

BOOK REVIEWS

The Old Testament: Its Claims and Its Critics, by Oswald T. Allis. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972. \$9.95.

For almost two decades, Dr. Allis taught at Princeton Theological Seminary and for seven years at Westminster Theological Seminary. This book is the last one he produced during his retirement and was published not long before his death.

This book is not for the casual reader and certainly not for those who are unfamiliar with controversies within the circle of Old Testament scholars. Most would classify the book as heavy reading, especially the footnotes at the back of the volume.

From the start, the author clearly identifies himself as a supporter of the accuracy and the infallibility of the Old Testament. His approach is apologetic, i.e. he proposes to defend the content of the Old Testament against those scholars who would attack its veracity. Hence, Professor Allis begins with a summary of what the Old Testament says, and thus makes a presentation which is almost an exact opposite of Professor Fohrer's. The chapter on literary forms, for the most part, ignores the source criticism and form criticism kinds of treatment of biblical literature. On the other hand, the third chapter draws heavily on the contributions of archaeology and linguistic study of ancient Near Eastern languages to show that the events of the Old Testament were historical. Dr. Allis concentrates his attacks on the critics in the fourth chapter. He not only rejects their point of view but joins battle with them on a number of issues, i.e. the creation, the Patriarchs, the person and work of Moses, the settlement of Canaan and the setting up of the kingdom. In the fifth chapter, the author contrasts Israel's beliefs with those of the Canaanites. This is probably the best chapter in the book. The last chapter on chronology is more difficult reading, but insists on the accuracy of Old Testament dating formula.

Most evangelicals in the Wesleyan tradition probably would find Dr. Allis farther to the right than their own positions, and some would not appreciate his argumentative procedures. Nevertheless, Dr. Allis' point of view is not to be ignored. His objections to the critics must be wrestled with seriously.

G. Herbert Livingston

History of Israelite Religion, by Georg Fohrer, translated by David E. Green. New York: Abingdon Press, 1972. \$10.95.

The author is the professor of Old Testament at the University of Erlangen-Nurnberg in Germany. His announced purpose is to present a new history of Israelite religion from earliest times to the end of the post-exilic period. The sequence of chapters reflects this concern for a chronological treatment of Israel's religion. Dr. Fohrer disavows making any theological value judgments or engaging in apologetics. Actually, the author is unsuccessful, for the work is pervaded by his own brand of theological value judgments, which are purely humanistic and evolutionary. And the work is an apologetic, not for the presentation of Israel's religion as found in the Scripture, but for a reconstruction of biblical material in terms of a pattern which he superimposes on the Bible.

Professor Fohrer does not look to Genesis for the origins of Israel's religion but to the paganism of nomadic tribes which roamed the desert areas and to the Canaanite literature of ancient Ugarit. The patriarchs were not a part of that early period and Moses had only a minimal role of selecting a nomadic deity called Yahweh and introducing him to his people. This new god was in conflict with many nomadic ideals and a strong foe of the Canaanite fertility cult, but was certainly not the only God in the universe or in Palestine. It was the kingdom period that elevated Yahweh to power and made the Israelites into a nation with its own distinctive cult. But Yahweh still was only a god among other gods. The prophets are attributed with making many key contributions to the concepts of Yahwism, but the reforms of Josiah and the impact of the exile were important too. All eschatology and apocalyptic works are assigned to the post-exilic period. And only in the exile did a true ethical monotheism come into being.

It is difficult to see much that is new in Fohrer's volume. Basically, it follows the patterns established a century ago by Julius Wellhausen. Though it is not so much given to a thesis-antithesis-synthesis scheme of development, the book does stress only humanistic sources of growth and rejects totally the supernatural revelation and miracle motifs of the Old Testament. Occasionally, the contributions of archaeology are referred to, but in spite of light this science has shed on early forms of covenant and treaty in the ancient Near East, Professor Fohrer stoutly holds that covenant was a late comer to Israelite thinking. On the whole, the book is a disappointment.

