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firmation of the chronology developed solely on the basis of the letters."

The last main chapter analyzes Paul's eschatological statements in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51-52. The former considers the death of Christians before the parousia a rare exception; the latter conversely envisages the proportion of dead Christians as outweighing that of living Christians as the parousia. The likelihood is thus strengthened that 1 Thess. was written early, about 41, well before 1 Cor. (some 8 or 11 years later).

There are full notes, a concluding chronological chart, an extensive bibliography and indices of authors and passages.

This is a thesis—a *tour de force* in order to establish and defend a particular hypothesis. It is not a dispassionate review of alternative chronological schemes with a tentative resolution appended at the end. As such it is an excellent example of the genre. Those not prepared for full-blooded argument should look elsewhere. The clarity and tenacity of the argument make it easy to follow and a pleasure to read.

It must also be said that the two primary assertions must be given considerable weight. It is wholly right as a methodological principle to attempt to make sense of Paul on his terms *before* looking to Acts, lest we miss some of the Pauline distinctives by superimposing the relative blandness of the Acts' Paul on them. And the collection was undoubtedly of great importance for Paul (even though we would never know it from Acts) and does provide something of a key to the chronological relationships of at least some of the letters.

That being said, however, I find myself far from convinced by a good number of Luedemann's conclusions.

1. For all that he recognizes the central importance of Gal. 1:6-2:14 his exegesis of it is surprisingly selective. He has ignored the point already made by B. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, Con. Bib., Gleerup: Lund, 1978 (and developed by myself—*NTS* 28, 1982, 461-78) that this passage cannot be understood without taking account of the tension within it between acknowledging Jerusalem's authority up to the Jerusalem conference, but had since then distanced himself much more clearly from Jerusalem. In particular, the suggestion that Paul discussed his gospel with Peter on his first visit to Jerusalem pays no attention to the dispute over *historèsai Kèphan* and runs counter to the clear implication of Gal. 2:2. And the argument that Gal. 2:9 reads as if it was an undoing of church relations in already existing mixed congregations (p. 73) is highly tendentious. Paul's own language in Gal. 1 and 2 is therefore at odds with one of the central assertions of Luedemann's reconstruction—viz. that Paul was already an independent and world-wide missionary before the Jerusalem conference.

2. If exegesis of Paul's own letters is, quite properly, to have the primary say in such questions, then we must not only take into account *all* that Paul said which is of relevance, but we must also recognize the *limits* of exegesis, the unavoidable ambiguity of Paul's language. Despite his carefulness, Luedemann, like his fellow chronologist Jewett, falls into the trap of pressing a particular plausible exegesis of one or two key texts into a firm datum from which he then draws wide ranging conclusions. Where the evidence does not quite fit his reconstruction he is willing to recognize exegetical ambiguity (as in pp. 135 n.185 and 180 n.48). Whereas, in order to substantiate his thesis, he has to insist that Phil. 4:15 cannot refer to the beginning of Paul's whole missionary endeavor—thus rendering the thesis of a Pauline mission in Greece *before* the Jerusalem conference "certain" (pp. 105, 199)!

3. It is clear that Gal. 2:10 must refer to the collection itself and must mean that thereafter the collection was such a dominant concern for Paul that he could not write to one of his congregations without mentioning it. I think not. Galatians itself is an embarrassment on that score, since it says nothing about the collection in Galatia; Gal. 2:10 can hardly be ranked with the explicit instructions and exhortations of Rom. and Cor. Conversely, the failure of Rom. 15:26 to mention Galatia among those contributing to the collection is simply explained by the fact that Macedonia and Achaia were within Rome's horizon and so could serve as a powerful example to the Romans, whereas Galatia was a much more distant territory. But if treatment of the collection is not such a definitive characteristic of Paul's post-conference epistolary concern, another of Luedemann's central pillars is undermined.

