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# Book Reviews

AMOS AMONG THE PROPHETS. By J. K. Howard. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1968. 119 pages. Cloth. \$2.95.

Even if Amos was an uneducated farmer (shepherd and fig dresser), he demonstrated a perceptive agility in the prophetic art of analogical description. Even if Dr. Howard apologizes in the preface for his lack of scholarship and originality, he is one of the few authors that I have read who simply and effectively interprets the prophecy of Amos on the basis of the idiom of the analogical description. Too often scholars search for hidden meaning in the prophetic analogies and end up with an interpretation more cryptic than the problem they attempted to solve. If a text is problematic, it isn't always the blame-worthy culprit. Some scholars do well to "farm" the *'adamah* before they "farm" for *adam*. In this sense Howard can be classified as a first-class "farmer"; his empathy for Amos' sensitivity is scholarly!

*Amos Among The Prophets* appears in the Baker Book House *New Minister's Handbook Series*. As such it provides the minister with valuable homiletical material, a useful Bible study guide (teens and adults), and a discussional aid for the problem of social affluence. In a lengthy introduction, Howard discusses the nature, function, and role of the prophetic tradition, which is a useful corollary to the study of any prophetic book. But the heightened usefulness of this introduction is the deposition of the twin facets of prophecy: the elements of crisis and prediction. The non-technical, lucid, but terse commentary carefully analyzes all the textual difficulties without leaving the reader with his hands full of marbles and no bag to put them in. But I must add that I do not consider the LXX the physician who heals all textual wounds, even though Howard, who is a doctor of both medicine and theology, applies it as the medicinal catalyst.

William F. Meyer

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YAHWEH AND THE GODS OF CANAAN: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TWO CONTRASTING FAITHS. By William Foxwell Albright. The Athlone Press, University of London, 1968. 249 pages. Cloth. \$7.90.

Few men would argue that archaeology is a science, even if their definition is limited to that of "digging up ruins"; but unfortunately even fewer are ready to accept any inference that it can and possibly should be labeled an exact science, especially in the wake of present day technical analysis. However, it is intriguing to imagine what response will be engendered in those who sift through our culture two thousand years from now. When one is removed from "the present" by a millennium or two, exactness can never be measured with numerical precision but only in terms of the evidence that approves or disavows a given interpretation or reconstruction of the ambiguous.

Albright's discussion of the contrasting faiths (Yahwehism vs. the gods of Canaan) from a historical perspective is based on the latest archaeological evidence, whether it is artifacts, epigraphic or paleographic material. On the basis of the evidence, he discusses a number of pertinent Old Testament questions within the framework of an underlying thesis: To what extent was culture diffusion an active catalyst in the development of these contrasting faiths? Specifically, he shows that archaic Hebrew poetry depended on Canaanite models; that the patriarchal Hebrew heritage was much closer to the Mesopotamian culture than previously supposed by most scholars; that the Ugaritic epics preserved the religious beliefs of the Canaanite cults; and that there were basic differences and similarities between the religious concerns of Moses and the prophets. However, even though these syncretistic tendencies are constantly evident in the opposing cultures, it is extremely important to observe that the religions of Canaan and Israel were fundamentally opposed. At no point in their historical development can it be substantiated that they were diffused into a homogenous movement.

The "Albright syndrome"—overwhelming the reader with bits of convincing evidence that normally is lost in the wastebasket of most scholars—is as apparent in this volume as it is in most of his previous works. However, the preciseness, completeness, and honesty that pervades all of his research necessitates a careful study of his findings by all serious students of the Old Testament.

*William F. Meyer*

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THE NEW TESTAMENT ERA: THE WORLD OF THE BIBLE FROM 500 B.C. TO A.D. 100. By Bo Reicke. Translated from the German by David E. Green. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1968. 336 pages. Cloth. \$5.75.

This volume meets a genuine need among this generation's English-speaking students and teachers of the Word many of whom would probably be hard put to describe the precise relationship between the Hasmoneans and the *Hasidim* or, more importantly perhaps, between groups prominently mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures including the Sadducees and Pharisees. Professor Reicke is amazingly successful in organizing what otherwise might easily have remained a welter of names, dates, movements, and places.

David Green's translation is generally even and eminently readable. (Perhaps Fortress Press would also seriously consider publishing an English translation of Strack-Billerbeck's *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*).

The following chapter headings indicate that the author's primary concern is historical, not theological:

- Judah under Persian Rule, 539-332 B.C.
- Judea under Hellenistic Rule, 332-142 B.C.
- The Hasmonean Rule, 142-63 B.C.
- Palestine under Rome and Herod, 63-4 B.C.

Palestine at the Time of Jesus and the Apostles, 4 B.C.-A.D. 66.

The Roman Empire in the Time of Jesus and the Apostles, 4 B.C.-A.D. 66.

The Roman Empire in the Subapostolic Period, A.D. 67-ca. 100.

Thus, beginning with early post-exilic Jewish history, Reicke discusses on the basis of the biblical data such issues as the complex chronological relationships involving Ezra, Nehemiah, and Persian rulers.

The author's decidedly historical approach in no way precludes his leading the reader to helpful grammatical, exegetical and theological insights, however. For example, on page 187, Reicke calls the verb used in Matthew 27:48 a *conative* imperfect (describing the act of a Roman soldier done "in jest" in *trying to revive Jesus with drink* just prior to our Lord's death).

The plural "high priests" (as opposed to *the* actual high priest as in the phrase "the high priests of Asia" in Acts 19:14) included laymen! The military personnel participating in the capture of Jesus and the apostles and who also guarded our Lord's tomb were Jews, not Roman soldiers (cf. John 18:3, 12; Acts 5:26; Matthew 27:65). The "rulers" (*archontes*) mentioned in Luke 23:13 and 24:20 may have been *financial* officers (cf. pp. 146 ff.).

Concerning the oftentimes ambiguous scribes, Reicke observes:

Gradually the "scribes" came to rank with the patricians and priests, replacing the prophets. These scribes were Levitical experts in sacral law; at times involved in the social government and legal system, at times in *teaching*, they made themselves indispensable . . . In Jesus' milieu, as in late Judaism generally, they exercised significant power under the title "rabbi" (p. 21; cf. pp. 150 ff.).