Evangelistic Sermons of Clovis G. Chappell, New York: Abingdon Press, 1973. 144 pages. \$2.95.

Clovis G. Chappell, one of the great preachers of evangelical America, died in 1972, an old and revered gentleman of the pulpit. Those who remember hearing him will recall his sense of timing, humor, and the rhythm and cadence of his speech. Altogether delightful to listen to, he averaged upwards of three hundred speaking engagements a year nearly to the last days of his life.

Evangelistic Sermons is a selection of thirteen messages from his many published books. His ability to relate to human need and human nature reflects itself in this worthwhile little volume. This experience-oriented book, rooted in Scriptural truth, feeds the soul with fresh insights. While Dr. Chappell does not read quite as well as he sounded, the investment of time in reading him is rewarded by both variety of homiletical procedure and religious content.

The pastor's heart (he served eight large churches), the gift for illustration (the alert preacher will want to do some filing), the perception of God and man (many a single sentence is a gem) all combine to provide helpful and healthful stimulation.

Donald E. Demaray

Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate, by Gerhard Hasel. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972. 103 pages. \$1.95 (paperback).

In book reviews it is trite to say, "Here is a book which should be in every (pastor's) library". Nonetheless, the reviewer is constrained to say that about this book. While it is primarily a concise review of the work of others, it is not predigested fare for the unthinking. It does point the way through the maze of works on Old Testament theology and, by highlighting the central questions and issues, makes it possible for those who are not professional theologians to read these works with greatly increased profit. The book is no substitute for the originals; it does make it possible to understand the originals much more quickly.

Hasel, Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology in the Theological Seminary of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, deals with four essential questions and concludes with a proposal. The

questions concern: the methodology used, the place of historical-critical studies, the possibility of isolating a central theme or motif in the Old Testament, and the relationship between the Testaments. In each case, the author describes the varying points of view quickly and fairly. He then raises questions about each. In general, the questions are framed from an evangelical point of view. However, Hasel is not grinding a theological axe here. He is at least as concerned about the logical consistency of the thought as he is about its theological tendency.

The concluding proposal is a fine summary. The author outlines seven steps which a valid Old Testament theology (from his point of view) must cover. Particularly welcome is his assertion that any concept of history which excludes the activity of God is simply not competent to deal with the Old Testament.

This book will disappoint the reader looking for ammunition for his "answer-gun". It will delight the one looking for a road-map to guide him in the development of his thought.

J. Oswalt

Historical Geography of the Holy Land, by George A. Turner. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973. \$11.95.

Dr. George A. Turner has been the Professor of Biblical Literature at Asbury Theological Seminary for twenty-eight years and has made a number of trips to the Holy Land. He knows the land intimately, having visited practically every site of any importance. He is well qualified to write a book on this subject and his competence comes through consistently throughout the book.

Dr. Turner begins by summarizing the geological and the geographical characteristics of Palestine; then he zeros in on its most important city, Jerusalem. Chapter two is not merely a descriptive walking tour of the city. History is expertly woven into the discussion, so that one catches much more than word pictures of buildings and places. The aura of centuries envelopes the narrative and the Holy city comes alive with the echoes of worship, battles, and pilgrims.

Leaving Jerusalem, the reader is spirited to the northern portion of Palestine—Galilee. At each historical site, the author is careful to tell its story of settlement, of prosperity, of adversity, of involvement in international commerce or conflict. This is the pattern of procedure as one follows Dr. Turner through the villages by the Sea of Galilee, across

the valley of Esdraelon, along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, into the ancient Philistine country, back to the north-south mountain range. Steadily one moves south along the main road and its cities, past Jerusalem to Hebron, to the Dead Sea, and then travels out into the hot deserts of the Negev.

Dr. Turner returns the reader to Jerusalem for a final look at the city in its modern historical setting since the Moslem Conquest. The downfall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I and its turbulent, but crucial significance in international affairs since World War II are vividly described.