4. Space permits only a brief mention of a few other points. (a) Does 1 Thess. 4 mean that only a short time had passed between the first Easter and Paul's initial visit to Thessalonica (p. 238), or that only a short time had elapsed between the initial visit and the letter? (b) The refusal to allow plausible speculation seeking to make sense of the Acts evidence as "historicizing" (e.g. pp. 159-60) is an unwelcome form of methodological fundamentalism. (c) On the Key issue of whether there was one expulsion of Jews from Rome (AD 41) or two (41 *and* 49), Luedemann's response to Hübner's criticism that Luedemann had failed to use E. Smallwood's *The Jews Under Roman Rule* is hardly to the point (p. 290). Hübner's point was that Smallwood's careful consideration of the evidence leads to the conclusion that there were *two* expulsions. Simply to note that he (Luedemann) had referred to Smallwood (but not to the passage in question!) hardly answers the point.

In short Luedemann's first volume shows all the strengths of a *tour de force*—but also the weaknesses. When a civil engineer is determined to push his road through along a certain line it is hardly surprising if he is unable to observe all the contours of the territory traversed.

Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text

by Scot McKnight

The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction
by B. S. Childs (Fortress, 1985, 572 pp., $22.95).

One could list only a handful of scholars in the world who would not only attempt to discuss the whole barrage of issues in both Testaments but who could also acomplish the feat. Professor Childs is a world-renowned scholar for his insightful analyses in Old Testament studies; this book will now earn him respect in the field of New Testament studies.

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In reading it I was humbled by the amazing grasp Childs has, not only of the literature pertaining to the NT, but also of the exegetical issues involved at each juncture.

Let me begin by stating what this *Introduction* is not. Childs has not written yet another standard introduction to the New Testament, merely to re-examine issues such as authorship, date, addressees, etc. Though Childs regularly raises one or more of these typical issues, his interest is of a different order and he offers for his readers a groundbreaking introduction to reading the NT *as a canonical text and the hermeneutical approach one must have if one takes the NT as canon.* In short, Childs is doing battle on the hermeneutical front, not the historical, proposing, in contrast to the normal historicist approach, that the NT must be interpreted at the final layer if one is to discern the true role the Bible has in the life of the believing Church.

Each chapter functions, if I may use the label, as a sort of "pronouncement story": first, we have a salient description of the context of scholarship in both its conservative and liberal forms, usually unable to resolve its own difficulties created by its desire to find historical referentiality; secondly, Childs offers a *via media* which seeks to exploit the best of both worlds, a hermeneutical stance called "canonical exegesis." The last part of the chapter is usually a short, pithy section which functions as more than a casual reminder that the NT scholarly world needs to

press on to interpret the final form of the text. After offering an introduction on the role of the canon, Childs applies his approach to each book of the NT and includes a discussion of the canonical problem of the Four Gospels and a lengthy, canonical approach to the issue of harmonizing the Gospels. He concludes with four stimulating excurses: the impact of a canonical approach on NT textual criticism (one of the most provocative features of the book) and on parable interpretation (here he steers away from Jeremias and the modern literary approaches), as well as a response to G.A. Lindbeck's new model for doing theology. Finally, he offers his suggestions for commentaries on the NT for pastor and teacher, books which he would suggest for those who want to pursue his hermeneutical angle. His suggestions, if heeded, will bring great benefits to the expositor.

It is needful to state here what Childs is criticizing. Continuing the lines he has already developed in his Old Testament studies, the author argues trenchantly against much of the current mode of scholarship: the attempt to discern the intention of the author in his own particular (reconstructed) historical context, an approach regularly called "historicism" (cf. pp. 35-7). As Childs and others have seriously queried, if one can never reconstruct that original context, can one ever really understand the text? In other words, as a good many are arguing today, meaning does not reside solely in referentiality, and the question after all for exegesis is that of meaning. A good example of this, one which is carefully criticized by Childs, is the recent view on the Johannine corpus of R. E. Brown who argues that there was a secession and that the Johannine letters are to be interpreted against this background. In the author's view, "what purports to be an historical investigation is actually an exercise in creative imagination with very few historical controls . . . and the text is interpreted in direct relation to Brown's reconstructed referent regardless of the level of clarity" (p. 483). Instead, Childs proposes that interpretation and meaning are concerned with the particular canonical construal of various traditions as found in their final shape.