Thus the scribes of Jesus' day were far more than copyists of ancient manuscripts; the above also sheds light on the possible significance of Matthew's statement at the conclusion of his account of the Sermon on the Mount in which both our Lord *and His teaching* are contrasted with "their scribes" (Matthew 7:28 f.).

Particularly helpful to the Bible class teacher and preacher are Reicke's detailed descriptions of the religious parties within the Judaism of the New Testament times including the priests, elders, Sadducees, scribes, Pharisees, and Essenes as well as a description of the composition and function of the High Council or Sanhedrin.

Although this volume already contains an impressive bibliography as well as a detailed index of names and subjects, a reference index of passages from biblical and extrabiblical writings would add even more to the usefulness of the book.

*The New Testament Era* not only merits a wide sale as a prestigious work to adorn one's study shelves; this book also deserves to be carefully read, studied, and regularly consulted. A real treat awaits the patient reader on almost every page.

Kenneth M. Ballas

**EARTH WITH HEAVEN: AN ESSAY IN SAYINGS OF JESUS.** By Richard R. Caemmerer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1969. 124 pages. Paper. \$2.75.

Dr. Caemmerer constructs a Biblical theology on the basis of the Gospels alone. This book comes in the wake of recent Biblical studies that consider the Gospels to be primarily theological productions of the early church. The author does not enter into the question concerning the authenticity of the words of Jesus, but takes them as they are given in the Gospels at their face value. Regardless of the individual reader's critical stance, the author very effectively reproduces the original impact that the Gospels might have had upon their first readers. Traditional dogmatical terminology gives way to a vocabulary which is largely Biblically determined and oriented. The end result is that Dr. Caemmerer has produced a dogmatics from the Gospels in miniature form. Here he is only reproducing the original intent of the writers who were after all writing not biographical sketches of the life of Jesus but rather theologies. Dr. Caemmerer has capably demonstrated that a theology—Lutheran or otherwise—can be legitimately based on the Gospels without the benefit of the more precisely defined Pauline terms. These pages should lead many into a greater appreciation of the messages of the Gospels.

David P. Scaer

**PREACHING FROM PAUL.** By R. C. H. Lenski. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968. 247 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

R. C. H. Lenski, author of the well known (at least in Lutheran circles) Commentary on the New Testament, is a skilled exegete and homiletician. Out of print for many years, his exegetical-homiletical works, viz. the *Eisenach Gospel* and *Eisenach Epistle Selections*, have continued to be in demand. Baker Book House has done well, therefore, to reprint as part of its "Minister's Paperback Library" series, an exegetical-homiletical work by Lenski originally published in 1916 under the title *Saint Paul*. This is a book of sermons, sermon outlines, and homiletic hints focusing on the life and ministry of the apostle. Lenski treats texts from Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, and I and II Timothy according to the same format employed in his other exegetical-homiletical works. First, there is a discussion of the background of the text, then a thorough exegesis on the basis of the Greek text. This is followed by several pages of homiletic hints concluded with four to ten sermon outline suggestions. The following topics in the life of Saint Paul are dealt with: The Pharisee, the Christian, the Missionary, the Preacher of Justification, the Man of Love, a Minister of Ministers, the Apostle of Hope, In Chains, Facing the End. In the Introduction the author explains that he undertook the preparation of this volume of text studies to furnish workable material for Sunday evening sermon series. It is obvious that on some of the texts more than one sermon could be preached so that the series could be lengthened.

Lenski is sometimes wordy, but he does a solid piece of exegesis with

each text, and he is a gifted homiletician. This is a helpful source book for the preacher who wants to organize his sermons well and who is concerned about dealing fairly and accurately with Scripture in a sermon. The homiletic hints and sermon outlines will stimulate the thought and planning of the preacher who has worked into the substance of these texts. But the preacher who wants to speak meaningfully and relevantly to his congregation will need to go on to a specific relating of the texts and topics to his congregation's existential situation.

This book will be welcomed by theological students and younger preachers who may have been trying to secure copies of Lenski's exegetical-homiletical works.

*Gerhard Aho*

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WHEN GOD SPEAKS. By Philip A. Quanbeck. Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1968. Paper. \$1.50. 126 pages.

Basic to understanding the Bible, the author states in the preface, "is the structure . . . which provides the possibility of understanding." Certainly this is true as far as the original languages are concerned. A person must be able to read the Scriptures in the Hebrew and Greek, or have a good translation. What else is required? Here is where the going gets rougher, especially with ancient texts. Rules for hermeneutics and isagogical principles mount their importance to such place that the simple, clear sense of the text is in danger of being lost in the shuffle. A basic presupposition for Quanbeck is that the Bible is a document of remembered history, "a response to what was perceived as God's action in history" (p. 17). What's wrong with this? Nothing, except that it is intended to relieve people of the idea that the Bible as a whole results from God's inspiration through chosen penmen. Accordingly, while the Bible is valuable as the human record of man's religious response to God's mighty, salvatory acts in history, it itself is as fallible as the men responsible for its writing. These writers sprang from a unique people, a people gifted with unusual religious capacity and perception. They recorded their own statements of faith, not something that rose uniquely from a divine source. As "the record of revelation," the Bible must therefore not be identified with revelation itself, this (revelation) "being the events as they were experienced by the people of Israel" (p. 28). Obviously in their "statements of faith" they could not "know more than their age allows them to know," and what they say must be subjected to and measured by the scientific slide-rules, form-critical and historico-cultural analyses of the text. Moses cannot have been the author of the Pentateuch, since the documentary hypothesis (now pretty well-worn and, in some quarters, totally rejected) proves that it was a patchwork composition. Isaiah, and other Old Testament books, fare little better. "Perfectly obvious" is how Quanbeck characterizes so-called problems and "inconsistencies" in the Biblical text, as also differing theologies or "biblical points of view." The great hermeneutical challenge which we of the twentieth century have is to imagine that we "are thinking like men of the first century." Naturally, says Quanbeck, "we'll never make it, but it's fun to try," the theological

enterprise apparently being viewed as a kind of game. Only the classical centrality of Christ is final and determinative in this tinkering with the text, for it is the "theme whereby the Bible is to be understood" and the "key" which "offers us . . . a new self-understanding, an authentic existence."