This volume is well written and exciting to read. It superbly fulfills the announced purpose of the author to produce a synthesis of geography and history of a portion of the globe which remains not only sacred to three world religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—but is the vortex of a political storm which increasingly involves every nation of the earth. Anyone interested in serious Bible study and contemporary events would do well to immerse himself in the information and insights packed into this book.

G. Herbert Livingston

A Theology of Love, by Mildred Bangs Wynkoop. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1972. 372 pages.

This presentation of Wesleyan theology could scarcely have been written by anyone not thoroughly familiar with the Holiness Movement in North America. The book itself can best be understood and appreciated by one also familiar with that movement. The thrust of this volume is to criticize, define, and defend the Wesleyan interpretation of the Bible as it relates to personal salvation. The author's stated purpose is "to apply the basic Wesleyan concepts to several of the doctrines particularly emphasized by Wesleyans, to discover any inconsistencies, and to bring harmony and strength and winsomeness to the faith we declare" (p. 101).

The sixteen chapters of the book deal with salient points in Wesley's thought: the Wesleyan and biblical view of human nature, sin and holiness in theology and in scripture, the function of faith in the divine-human encounter, Christian perfection and sanctification.

Throughout, the author's concern is to move from static concepts to dynamic ones, from status to relationship, from "states of grace" to continuous obedience to Christ. There is a constant effort to correct stereotyped phrases, to distinguish between peripheral and central issues, to clarify and refine concepts. Readers are warned against thinking of sin as "substance" and of stressing a second crisis to the neglect of process in Christian experience.

The author's procedure results from her educational, personal and professional experiences. The tendency for some is to move deductively from the theological, philosophical and psychological perspectives to supporting evidence in the Scriptures, rather than the reverse. (The author's basic method in the use of scriptural resources is word studies in both Hebrew and Greek.) Commendable is her insistence on the total understanding of biblical evidence rather than relying on selected proof-texts. Thoroughness characterizes every step, yet somewhat lacking is a comprehensive grasp of biblical theology, not surprising in view of the author's concentration in the fields of philosophy and theology. Through every phase of her educational experience and professional career, however, Dr. Wynkoop has been thorough, critical, and responsive to "the light". This volume marks the insights of a dedicated, mature, and thoughtful Christian.

The thesis that love is basic in Wesleyan theology and that "to be 'Wesleyan' is to be committed to a theology of love" is convincingly argued. The main strength of the volume is its thorough acquaintance with the writings of Wesley and a familiarity with the contemporary facets in the Wesleyan tradition which need correction and clarification in the light of a better understanding of both Wesley and the Bible. It is not easy to be both critical and supportive. Few possess the perception, knowledge and courage to achieve this. This author succeeds admirably in this necessary, incisive and constructive task.

This reviewer found a few facets of the study which he could not wholeheartedly support. One concerns the position that "our old man" is Adam and the "new Man" of Pauline theology is Christ, rather than unregenerate and regenerate human nature respectively. Also dubious to this reviewer is the twice-repeated statement that to view human nature as including, "body, mind and spirit" is not biblical teaching (in the light of Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37; I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12). It is often said that the basic Hebraic view of human nature is dualistic: consisting of flesh and spirit, that man cannot exist apart from his body, hence the necessity of a bodily resurrection. But the Old Testament recognizes a body, and *ruach* or breath (in common with beasts) yet an element

which hopefully survives physical death (cf. Ps. 16; Job 19), which beasts do not share.

That "Pure individualism is a modern phenomenon" and Western is a statement difficult to sustain in the light of Deut. 24:16; Ezekiel 18:1-28; Mark 3:33-35 and John 1:12, 13; 3:3-7. Instead, individualism was initiated after the Exile, and reinforced in the New Testament; later influenced by Stoicism, it found extreme expression in monasticism.

There is some repetition in the volume. Perhaps a reorganization and condensation would have resulted in a consolidation of several categories and a greater conciseness in presentation. However a compensating factor is that repetition adds emphasis.

The central thesis of the volume, that Wesleyan theology is best understood as love of God and neighbor, is convincingly set forth and placed in proper perspective. The book deserves a wide reading and acceptance. It serves as a corrective to those in the Wesleyan tradition and will blunt the criticism of those without.