Childs has successfully and brilliantly accomplished a grand exposure of the consistent failure in this regard for the bulk of NT scholarship, and each chapter is a painful reminder of the fact. This demonstration is the major success of the book; Childs is not attempting to discard historical-critical scholarship but, instead, is reminding its practitioners, especially those within the Church, that the historical-critical enterprise is an unfinished task if it does not climax in the interpretation of the text as it has been received by the Church and seek to understand the kerygmatic theology of the canonical text (cf. pp. 48-53). And so, Childs' proposal is one of a both/and rather than an either/or; the interpreter is to utilize the tools of the historical-critical method but his task is not finished until the present shape of the text is discussed.

Contrary to most scholars, Childs is not attempting to discern the intention of the author as made known in his original setting or text; instead his pursuit is the meaning of the canonical text, and this text has often been modified in many ways. In fact, Childs, along with many NT scholars today, would argue that few books of the NT are presently substantially the text of the original author. Regarding 1 Peter, for instance, Childs states the following: "It is of crucial hermeneutical significance to understand exactly what is being suggested. This canonical function [rendering 1 Peter as a letter of the apostle by its canonical attribution] is not to be confused with recovering an author's original intention, nor proving historical continuity. Rather, it is a function of canon to establish an intertextuality between the parts as the context for its theological appropriation" (p. 461). One could cite many such examples, including his treatment of 2 Thessalonians, Jude, 2 Peter and Revelation. Loosing exegesis from the moorings of the author's historical intention is an unwelcomed departure and for most it will be seen as putting one's interpretation into the sea of relativity, though Childs has some comments on this as well (cf. pp. 542-6).

A noteworthy feature of this volume is that Childs calls attention to the need to take the canon seriously, not only as a collection, but as a hermeneutical device for interpreting the individual books. I will offer a criticism below on whether the author is consistent in this regard, but let it be said here that Childs proposes a bold reminder that a decision in favor of the canon may well imply some hermeneutical restrictions. For instance, Childs demonstrates that though Jude does not specify the theological content of the gospel to be defended, the book in its canonical shape exhorts the Church to preserve what is written in the rest of her Bible (p. 493). An historicist reading of Jude would not detect this. Similarly, he argues that Revelation, though he thinks the apostle was not the author, in its canonical shape (having John as the author) is to be read "in conjunction with the large Johannine corpus" and "that there is a larger canonical unity to the church's scriptures which is an important guideline to its correct theological understanding" (p. 517). Of course, the most fruitful book for canonical exegesis is James, and Childs demonstrates carefully that a canonical rendering of James makes it a balancing of Paul's understanding of the relationship of faith and works. This is argued quite apart from any historical relationship of James to Paul; instead, the canonical order forces one to think of Paul's views and to incorporate the views into one whole (pp. 436, 438-43). For the evangelical, anyone who takes seriously the desire to incorporate the NT texts into one whole is welcome (cf. p. 30). I must admit that I found this motif in his book the most challenging, and it has caused me to re-think some of my approach to exegesis. If one accepts the canon, then certainly this will have an impact upon one's exegetical method, but the critical factor here is precisely how one is to utilize the canon for the hermeneutical process.

We mentioned above that Childs argues that a canonical reading of the NT will have an impact on how one does textual criticism and he offers guidelines on the matter. In contrast to most text critics, Childs argues that the *purpose* of the enterprise is not to discover the original text (the success of which he doubts as feasible) but instead to find the text "which best reflects the true apostolic witness found in the church's scripture" (p. 527) which he calls "the best received text" (p. 525). Thus, the critic is to begin with the *textus receptus* (but Childs is not to be aligned with those who want to align themselves with the Majority text) and distill from this inclusive text, in an ongoing process, "that text which best reflects the church's judgment as to its truth" (p. 528). In effect, this suggestion seems to require that one know the theological content of the apostolic faith of the Church before one determines her text. Can this be done? Childs, however, sees this sifting to be a discernment between various qualities (p. 528) and he obviously accepts the normal methods for this determination. What at first seemed to be radical is not as radical as I had thought; nevertheless, his proposal of beginning with the inclusive text and proceeding by way of restriction is fully commensurate with his canonical approach, and his goal is certainly not the traditional one.

Let me now offer my reservations with the book. Though Childs does offer some rationale for a canonical reading of the NT (pp. 34-47), I am not satisfied that he has demonstrated that his view is the *true* approach. Yes, there are antecedents within the texts themselves for this approach (pp. 23-4); but how can the reader know that the canon is in fact what it claims to be—the authoritative books for the Church? Again, we do indeed have a canon; but, is the canon justified? Childs anchors this decision totally in the decision of the Church. Those who accuse Childs of a fideism (p. 37) are not without some justification.