This may be the "gospel according to Tillich" but it is hardly the Christian Gospel. In fact, anything resembling the vicarious atonement for the forgiveness of sins is conspicuous by its absence, and in its place the message of the Bible is given as "bringing the rule of God into the world in a dynamic and new way." It is a little hard to believe it, but apparently the Reformation article on justification is judged *passé* for our day and in its place comes (of all things!) the rectoral or governmental theory of the atonement. Because this book, as the whole Tower series of which it is a part, is intended for the general reader, we can only express concern and alarm over what has happened at Augsburg! The book is a case in point of what eventuates when the *sola Scriptura* principle is tampered with and surrendered. Never far behind is fuzzy thinking, not to say evasion, of the chief article of the Christian faith. The earnest words and warning of Jesus seem pertinent here in view of the wholesale adoption of the higher critical judgment over the Biblical text and its content: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5, 46).

E. F. Klug

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IS IT—OR ISN'T IT? Why We Believe in the Existence of God. By E. M. Blaiklock and D. A. Blaiklock. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1968. 83 pages. Cloth. \$2.95.

"Taste, that is, and see," the authors, father and son, invite, urging their readers to climb their own little hills along life's way, with its crises and challenges, and to find, as they have, that "Christ is the life" indeed. For what they have written, an eloquent and admirable apologetic for the Christian faith, we may return the compliment: Taste and see! They team up—the father, a distinguished professor of classics and public orator at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, the son, a medical man with a speciality in psychology—to produce what we may appropriately dub a sprightly "case for Christianity." Refreshing and ingenuous in their defense of Biblical truth, the authors demonstrate how a strong, convincing argument for the faith can be made in this day, not any faith, but specifically the Christian faith, in which the documents (the Bible) are valid, and the central figure, Christ, above all, is valid and not to be denied in any way, either His full deity, or His true humanity.

Occasionally we look for a clear, convincing book like this, for that skeptical friend or acquaintance, for that doubting spirit which is part of our own sinful flesh. The book has depth, brevity, and power, along with ease of reading and being completely uncomplicated. The Blaiklocks achieve their goal: 1) that "in the light of Christianity life and the world make sense"; and 2) that "the contrary faith has only frustration and

confusion to offer." When we now add that the core of the book surveys the so-called rational or philosophical proofs for the existence of God—cosmological, ontological, teleological, moral—let none flip the page and say, that's old hat. Theirs is a lucid, interesting treatment, and a good review. Even sermon material pokes up its head throughout the book, particularly in the respectful chapter on Holy Writ, in the striking material on Christ, and His resurrection, and finally in the personal testimony of the meaning of Christian faith for the authors themselves. When so many are writing with embarrassment for their faith, with apologies to the secular realm around them, with misguided attention to a history and humanity which are held to be self-redeeming, we can only say that it is heart-warming to share the penetrating, sterling testimony of faith in the Savior that comes from these friends "Down Under."

*E. F. Klug*

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INFALLIBILITY AND THE EVIDENCE. By Francis Simons. Templegate Publishers, Springfield, Illinois. 1968. 120 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

The 'reformation' in the Church of Rome, initiated by Pope John XXIII, is real, progressive and evangelical, involving the very substance of theology and not only the outward forms of worship. Francis Simons, who received his doctorate in theology at the Gregorian University in Rome and is now Bishop of Indore, makes on the basis of the biblical evidence an impassioned plea for the Church of Rome to reconsider the doctrine of the church's infallibility, especially as it centers in the pope. Cardinal O'Boyle's disciplining of priests in the Washington Diocese on the matter of birth control is only symptomatic of the all basic and important problems of authority in the Roman Church. What many priests, especially in our country, are doing in a practical way in the matter of authority by ignoring or acting contrary to the official opinions, Bishop Simons has done in a theological way.

At this juncture it should be said that as the Church of Rome goes through pangs of evangelical rebirth, it is unfortunate that there are any Protestants around, like this reviewer for example. Nothing could be more detrimental than an 'I told you so' attitude on the part of spectator Protestants. What is exciting is the freshness in Biblical rediscovery in the Roman Church and in the end it would be ironic if they, instead of us, heirs of Luther, should become the really great biblical scholars.

Bishop Simons' main thesis is that the Church bases its task and ministry on the events in the life of Jesus Christ, which are then transmitted to the Church through the apostolic writings. Papal infallibility requires belief in events which are not capable of historic verification, e.g. the assumption of Mary. Interesting is his critique on the dictum of Vincent of Lerin that doctrine is determined by "what was believed always, everywhere and by all." Only those doctrines contained in the biblical records and none in the post-apostolic period fit these criteria. Opinions of the later church contradict themselves from time to time and this would not be possible if the church really had infallibility. Also



questioned is whether the unity is dependent on a visible head, e.g., the pope.

Bishop Simons' concerns about the infallibility of the pope has parallel considerations for the doctrine of the infallibility of the Scriptures in Protestant circles. The Roman Church has weakened its case when in doctrinal disputes it has taken refuge in the infallibility of the pope instead of authenticating the basic historicity. Protestants taking refuge in the doctrine of biblical infallibility is also an ostrich like approach when the very historical foundations of the Gospels are questioned.

In the face of the growing crisis within Christendom where the 'word' is divorced from the actual historical situation, the Scriptures must be understood as authentic and trustworthy historical documents. Infallibility, papal or Scriptural, must have historical foundations, because it was in history that God worked out His salvation. The bishop shows that the doctrine of papal infallibility permits the most severe type of form criticism. If the Scriptures are destroyed as reliable historical witnesses, then papal infallibility is a second line of defense for the faith of the Church. Also treated are those passages traditionally used to support papal infallibility. Here is a book that could well serve Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue on the local level. Here is an eye opener to the skeptical pastor who thought that the changes in Rome were only superficial at best. Lutheran pastors owe it to themselves to see in the Roman Church a firm sign of evangelical witness. Bishop Simons' contribution has made the church more Catholic and more evangelical. A mile-stone in religious literature, it is already an assured best-seller.