George A. Turner

Baptism in the New Testament, by G. R. Beasley-Murray. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973. 442 pages. \$4.95.

This is a paperback edition of the work first published in 1962. It is a thorough, well documented study of the antecedents of Christian baptism and the development of baptism on the basis of the New Testament witness. Especially well done is the study of "The Rise and Significance of Infant Baptism." An excellent bibliography is appended, including a section listing works published since 1962. Beasley-Murray, well-known Baptist scholar late of Spurgeon's College and now teaching at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is carefully non-sectarian in his presentation of data and drawing of conclusions.

Reviews of the 1962 edition have been presented by A. R. George, *Expository Times* 74(1963), 106; C.I.K. Storey, *Christianity Today* 7(1963), 43-7; C. Morrison, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82(1963), 339-341; J. G. Davies, *Journal of Theological Studies* 14(1963), 478-9; D. Moody, *Review and Expositor* 60(1963), 232-4; W. A. van Roo, *Gregorianum* 44(1963), 134; R. Schnackenburg, *Biblische Zeitschrift* ns 7(1963), 305-8; and by G. Delling, *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 89(1964), 273-5.

This is, perhaps, the most valuable study of the sacrament of baptism in English. Ministers and teachers will find it a valuable tool.

David D. Bundy

O Jerusalem!, by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972; Pocketbook edition, 1973. Paperback edition. 745 pages. \$1.95.

Jerusalem, the "spiritual capital of the World," remains the focus of international concern. In what is probably the most thoroughly documented report of its origin, this volume traces the origin of the modern state of Israel from its recognition by the United Nations in 1947 to the conclusion of the armistice in 1948. Concerning what Israel calls its "war of independence" the authors provide a very readable and yet detailed account of these momentous formative years, events which continue to preoccupy most of the modern world today. The authors are publishers of a best seller entitled *Is Paris Burning?*. Collins served as foreign correspondent in the Middle East for ten years. His colleague, Lapierre, who served as reporter and editor for Paris newspapers, is author of several books and served in the United States Army as interpreter. This volume represents years of research and reporting. The text is accompanied by a series of black and white pictures which graphically portray some of the scenes described. A helpful index is provided and an excellent bibliography covering eleven pages. Each chapter is accompanied by notes providing helpful details. Of the major participants in these events the location and occupation at the time of writing are given. In their research the authors utilized books written by participants in the struggle, diaries, official papers, state papers and hundreds of interviews with survivors. The result is a correction of some current misinformation and, most importantly, the filling in of episodes that are helpful to the understanding of the current situation: the descendents of Isaac and Ishmael are struggling for possession of land promised to their common ancestor Abraham.

The practice followed by the authors in leaping suddenly from one episode to another makes it difficult for the reader to follow the sequence of events, but it seems to have the compensating effect of holding the reader's attention as he struggles to piece the patchwork together into a chronological whole. The attention to detail is amazing; the reader is, to a remarkable degree, able to be a participant in the events. Unlike most histories of this period, both Arab and Israeli views

are presented. Perhaps because of the greater amount of material available more attention is given to the Israeli struggle. But the Arab side too is represented by sources that are original, both in printed documents and private interviews. The result is a combination of research and reporting at its best, best in the sense of fullness and accuracy and also in the sense of reader interest.

As the title indicates most of the attention is given to the siege of Jerusalem, and today visitors to that city can appreciate the on-the-spot reporting of the struggle. In this volume the reader will find not only events chronicled but the background causes adequately presented. It may be said that this volume is required reading for one who wishes to be thoroughly familiar with the events leading up to the situation in the Holy Land today.

George A. Turner

Early Quaker Writings, by Hugh Barbour and Arthur O. Roberts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973. 622 pages. \$9.95.

This compilation contains selections from the early Quaker movement during its most formative period in the first fifty years of its history. The editors had a rather large repository from which to choose, for the early Quakers were prolific in the use of the pen. The early Friends produced more than 2,000 pieces of writing from 1650-1700. While many of these were brief, others were longer, significant, and classic in their time; however even some of the classic statements have not been available readily to many contemporary readers.