Childs anticipates my second criticism (p. 543). I find it difficult to render the meaning of a text apart from its factuality or historical reference. For Childs the issue is one of a theological construal, but the nagging question of truth, to me, remains unanswered, and I think that one cannot opt for a theological construal which renders the historical fact relative. I quote his treatment of 1 Peter as an example of his view: "Still the point must be emphasized that in its canonical shape the letter of I Peter is attributed to the apostle, and its kerygmatic function is made a derivative of his authority. The effect of the historical-critical approach has been to force a distinction between the historical problem of authorship and the theological function of rendering the material according to a peculiar canonical fashion" (p. 461). Is one being intellectually honest, can one base one's faith upon a theological construal which, in fact, may be historically inaccurate? Is there not an intense concern with the texts themselves with description of the past (a referentiality)? Is not the nature of gospel genre an indicator of concern with past reference?

What is the precise meaning of canonical? Though Childs utilizes "canon" in an amaz-

ingly plastic fashion (cf. p. 41), when it comes to the treatments of the NT books, by and large it means the present shape of the text. But, in my view, one must speak to the issue of intertextuality if one is to call one's method canonical and Childs does this, say, in Jude, James and the Pastorals, but he does not always do this in the Synoptics (pp. 86, 92, 104, etc.). Instead, what he often calls "canonical" is nothing other than the final, redactional layer, or the authorial intent. Thus, I think a distinction needs to be made between redactional and canonical exegesis. It goes to the credit of Childs that he has shown that redactional studies need to press forward to study the canonical shape of the text, but canonical exegesis, in my view, implies a larger context. And a disappointing feature of the book for me was his consistent reduction of the meaning of a NT book to its basic theological meaning (cf. his studies of the Pauline epistles). One wonders if this can work except at the broadest level of exegesis.

In spite of his concern with the canonical text and how the editors of the canon sought to free the texts from their historical occasion, there still remains a great deal of historical particularity in these texts and few will be satisfied with his brief statements which address this (pp. 23-4) or with a hermeneutic which "typifies" these historical particulars. Thus, when he discusses Paul's cloak in 2 Timothy 4:13, he sees this illustrating "the single-hearted devotion of the apostle to his ministry who ended his life not even possessing a coat" (p. 394).

I might criticize his *method* of demonstrating, for each book of the NT, the lack of consensus of interpretation by playing off conservatives and liberals. The fact is that there is a much greater consensus if one recognizes that the two poles are incompatible; within each framework there is often a considerable consensus. Instead, Childs should recognize that a consensus can only be reached on the basis of some *a prioris* and previously established conclusions. One could wish that Childs would explore a little more deeply into the realm of what factors led to each polarity.

Finally, for the evangelical there will be a grave disappointment in the fact that Childs does not relate canon to inspiration. Traditional orthodoxy has always posited canon as a direct and natural effect of inspiration. For Childs, the Bible is canon seemingly because of decisions of the Church. For the evangelical the question will always be: what if the Church was wrong?

This book has been one of the most challenging I have ever read. Though I disagree with the historical moorings of Childs' proposal, I agree wholeheartedly with the need to interpret the finished product and his interest in understanding the theological meaning of a NT book in light of its relationship to other NT books.

Childs Responds to McKnight

Dear Prof. McKnight:

It was very kind and thoughtful of you to send me a copy of your review which I have studied with interest and profit. You have read the book with more care and insight than anyone up to now and for that I am grateful.

I think that your review is both fair and incisive. As you correctly saw, the book did not attempt to engage in a detailed analysis of all the problems surrounding the NT, but rather to propose some broad lines of a different approach in an effort to reverse the dominant trend within the field. I am happy that you felt the book raised some fresh questions. I doubt very much whether many within the scholarly guild will be convinced, but I felt the need to present another theological alternative. When I was in seminary, I was always exceedingly grateful for the minority voice of scholars such as J. Denney, M. Kaehler, and A. Schlatter, among others.