*David P. Scaer*

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THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. By R. A. Torrey. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1968. 262 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

Although this book was first published more than a half century ago, it is still capable of making a valuable contribution to the current discussion of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. It is a classic work, offering the reader a thorough, comprehensive, interesting and warm treatment of a most important Biblical doctrine. Though the book has been written in a scholarly fashion, the author hopes to lead the reader beyond a mere intellectual comprehension of the doctrine involved. Therefore Dr. Torrey insists that "it is of highest importance from the standpoint of experience that Christians know the Holy Spirit as a person, just as real as Jesus Christ Himself, an ever-present, loving Friend and mighty Helper, who is not only always by their side but dwells in their hearts every day and every hour, and who is ready to undertake for them in every emergency of life."

The author apparently finds particular joy in describing the Spirit as Paraclete and Comforter. Concerning the Spirit as *Parakleetos* he writes: "It is a wonderfully tender and expressive name for the Holy One. Sometimes when we think of the Holy Spirit, He seems to be so

far away, but when we think of the *Parakleetos*, or in plain English our "Standbyer" or our "Par-taker" how near He is." Again Torrey writes: "If this thought of the Holy Spirit as the ever-present Paraclete once gets into your heart and abides there, it will banish all fears forever." Perhaps the author goes too far, however, when he finally concludes: "In the thought of the Holy Spirit as Paraclete there is also a cure for insomnia."

Dr. Torrey includes in his book a clear and convincing chapter on the deity of the Holy Spirit in which he lists "five distinct and decisive lines of proof" that the Holy Spirit is God. One is disappointed, however, when two chapters later he argues that the Spirit is subordinate to the Father and the Son, an opinion which he then seeks to substantiate with Scripture. One wonders how he can maintain both the deity of the Spirit and also His subordination to the other persons in the Trinity.

In the course of his book the author devotes attention to practically all of the important facets of the person and work of the Spirit. Still it is rather evident that his chief interest centers in the so-called baptism with the Holy Spirit. He devotes more than seventy five pages to this one topic. He considers baptism with the Holy Spirit to be a *special* gift of God, yet "it is the birthright of every believer." One can indeed be a Christian without this gift, but only by the baptism with the Holy Spirit does one become a member of the body of Christ in the fullest sense."

What is meant by baptism with the Holy Spirit, and what are its benefits? Torrey summarizes his views thus: "The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God coming upon the believer, filling his mind with a real apprehension of truth, especially of Christ, taking possession of his faculties, imparting to him gifts not otherwise his but which qualify him for the service to which God has called him."

As far as the necessity of baptism with the Holy Spirit is concerned, Torrey writes: "It is evident that baptism with the Holy Spirit is an absolutely necessary preparation for effective work for Christ along every line of service."

What must one do in order to obtain the baptism with the Holy Spirit? The author lists seven steps in this path. Among these are: acceptance of Jesus as one's Savior and Lord, renunciation of sin, open confession of the renunciation of sin and public acceptance of Christ, absolute surrender to God, desire for baptism with the Holy Spirit, prayer for this blessing, and finally faith. In the opinion of a Lutheran, a list of this type appears to be legalistic.

Throughout his book it is quite evident that Torrey is operating with Reformed presuppositions. This is especially apparent when he discusses the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Word. In his opinion there can be times and occasions when the Spirit does not accompany the proclamation of the Word.

Lutherans, however, will find this book to be interesting and profitable reading, containing valuable insights into the Scriptural doctrine of the person and work of the Spirit.

Howard W. Tepker

THE TASK OF PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY. By C. J. Curtis. Philosophical Library, New York, 1967. 165 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

According to the foreward this volume claims to be the result of two factors: one is the supposed crisis in theology, caused by the "God is dead" movement, the other harks back to the author's interest in the philosopher Whitehead, which began over twenty years ago when he was a student of Charles Hartshorne and Bernard Lomer at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Curtis states that another title for the book might well be: "Christian Theology and Process Philosophy." The purpose of the book is consequently, "limited and very specific to define a number of classic Christian notions in Whiteheadian categories" (p. ix). The purpose of the book is apologetical, namely, to state theology in consonance with twentieth century thought so that theology will not be merely an exercise of futility and prevent thinking people from embracing "the death of God" movement.

The author is an LCA pastor in Chicago, Illinois. In this volume he attempted "to illumine more richly many traditional theological ideas in the light of Whiteheadian philosophy." The LCA pastor claims that the doctrines of traditional Christianity (and of Lutheranism) are expressed in archaic forms. "There is need for something new, constructive, and more contemporary; the time has come for a major updating of the whole framework of Christian faith (p. x.)."

Dr. Curtis is persuaded that the process philosophy developed by Alfred North Whitehead is the best available for presentation of the sense of great doctrinal affirmations of the universal church. To place before the educated laity of our day the old doctrinal formulations of the past is according to Curtis, to insult their intelligence.

The author of *The Task of Philosophical Theology* believes himself a man with a mission, namely, that of a "rescue mission." To quote his own words: "It is an attempt to give warm, rich, universal meaning to theological notions and Christian cultic practices which have become irrelevant, understandable, and anachronistic to twentieth century man. In this book a particular effort is made to restate theological notions in terms of the thought and categories of the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead" (p. xxv).

After an introduction (called foreword, preface) the author in chapter I gives a sketch of Whitehead's life and thought. Chapter II presents in Whiteheadian terms and categories the aims and methods of philosophical theology. Chapter III applies process philosophy to twenty-five theological concepts and doctrines (pp. 27-158). The volume concludes with an explanation of Whiteheadian terminology.

Dr. Curtis also believes that the restatement of traditional doctrines in terms of Whitehead's philosophy is also the best way to help in participating in ecumenical movements as well as meeting other religions on a basis that will not repel the non-Christian religions, a goal that Lutheran bishop Nathan Söderblom sponsored and fostered.

In Protestant thinking revelation was believed to have been ter-

minated with the death of the last of the apostles. "From the point of view of process theology the notion of revelation as closed with the Bible is untenable. Process thought conceives of revelation as a continued process, which preceded the earliest pages of the Bible and continued after the last page of the Bible has been written or edited," (p. 37). Other religions also have revelations from God. According to Bishop Söderblom, as quoted by Curtis, the religion of Zoroaster was an example of special revelation of God outside of the Bible.