This book contains several major types of Quaker literature including the following: (1) personal experience from letters and journals; (2) the elucidation and defense of Quaker ideas; (3) tracts that presented the movement's ethical standards accompanied by exhortations for their acceptance; and, (4) writings concerning the nature of the church.

It appears that the editors did their work well. The selections were made with care and in conference with several Quaker scholars. The various selections are prefaced by helpful editorial introductions that serve to place each piece in its historical and theological context. A series of indices makes the volume highly usable.

These selections from a highly creative and significant religious movement are timely in view of the growing contemporary interest in the work of the Holy Spirit and in religious phenomena. Many persons,

besides those interested in Quaker history and thought, can read this volume with great profit. Psychologists of religion will find it relevant and of value to some of their concerns. Ministers and thoughtful laymen in many communions will discover that it makes a fine contribution to an understanding of the spiritual life.

W.C. Mavis

The Mood of Christmas, by Howard Thurman, New York: Harper and Row, 1973. 127 pages. \$4.95.

Howard Thurman, the black preacher, shares in this book fruit from a lifetime of careful thought. The serious reader will want to have a pencil in hand, underscore and write in the margins. The preachers will find numerous quotable sentences and ideas, and will be especially appreciative of his rich picture language. Thurman is a preacher's preacher.

The preacher should also look for his rich insights into life (he is no mean analyst of human nature); his thought about God (he will probably go down as one of the true mystics of the twentieth century); and his poetic feel (whether the format be prose or poetry). Dr. Thurman has included materials from his former works, as well as fresh matter.

Whatever the depth of seriousness with which the reader comes to this book, he will profit by its flashes of illumination. It is the kind of volume that makes the perfect gift, not only because of its fine content, but for its design and coloration as well.

Donald E. Demaray

Jewish Law in Ancient and Modern Israel, by Haim Cohn. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1971. 259 pages.

While this book will not be of great interest in toto to Christian pastors and teachers, they should find its basic theme and at least three of its nine essays very provocative. The author, who sits on the Supreme Court of Israel, is concerned with the ways in which the divine (and thus immutable) law can be interpreted for changed circumstances (as

those of modern Israel). Christians who take their Bible seriously are concerned about the same kinds of issues. They will look with interest at the Jewish methodologies although some of the specific questions (e.g. penology in the Talmud) may be of little import to them.

Probably the most interesting essays to Christians will be the first, second and fourth. The first is a historical essay dealing with the development of the concept of divine law in various cultures and the difficulties which have been encountered by these cultures in applying the concept. A lengthy (28 page) introduction to the book is most helpful in gaining an understanding of the Jewish approach to the problem. The second essay deals with the origins of Biblical law, comparing specifically the provisions for a goring ox in the known law codes. The fourth will undoubtedly be of the greatest interest since it offers a carefully documented argument that the reports of Jesus' trial contained in the Gospels are fabrication. He comes to this conclusion as a result of his finding that the trial as reported was flagrantly (and impossibly) illegal at every point. To Cohn this "overkill" indicates propaganda rather than historical account. Whether one agrees with the author or not, such a provocative and informative essay merits attention.

John N. Oswalt

A Matter of Eternity: Selections from the Writings of Dorothy L. Sayers, by Rosamond Kent Sprague. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1973. 140 pages. \$4.50.

Miss Sayers, one of the creative minds of our time, reveals herself in these devotional selections as both saint and scholar. Always Christ is the Rock on which she stands; always she brings to her writing task the clear and perceptive thinking of a disciplined mind.

Actually, one sees in this little book the great breadth and depth of Dorothy L. Sayers: theologian, philosopher, amateur scientist, educator, translator, poetess, devotional writer, critic (an informed one!), historian, playwright, detective writer, essayist—but I am sure I have missed something! The topics she plows are beyond counting: women, responsibility, covetousness, personhood, energy, love, grammar, redemption, *ad infinitum*. The creativity and revelation in her work make it fascinating; one can hardly fail to profit if he has any urges for personal and intellectual growth.

