention; and it was not arthritis which first crippled Amy Carmichael.

But these are small things set against the rich truth and grace reflected in this handsome book. Some items stretch our definition of 'prayer', but the mainstream is truly Christian.

One other impression remains: here are scores of people, many of heroic stature in their labours for peace, for the poor, for social reform, for mission and martyrdom. Their prayers are wistful or solemn, penitent or joyful, not without humour, but rarely in this selection are they intercessions for others. Rather, they express the soul's concern with God himself; the secret of all these Marthas is that they have first learned to be Marys.

To glance through this book is a delight; to read it carefully is to be made more aware of God's world, and to be drawn nearer to the Lord.

**CHRISTIAN CHOICES 3 Moral Issues**  
 Parish Group Study Guides  
 Mowbray 1983 23 pp. 75p

ISBN 0 264 66967 3

The Bishop of Ripon, in his foreword to this study course and with Lent in mind, expresses the hope that those who use it will be able to 'think more clearly and live more closely to the Mind of Christ.' That hope is well founded.

The moral issues which Canon Wilkinson selects for discussion include abortion and euthanasia, marriage and divorce, the increasing practice of couples 'living together' either before or instead of marriage, and homosexuality. The last of the five studies concerns pacifism in all its facets, begins with a quotation from the Archbishop of Canterbury's address at the Falklands commemoration service, and reaches the concluding questions without a mention of Greenham Common or CND—quite a provocative achievement!

The first study is fundamental to the series, with discussion material around the question 'How does one decide moral questions?'. I would have wished for a greater emphasis here on the Bible as a resource material.

Each of the studies ends with three thought-provoking questions, and there is a catholic selection of books suggested for further reading.

Canon Wilkinson is always stimulating, and the moral choices are engagingly and fairly presented. I foresee good and sometimes heated discussion where these studies are used. Because the questions are so open-ended, the 'leader' will have a particular responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of the discussions. This factor would also need to be considered in a decision to adopt this study course. I would have liked also to have seen more guidance about how a meeting might function where the material is used. For instance, could there have been some encouragement to manageable preparation, such as attentive newspaper reading or relevant Bible passages to be examined?

In the crowded market place of study course, *Christian Choices* deserves serious consideration.

Christ Church Vicarage, Barnet, Herts

MICHAEL MCGOWAN

## Other Books Received

**Albatross Books** K. Medway, *Bush Preacher Bites the Dust*, 1984, £1.50

**Christian Focus Publications** B. Honour, *Gems from Genesis and Other Scriptures*, 1983, 75p

**Croom Helm** P. Henze, *The Plot to Kill the Pope*, 1984, £9.95

**Eerdmans** B. Hill, *Faith at the Blackboard*, 1982, £5.65

**Hodder & Stoughton** D. Sheppard, *Bias to the Poor*, 1984, £1.95 (pb reprint)

**New Puritan Library** D. MacPherson, *The Great Rapture Hoax*, 1983, US\$5.00

**SCM Press** J. Houlden, *Patterns of Faith*, 1983, £2.50

**SPCK** C. Saunders, *Beyond All Pain*, £1.80

## In Brief

**THE LION HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE** edited David and Pat Alexander

first published in 1973

Lion Publishing 1983 (revised edition) 680 pp. £12.95

ISBN 0 85648 320 6

Albatross Books, Australia 1983 Aust.\$24.95

ISBN 0 86760 271 6

Many students begin theological training with little substantial knowledge of the contents of the Bible. They have to contend with 'the assumed results of modern criticism' and manifold opinions about the Bible without an adequate knowledge of what the books are about. The *Lion Handbook* is precisely the book to put into people's hands as a preparation for later serious study.

The revised edition is much the same as the earlier one, except that it has been reset and there are minor revisions, mainly in the archaeological field. A particular advantage is the much clearer type-setting.

Quite simply, this is one of those books which it is difficult to put down.

St Barnabas' Vicarage, London E9

JOHN PEARCE

**SACRIFICE AND THE DEATH OF CHRIST** Frances Young

first published by SPCK in 1975

SCM Press 1983 150 pp. £3.50

ISBN 0 334 02324 6

This is a reissue of a book first published in 1975 and reviewed in *The Churchman* in July 1976 (vol.90, p.221f.). The reviewer on that occasion (S. S. Smalley), while commending the merits of the book, noted that it 'deals very cursorily with the NT evidence for interpreting the meaning of Christ's sacrifice', and hoped that the author would later make this grave deficiency good. Regrettably she has not taken the present opportunity of doing so. The book is more a discussion of patristic thought than biblical, and it accepts in rather too facile a manner standard liberal interpretations of biblical teaching, as the background to what the Fathers say.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**JOURNEY TO THE LAKE DISTRICT FROM CAMBRIDGE: A Summer Diary 1779**

William Wilberforce edited C. E. Wrangham

Oriel Press/Routledge & Kegan Paul 1963 96 pp. hardcover £8.95 ISBN 0 85362 204 3

paperback £4.95 ISBN 0 85362 205 1

The earliest manuscript of the *Emancipator*, discovered and tastefully edited by a descendant, and illustrated by contemporary prints and maps. The undergraduate Wilberforce was only nineteen years old at the beginning of his tour. He was not yet a Christian, but shows many of his later qualities: love of nature, inquisitive mind, sharp eye for detail, sense of humour. A happy little footnote for the 150th anniversary (1983).

Rose Ash, Devon

JOHN POLLOCK

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