You pose some reservations which, I am sure, are high on the priority of most evangelicals. Let me offer a few brief responses:

1) I have purposefully not dealt directly with the question of inspiration. The reason is not because I regard the issue as unimportant. Rather, the present theological climate is such that it is difficult to formulate a fresh position. I think that other issues will first have to be understood before there can be a meaningful return to a restatement.

For a very long time there has been an impasse between a position such as that of Warfield and the numerous followers of Schleiermacher. In my judgment, both these giants were children of the 19th century. Time is, of course, too short to discuss in detail such questions as whether Warfield has narrowed the doctrinal scope even of 17th century Reformed dogmatics. My present concern is that he has defined inspiration in terms of a philosophical theory of truth—namely, 18th century Scottish realism—as correspondence to historical referentiality (inerrancy), and author intentionality. In contrast, I find in Calvin a far greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit's role in rendering the Word truthfully to its recipient, and thus not pulling text and believer apart in the same way. Obviously, Calvin and Schleiermacher are in great opposition respecting the role of the Spirit which in the latter is simply a form of human consciousness.

In my opinion, the place to begin in reformulating a modern theology of inspiration—and it is only a beginning—is with the Early Church Fathers before Word and tradition, text and Spirit were split apart in the controversies of the 16th century. My appropriation of the concept of *regula fidei* from Irenaeus and Tertullian is my initial attempt at a formulation of the issue. I fear that most evangelicals will not even recognize the attempt.

2) In regard to the question of historicity and historical moorings, it is again difficult to formulate the issue with enough theological precision. In my opinion, most of the modern evangelical formulations reflect a type of natural theology which I do not share. Carl Henry is a grievous example. I do not, for example, believe that one can establish scientifically and in a neutral fashion the factuality of the biblical accounts nor can such an attempt provide a criterion for testing the truth of the Gospel. There is no means outside the Gospel to test its truth. It is sui generis. Of course, the OT and NT make constant reference to external reality (I Cor. 15:14), but often to a reality which has entered time and space but is only perceived in faith. Indeed, at times an appeal is made to God's action which can be confirmed by public knowledge (e.g., the fall of Jerusalem) cf. the prophets. The point is that the level of public perception (factuality) varies greatly within the biblical witness. Historicity as a perception apart from faith cannot be made a criterion of divine truth, certainly not as an overarching theological axiom. Conversely, one cannot argue as does Bultmann that historicity is never an issue. In my opinion, both these theological stances are skewed, and both are very much a product of the Enlightenment. Often the most concrete entry of God into human affairs is registered in the Bible in such a way as utterly to confound the litmus paper test of critical appraisal, whether liberal or conservative. The appeal to historical criticism both from the left and right as a correction of Docetism appears to me badly misconstrued and a serious confusion of categories. In sum, it remains difficult to address the problem of historicity in a meaningful way before the basic problems of natural theology are first addressed. In this respect, most evangelicals—Bromiley is an exception—have simply misunderstood what K. Barth was after.

3) Finally regarding the problem of canon as church decision, I have tried to make the point, fully consonant with Calvin, that the church never "created" its canon, but responded to the authority of certain books which were received through use as normative for faith and practice.

But you raise the question: "What if the church was wrong?" Is this not a response of unbelief which does not take seriously the power and promise of God? We confess: "I

believe in God, the Father, Maker of Heaven and Earth; I believe in Jesus Christ . . . ; I believe in the Holy Catholic Church . . . and the resurrection from the dead . . ." But what if the Church was wrong in believing in God the Father as Creator, and in Jesus Christ as Redeemer? Is this not a very false way to pose the issue and utterly without warrant in the NT?

We confess that God has made himself known in Jesus Christ and in the same way that His Spirit has brought into existence a people of God, his Church. We have the promise of His continuous presence and guidance which is daily confirmed. Our confession in the reality of the Church as bearer of the Gospel proclamation is equally strong as in Christology. The Church's designation of an authoritative canon was simply a derivative of its Christology. This is not to claim "inerrancy" for the canon, but rather to stake out the parameters of the Christian faith and to provide a point of standing in the belief that God is faithful and will not abandon his people to confusion in spite of their sin. Just as there is no "objective criterion" by which to prove that Jesus Christ is God's elect Son, the Church cannot *prove* from a neutral position shared with unbelief that its canon is from God. No degree of historical inerrancy can confirm this testimony, but only the Spirit. Thus, the Church has confessed from the beginning of its inception that the Holy Spirit continues to instruct, edify, and admonish God's people through the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ.