A salute to Rosamond Kent Sprague, writer in her own right (see her good Introduction, e.g.) and Professor of Philosophy and Greek at the University of South Carolina.

Donald E. Demaray

Demons, Demons, Demons, by John P. Newport. Nashville: Broadman, 1972. 159 pages. \$4.95.

The June 19, 1972, issue of *Time* magazine featured "the occult revival," taking note of the wave of fascination with the occult throughout the country. With the ever-increasing volume of literature on the movement, it is helpful to have a reliable resource from an evangelical point of view. This volume is that kind of resource and is intended as a Christian guide through the murky maze of the occult.

The author is professor of philosophy of Religion at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. The contents of the book were particularly utilized in a lecture series of Southwestern in 1972. Attention is given to the rise of a counter-religion, witchcraft, magic, demon possession, astrology, palmistry, intuitive prophecy, extrasensory communication, spiritualism, and many other related topics. The contents reflect careful research and study, and the materials are carefully documented from many sources. The dangers of a counter-religion are set forth, very often with biblical warnings and insights. Dr. Newport was formerly a pastor, and his work has great value for pastors and laymen.

William M. Arnett

Our Visited Planet, by William M. Justice. New York: Vantage Press, 1973. 179 pages. \$5.95.

In late summer, 1973, this book *Our Visited Planet*, came from the press. It is the product of many years of study and preaching, and its published form has been made possible because of available writing time during the retirement years of the author. As a minister of the United Methodist Church, he served pastorates in Texas, New Mexico, New York, and New Jersey. Active in the cause of interracial justice and world peace, he has lectured extensively both at home and abroad. Among his avocational interests is the study of astronomy, a fact which

becomes significantly evident to the reader.

The book makes fascinating reading. One reviewer writes, "I do not know of any book in the past quarter of a century which conveys so well the impression of numinous 'otherness' that Christ made upon His immediate followers . . . The book is a breath of fresh air." Another reviewer says, "The author brings to the old, old story a refreshingly creative sense of the contemporary struggle of man both personal and cosmic." I commend this book, *Our Visited Planet*, because of its many excellences. It is written in a rhythmic, sonorous prose. It is characterized by a balanced rationality of approach. It is an intelligent defense of a substantial Christian faith that has contemporary meaning.

Our Visited Planet deals with basic Christian doctrines about Jesus Christ: His incarnation, His crucifixion, His resurrection, the forty days immediately following His resurrection, His ascension, and His return. The work is genuinely evangelical in its focus and content. Not only in the affirmation of the basic Christian teachings about Jesus Christ but also in the author's documentary discussion of each there is a strong reliance upon the authenticity and authority of the Holy Scriptures. The author is in command of contemporary knowledge and scientific discoveries. He uses facts meaningfully to confirm the authenticity of the Scripture narratives which have given rise to the basic doctrines about Jesus Christ. The book is enhanced by relevant references to other scholars and their writings.

The two chapters on the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3 and 4) are especially illuminating. A student of psychical research, the author uses his background of knowledge in this area in his discussion of "the manner of the resurrection."

Throughout the book there is a serious and carefully communicated concern to show the relevance of the traditional Christian doctrines about Jesus Christ in relation to contemporary experience, life, activity and hope. This is especially evident in the chapters "The Meaning of the Ascension" and "The Christ Who Is to Come."

The author closes with a beautifully-penned testimony to "the finality and sufficiency of Christ for my own life." Included are such lines as "From earliest childhood . . . I have felt His moral beauty and excellence . . . His words became increasingly meaningful to me . . . Fellowship with Him has been the great reality of my life . . . Christ has been the central object of my thought and worship and the focus of all good I know . . . I am privileged to know something that the angels can never know—the immeasurable and transcendent experience of sins forgiven . . . I look forward to expressing in a broader and more effective

service my undying gratitude to Him . . . through all eternity I shall belong to Him.”

Frank Bateman Stanger