Readers who accept the clear statements of the New Testament about Christ as the only way to salvation (cf. Acts 4:12; John 3:36; 3:16) will be shocked by Curtis' statements. Thus he wrote: "The actuality of Christ's life was the process in which divine potentialities (such as sinlessness) were actualized. Jesus evolved into a religious genius and a son of God" (p. 43). He was not born a complete and perfect man. Curtis claims it is a scandal that Christianity has refused to recognize "the reality of process in the humanity of Christ," and consequently unnecessarily speculates about the Virgin Birth.

The deity of Christ is attacked on page 45: "The reason that the person of Christ can have exemplary and redemptive significance for us is that he was different from us in degree, but not in kind."

The reader will find that every major Christian doctrine treated by Curtis in his book is restated in such a manner as to virtually deny what the Scriptures teach about the doctrine presented in terms of process categories. While in Biblical and systematic theology it has been customary by Christian theologians to cite *sedes doctrinae*, Scriptures passages, as the basis for the formulation of doctrinal statements or dogmas, the LCA pastor's procedure is to show that his formulation agrees with some passage from the writings of Whitehead. That means that Whitehead's pronouncements are the new Bible, by means of which philosophical doctrine are supported and constitute the new "Source for religious authority."

The reader might be inclined to shrug this book off as an aberration and consider its author an exception to what is normal in the LCA. However, in an article that was published in the *Lutheran Forum*, August, 1968 an academic dean of a prominent Lutheran Eastern Seminary stated that it was perfectly legitimate to state Lutheran doctrine in Barthian, Tillichian or Whiteheadian terms.

Today there are those in the Lutheran Church who are telling us that it is improper to ask: What does the text say? but the proper question to ask is: What function does the text have in today's world. Since the world is constantly changing, the church must accommodate itself to this dynamic world order and not tell the world that there are absolutes in religion which are not dependent upon the moods of a given time nor the aberrations of fallen men! The slogan of "A Changeless Christ for a Changing World" is now made to read: "A Changing Christ for A Changing World," and process philosophy is the framework in which religious teachings are to be articulated!

*Raymond F. Surburg*

TONGUES, HEALING, AND YOU. By Don W. Hillis. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1969. 111 pages. Paper, \$1.00.

If the church in the twentieth century has shown itself to be ineffective, irrelevant, and unconcerned with the needs of modern man, then what is the answer? Is "speaking in tongues" or "the gifts of healing" possible solutions to our problem? Are there lessons to be learned from the Pentecostal movement? Is there an evangelical zeal which could be ours if we would move in the direction of Pentecostalism? These are some of the questions being asked with increasing frequency by many liturgical and traditional Protestant churches, including Lutherans. These are also the questions which the author discusses and evaluates in his book.

After a brief survey of the extent to which "speaking in tongues" and faith healing have claimed the interest of non-Pentecostal churches in recent years, Mr. Hillis then examines the Scripture, particularly the Book of Acts and St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, to determine the nature of the charismatic gifts spoken of in the Bible and the extent to which they were employed in the early church. He reaches the conclusion that the picture one gains of the early church is that of a fearless group of people who turned the world upside down by their bold declaration of the Gospel in languages understood by their hearers, rather than that of a little band of people who distinguished themselves from the rest of the world by their speaking in unknown tongues.

In the second part of his book the author discusses the "gifts of healing" which, like speaking in tongues, is attracting much attention in traditional Protestant churches today. He contrasts the "healing campaigns" of the twentieth century with the "gifts of healing" exercised by members in the early church and referred to in I Corinthians 12. He illustrates from Scripture that "the gifts of healing" held a comparatively small place in the lives and work of the apostles. Their main task was soul-winning, not healing in a miraculous way. Furthermore the author challenges the popular misconception which insists that it is never the will of a loving God that a child of His should be ill, and that therefore it is always the will of the Lord that believers should be healed of their diseases. He asserts that the Christian is in no position to expect immunity from sickness and suffering, despite the fact that Christ has suffered for sin, for "as long as we are on earth we are subject to the frailties of a sin-cursed body and a sin-cursed world." The author finally discusses what he terms "The Sanctity of Suffering" concluding that sickness, sorrow, and suffering can be a blessing in the life of the Christian and can be endured for the glory of God. This is a particularly worthwhile chapter.

This little booklet, *Tongues, Healing, and You*, is one which no doubt will be read with interest, appreciation, and profit by many pastors and laymen who are looking for a Scripture-based evaluation of the tongues movement and the healing ministries which are coming into prominence today as the church looks for ways to attract the attention and meet the needs of twentieth century man. The author correctly centers the

readers attention on the church's primary concern, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and urges Christians to keep first things first, rather than majoring in minors.

Howard W. Tepker

**APOSTOLATE AND MINISTRY:** The New Testament Doctrine of the Office of the Ministry. By Karl Heinrich Rengstorf. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis and London, 1969. 124 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

Concordia Publishing House recently has begun publishing the works of contemporary German theologians. In spite of a "Johnny come lately" excursion into this rather lucrative and promising field, the selections by the editors have been outstanding. Rengstorf's monograph on the ministry can be placed along side of Dantine's *Justification of the Ungodly*, Gensichen's *We Condemn* and Elert's *Eucharist and Church Fellowship*. Though the first edition of Rengstorf's book first appeared thirty-five years ago, the work is as timely now as it was then. The Münster theologian has specialized in the concept of the New Testament apostleship and has made it his life's work, so to speak. Much of the material here may be found in his more scholarly documented article in Kittel's *Wörterbuch*, now also available in English by Eerdmans. In this work *Apostolate and Ministry* Rengstorf takes the Judaic and New Testament data and applies it in a very practical way to the pastor who is concerned about the legitimacy of his task as a preacher in the church. Rengstorf's major contention is that the New Testament office of the apostle is to be understood from the Jewish office of the *schelicha* which is then translated into Greek as *apostolos*. The *schelicha* is a representative for Christ. The present day ministry resembles the office of the apostle in that its work is done under difficult conditions and that its meaning is derived from the future of Jesus. The theologically aware reader will see here that Rengstorf has a thought now popularized by Jürgen Moltmann. Also discussed is the "chicken and egg" controversy applied to clergy and laity with Rengstorf giving to neither a supremacy over the other. Pastors are reminded that it is God who gives the office of the ministry and not that men of themselves are able to take it up. In the matter of jurisdiction, pastors are limited to their own bailiwicks.