But enough of this. You can see that your review has stimulated further reflection and thought.

Taking Mennonite History Seriously

by Dennis D. Martin

Maintaining the Right Fellowship: A Narrative Account of Life in the Oldest Mennonite Community in North America **by John L. Ruth (Herald Press, 1984, 616 pp., $24.95).**
Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683-1790, **Mennonite Experience in America, Vol. 1 by Richard K. MacMaster (Herald Press, 1985, 340 pp., $12.00).**

In 1937 a recent graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary named J.C. Wenger published a history of eastern Pennsylvania's Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church. Fifty years later J.C. Wenger is emeritus professor of historical theology at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and a respected storytelling guardian of the Swiss-Pennsylvania Mennonite heritage. John L. Ruth, a former teacher of literature and present freelance filmmaker and storytelling interpreter of the Mennonite heritage, has now given us a history of the Franconia Conference and its counterpart, the Eastern District of the General Conference Mennonite Church. It is not a typical regional denominational history, i.e., it is not merely a collection of biographies, congregational historical sketches and desultory photographs of high schools and retirement homes.

It is rare that a local denominational study merits attention beyond its own constituency. Ruth's book merits attention because it is a fine piece of regional history told with considerable narrative power. Coinciding with the three-hundredth anniversary of the initial Quaker-Mennonite immigration to Germantown, Pennsylvania, Ruth's book carries the story of a people through three centuries of emigration, immigration and acculturation, following the thread of their effort to maintain identity through a disciplined church life.

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is a story of Quaker-Mennonite tensions and commonalities in Germany's Rhine Valley and of Dutch Mennonite aid to and exasperation at Swiss Mennonite refugees over a century of emigration. It is the story of Mennonite peoplehood in the midst of Pennsylvania's varied peoples: Lutheran and Reformed, Pietist, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders, Quakers. It is the story of Mennonite divisions in response to the American revolt against the king of England and in response to a nineteenth century American enthusiasm for education, evangelism, and organization. Ruth's treatment of two main schisms in the 1770s and 1840s would be profitable reading for Christians of any tradition as case studies in church discipline, leadership styles, and decision making by consensus or by "parliamentary democracy."

Ruth uses family records and tales to document and interpret many of the events he chronicles. At times the detailed narration of family interconnections will swamp the outside reader to the same degree that it will fascinate eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites: Ruth traces migrations to Ohio, Indiana and Ontario, following eastern Pennsylvania natives who assumed denominational leadership roles.

The first two or three chapters of *Maintaining the Right Fellowship* could serve as an alternate introduction for a study of American church history, contrasting with the familiar story of Puritan immigration and settlement. The fifth chapter, on the Pennsylvania Mennonite experience of the Revolution (cf. Ruth's booklength treatment of the same materials in *'Twas Seeding Time* [Herald Press, 1976]), could be used in survey courses as a reminder that there were two sides to the war for independence. Few Mennonites and even fewer non-Mennonites are aware of Mennonite involvement in the early Christian and Missionary Alliance (p. 370). (Members of the Church of the Brethren [Dunkers] and related groups were also involved in the early CMA. See *Brethren Encyclopedia* [1983], p. 259).

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is, however, a denominational regional history and, despite Ruth's narrative skill, reveals its origins: the list of donors at the back of the book, the use of the in-house Mennonite codewords "unordained" and "ethnic" on the dedication page, occasional untranslated German ("zersplittert" on p. 303), and chains of family-transmitted anecdotes (pp. 172ff). Most blemishes are editorial: The book has excellent maps for Mennonite origins in Europe but a good map for colonial eastern Pennsylvania would have been a great help to readers plowing their way through the intricate interconnections of families and villages. The modern map of the area on p. 479 is inadequate for that purpose. Cross-referencing in footnotes is outstanding; the index is thorough, especially for names.

At times Ruth's colloquial story-telling style and his tendency to tell what the future held for an individual, family, or congregation under discussion becomes distracting (e.g., p. 213 bottom, p. 284 top). Colloquial language, as in the case of references to two congregations that "had gotten stone meetinghouses" and to another that "seems also

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