In some places Rengstorf seems to make the office of the apostle too wide by including Barnabas along with St. Paul. This contention is made on the basis of the missionary commission of the Antiochian congregation. However, Paul's support for his apostolic office always seems to lead back to the appearance of Jesus on the Damascus Road. While it is true that Paul and Barnabas did serve as "apostles" for the Christians at Antioch in carrying out their missionary directives in Asia Minor, Paul's primary appointment to the apostleship is given directly by Jesus and is superior to any joint endeavors carried out with Barnabas on the first missionary journey.

Rengstorf's concept of the apostle should in some way be connected with a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. While Rengstorf does not make what seems to be a necessary connection between apostleship and Scrip-

ture, he has opened another avenue with productive possibilities. It is refreshing to see a book of such outstanding theological caliber made available in English.

*David P. Scaer*

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THE GOD WHO IS THERE. By Frances A. Schaeffer. Inter-Varsity Press, Chicago, 1968. 191 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

This is a provocative study. In six unequal sections and fourteen pages of appendices, the author attempts an analysis of the intellectual and cultural climate of the second half of the 20th century. Having drawn a portrait of despair upon the canvas of culture, he points out how the so-called new theology attempts to relate to this kind of a climate and how historic Christian theology must relate to it.

The first step he sees in the line of despair is philosophy, represented particularly by Hegelian dialectic and Kierkegaardian existentialism, which bifurcated into the secular and the religious. The second step is art. Art has influenced many more people than has philosophy. The "artistic" doorway to despair was opened by the impressionists. The line of despair continues in music and the general culture. Debussy, says Schaeffer, is the doorway into the field of modern music; Henry Miller, John Osborn, and Dylan Thomas represent the novelists, the dramatists, and the poetry. "The line of despair is a unit and the steps in the line have a distinguishing and unifying mark," writes Schaeffer (p. 44). The various steps—philosophy, art, music, theater, etc.—differ in details, but the way in which they differ is only incidental. At base the concept of truth is attacked. All these movements represent a new way of talking about and arriving at truth.

The new theology, as seen by the author, stands in bold contract to both biblical and reformation theology; it is, in fact, anti-theology. Naturalistic and rationalistic theology failed. They rejected everything miraculous and supernatural but still hoped to find an historical Jesus in a rational, objective, scholarly way. Their search, opines the author, was doomed to failure before it began. They could have returned to biblical theology or they could have turned to a complete nihilism. Instead, theologians chose a third way. This way is identified by Schaeffer as Neo-orthodoxy. But this too gave no new answers. What existential philosophy said in secular language, Neo-orthodoxy spoke in theological language. The basic issue in Neo-orthodoxy was really a shift in epistemology. Then followed the "newer" theologians: Reinold Niebuhr, Tillich, John Robinson, Alan Richardson. They separated religious truth from science on the one hand and history on the other. Their "new" theology offered nothing more than a divided view of truth. Here it should be stated that the author's view of Tillich and Robinson leaves something open to question. After discussing modern mysticism the author turns to a new phase of modern theology. It is the already deceased "death of God theology." This theology, too, has no answer to man's basic dilemma, a dilemma which consists in human guilt and the scandal of the cross as the answer to that guilt.

In section V of his book the author treats the commendation of the Christian faith to our own generation. We have, he says, a responsibility to communicate the Gospel to our generation. But how can this "positive apologetic" operate in a generation which doesn't understand our traditional terms? The author insists that historic Christianity has never separated itself from knowledge. Nor does it ever forget that true apologetics is a work of the Holy Spirit. Historic Christianity insists, furthermore, that truth is one; the Church must live and teach this "even if 20th century thought and theology deny it" (p. 141). Schaeffer then proceeds to offer certain space-time proofs which he believes validate the claims of biblical Christianity. These proofs offer "good and sufficient evidence that Christ is the Messiah as prophesied in the Old Testament and also that he is the Son of God." I believe that the author means well when he discusses the relationship between faith and knowledge. I seriously question, however, that he understands the basic biblical and philosophical relationship, as well as the difference, between knowledge and faith.

Dr. Schaeffer holds to the full doctrinal position of historic Christianity. He also believes that every honest question must be given an honest answer, and that there must be an individual as well as a corporate exhibition that God truly exists in our century. He is concerned to be able to demonstrate that historic Christianity is not just a superior dialectic or better point of psychological integration. This is, to be sure, a position which not only challenges but even scandalizes much of our contemporary culture. Even to assert his position is to assume a rather formidable task. As said at the beginning, this book is provocative. It is well worth the reading, even though all who have committed themselves to a historic biblical and evangelical faith will not subscribe to all of his presuppositions. I, for one, do not. A glossary of terms used in the book will prove to be extremely helpful.

*John F. Johnson*

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- THE REFORMATION, THEN AND NOW. By Charles S. Anderson, 1966. 119 pages.
- IF GOD BE FOR US. By Joseph M. Shaw, 1966. 120 pages.
- EXODUS INTO THE WORLD. By Loren E. Halvorsen, 1966. 115 pages.
- HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD. By Kent Knutson, 1966. 113 pages.
- CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF FAITH. By Paul R. Sponheim, 1967. 128 pages.
- THE FINAL ACT. By Peter L. Kjeseth, 1967. 121 pages.
- THE MIRACLE OF MARK. By Roy A. Harrisville, 1967. 128 pages.
- WHATEVER YOU DO. By James H. Burtness, 1967. 128 pages.
- WHEN GOD SPEAKS. By Philip A. Quanbeck, 1968. 124 pages.
- CREATION, FALL AND FLOOD. By Terrence E. Fretheim, 1969. 127 pages.

Augsburg Publishing House, the official publication house of TALC, has since 1966 been issuing a series of volumes called the TOWER BOOKS. They are volumes, ranging from between 113 to 128 pages, written espe-



cially for the educated layman. Dr. Kent Knutson, till recently professor of systematic theology at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, and now president of Wartburg Theological Seminary of Dubuque, Iowa, is the general editor for this series. The title of "Tower" is explained by the editor in the foreword of each volume as follows:

A tower has both height and strength. Grounded in a firm foundation it provides the opportunity for a full-range perspective and soaring vision. It was in a tower that Luther had the shattering experience of grace which began the Reformation with its insights into the Gospel of God and new freedom for man.

The TOWER volumes have been written to serve "the curious and reflective Christian by examining the varied themes of God and man in clear, concise, and in interesting (perhaps even sparkling) ways." The authors of the ten volumes thus far published are said to be committed to the biblical faith. Professors from colleges and seminaries of the American Lutheran Church endeavor "to explore great ideas, and reflect on the application of faith to daily life, transmit the wisdom of the past, suggest new strategy for the church in the world, and open up the Scriptures as honestly and competently as they can."

In these books the educated layman is being introduced to some of the new theological developments in European and American Lutheranism. This reviewer has read the books and monographs of American Lutheran publication houses since 1929. He is well acquainted with the Lutheran literature that was issued by Augsburg Publishing House (before it became the official publication House of TALC), Muhlenberg Press, Fortress Press, The Lutheran Book Concern, Augustana Book Concern and The Lutheran Literary Board (Burlington, Iowa). In the TOWER volumes the reader will find theological trends and positions taken which in many respects are different from those once held in the former Evangelical Lutheran Church, The American Lutheran Conference and the American Lutheran Church. Views are being promulgated in the TOWER series that contradict the views once enunciated by such stalwarts as Martin Reu, R. C. Lenski, H. C. Leupold, Herman Preus, Paul Buehring, O. Hallesby, L. H. Schuh, Jacob Tanner, J. A. Dell, F. C. Fendt, John Lavik, J. L. Neve, C. F. Hein, C. A. Freseman, W. E. Schuette, Edward Schramm, Emory Golladay, L. A. Gottwald, George Fritschel and others. Articles and contributions to *Die Kirchliche Zeitschrift* and *The Journal of the American Lutheran Conference* enunciated different views on Biblical interpretation, doctrine and ethics than do the TOWER volumes.

It is, of course, true that the present generation does not need to state Christian doctrines and ethical principles in the same words of the past, but the approach to Scripture ought not to change with the passing decades, unless it was misunderstood or mistated in the past. The new Augsburg House volumes do take a different approach to the Scriptures. The belief that the entire Scriptures, comprising the sixty-six canonical books, was inspired and therefore inerrant was a belief once held by the old members of TALC. While it is true that the official constitution of TALC holds the historic view of an inerrant Scripture, a number of

TOWER volumes indicate that most of the authors of this new series do not hold to the official position of TALC. This will become apparent from the reading of Philip A. Quanbeck's *When God Speaks* (of which there is an extended review in this issue). A critical approach to the Scriptures is taken by a number of the authors in this series. A destructive literary criticism, which rejects clear assertions by Christ and the Apostles about the authorship of Old Testament books and Psalms, once rejected by theologians of the old synods now comprising TALC, are now openly espoused and the traditional positions repudiated.

Form criticism which has injected a greater note of uncertainty into the area of Biblical interpretation, is now being advocated by Harrisville in *The Miracle of Mark*, by Fretheim in *Creation, Fall and Flood*, and by Kjeseth in *The Final Act* (a book dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit). Professor Harrisville operates with New Testament form criticism, which means the reader of the Gospels cannot be certain of what Jesus said and did and what the Early Church ascribed to Jesus as the sayings and deeds of Jesus in the interest of catechetical teaching. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the Luther Seminary professor believes in miracles, which he defines in Mark as parables. Some miracles ascribed to Christ in certain stories were later created by the Christian community on the basis of the resurrection belief. Satan, as man's great opponent in the days of the Old Testament, is seriously questioned when Harrisville states that the idea of Satan is mentioned for the first time in the intertestamental literature. Demoniacal possession obviously did not exist, but the ascription of diseases to demons was simply Mark's way of describing the origin of diseases. What the New Testament calls demoniacal possession, modern man would prefer to call mental or psychosomatic illness.

Professor Fretheim, in *Creation, Fall and Flood* has accepted the views originally sponsored by Herman Gunkel, who in his *The Legends of Genesis* classified chapters 1-11 as mythological. Although the historical character of many events alluded to in Genesis 1-11 are, in the New Testament, referred to as having occurred, the views of form critics which reject the historicity of the Genesis narrative, are preferred to those of the New Testament. The theology reflected in the various documents in the Book of Genesis are depicted by Fretheim as the result of Israel's faith and not as once held, as a matter of God's revelation to Moses. There are supposedly numerous contradictions in the Genesis 1-11.

A number of the TOWER volumes express their dissatisfaction with the past attitude of many Lutheran bodies over against the ecumenical movement. They are critical of the exclusive attitude taken by Lutheranism in the first half of this century in believing that because of erroneous doctrinal positions in other denominations Lutherans were not to have fellowship with Roman Catholicism, with Calvinism, with Protestant churches and sects that advocated teachings different from those set forth in The Lutheran Confessions. Professor Charles Anderson, *The Reformation, Then and Now* urges participation in the ecumenical movement. He wrote: "The overall aim of the ecumenical endeavor has been the furtherance of common goals such as missions and service, the creation of a

united front on some issues so that greater impact may be made on the world, and the demonstration that there is indeed a "oneness" in Christ found among Christians." (p. 89).

Anderson believes that because of the ecumenical surge, the fact of Post-Christian existence, and the never ending quest for a principle of meaning in life—all this means that the church will constantly need to reform itself, since it can never adequately state the teachings of the Scriptures in such a way that in another age they need not be changed. This would, of course, imply that the Scriptures are not clear and Christians can never be certain that they have grasped the truth of God.

A number of volumes in the TOWER series fail to set forth Scriptural doctrine with clarity and with the definiteness that the Lutheran Confessions do. Dr. Knutson in his *Only Son Our Lord* makes many concessions to modern liberal thought. He does not believe it necessary to hold to the Virgin Birth, clearly taught in Matthew and Luke and in all the major creeds of Christendom. He espouses a view of the *kenosis* of Christ that this reviewer believes does not do justice to the Biblical data. He does not take a clear stand on the miracles of Christ. On the atonement he prefers to accept Aulen's *Christus Victor* view, in preference to that taught by the Lutheran Confessions. In his discussion of the descent of Christ into hell, the resurrection and the ascension he leaves the reader wondering as to whether or not these were events which actually transpired in calendar history.

Dr. Joseph Shaw in *If God Be For Us* presents views on the doctrine of justification by faith which are not in harmony with the understanding of this doctrine as given in the Lutheran Confessions. Shaw has questioned the correctness of Article IV of the Augustana. He opposes the concept of justification as being forensic and that Jesus placated the wrath of God. Shaw's exposition of justification by faith does not conform to the teaching as taught by Paul's Letter to the Romans. His views on justification are those of a Lutheran scholarship that wants to make the doctrine more palatable to human reason.

In a number of the TOWER volumes Biblical doctrines are not portrayed as made known by divine revelation but are depicted as a result of development of the religious thinking of the people of the Old Testament and of the Apostolic era. Those who hold to verbal plenary inspiration are berated as holding to a dictation theory of the Bible. The Bible is only to be trusted and accepted when it discusses God's relationship to man and man's relationship to God. Many Biblical directives, ethical and doctrinal teachings are no longer binding or applicable in the opinion of authors in the TOWER series.

Professor Burtness of Luther Seminary, St. Paul advocates ethical positions in his *Whatever You Do* which are different from those advanced by Reu, Matson and Keyser, earlier Lutheran writers on the subject of ethics. Burtness states that his point of view insists on "the absence of any "ethical absolutes," that is, generalizations—whether laws, principles, values, or whatever—which are always, for every person in every situation, applicable," (p. 17). He claims that there can never be "absolute certainty about the will of God in any particular situation" (p. 52). This

he claims also means "that the Bible does not yield absolute answers about ethical questions" (p. 53). Because we are sinners Burtness claims we can never know the will of God in any situation (p. 54). Burtness argues that every situation faced by a Christian is characterized by "ambiguity." Thus he asserts: "Because sin penetrates the whole person, the whole society, and the whole creation, no situation ever has a self-evident meaning. Every situation is ambiguous" (p. 68). The Bible does not contain principles which should be followed, but merely descriptions how God's people in the past have responded to an ethical situation (p. 51). Today God's people must make their own decisions in an ethical situation and in their own way respond to the "act in Christ." Burtness' attitude toward ethical problems is influenced by what this reviewer considers is a defective view of the authority of the holy Scriptures!

A number of the TOWER volumes come out strongly for "the social gospel." The Lutheran Church, they assert, must become involved in the social issues of the day, one of its great failures in the past. It is not proper to speak of "personal salvation" (Burtness, p. 63). The involvement of the Church in the problems of society and the world is the major thrust of Loren E. Halvorsen's *Exodus into the World*. With the new emphasis on Rauschenbusch's social gospel one can understand why there is support for cooperation with the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, organizations that are capable of giving clear-cut pronouncement on political and social issues but are unable to define any of the major Christian doctrines with anything like clarity. The same judgment can be made about The Lutheran World Federation, which at its most recent gathering, was unable to define the doctrine of justification by faith, the "doctrine of the standing or falling church."

The future history of Lutheranism will take a different direction than it has in the past if the positions advocated by the TOWER authors are accepted.

*Raymond F. Surburg*

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POST-CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA: A THEOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY. By G. C. Oosthuizen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1968. 273 pages. Cloth. \$7.95.

The author is a past professor of missiology and ecclesiastical history at Fort Hare University College, South Africa and visiting professor at the Kirchliche Hochschule, Berlin. According to the information on the dust jacket, G. C. Oosthuizen holds doctoral degrees from South Africa and Amsterdam and is M. Th. of Union Theological Seminary, New York.

The book shows an acquaintaince with the vast and recent literature on Africa and on missiology in general. The bibliography found in the annotations to the several chapters is truly astounding.

The title and tone of the book appear rather pessimistic. While Dr. Dammann, the Marburg Africanist has used a similar title recently, the number of sects seems to be multiplying too fast; the number has grown rapidly from 1200 to 2200 to 3000, and now to 6000. It seems to be a question, how a separate sect is to be identified. Not every group is truly a

new and separate entity. The non-black South African author may be inclined toward a gloomy view on several counts. Besides the South African solution of the racial problem (in which the pot should hesitate to call the kettle black), there is the pessimism of ecumenical Christianity, which sees post-Christianity and secularism everywhere and is ready to sacrifice basic and traditional tenets of the faith in order to meet man "where he is."

The many difficult issues relating to missions today and situations encountered in many parts of the world are well reviewed and documented. Many judgments are passed upon the missions of an earlier day, but the author does not recognize that a Calvinistic theology of the Christianized realm has directed some missions into improper channels. And yet, perhaps, he does. He quotes W. A. Visser 't Hooft to the effect that "the mission of the Church does not belong to a greater extent to its *esse* (well-being) than to its *diakonia* (service) . . . The Church also fails in its task by identifying God's purposes with the aims of the nation and vice versa—a phenomenon not uncommon in Africa" (p. 13).

The misunderstanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit he ascribes not only to the nativistic movements, but also to the Pentecostal Churches (p. 120). At the same time Dr. Oosthuizen recognizes that the Church in Africa has shown an antipathy to missionaries of emotionalism, thereby being in opposition to basic elements of African religious expression (p. 129).

After an introduction to the independent movements in Africa the author classifies them as nativistic, prophetic, messianic, etc., generally featuring native elements relating to polygamy, sacred sites, and traditional ceremonies. After treating the problems of language, culture, and fellowship, Dr. Oosthuizen concludes with a discussion of theological training in the African context. The whole is a very careful study thoroughly documented.

Otto F. Stahlke

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THE HUNGERING DARK. By Frederick Buechner. The Seabury Press, New York. 1969. 125 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

Hovering some place between the style of dramatic writing and that of the private devotional type, *The Hungering Dark* applies basic Biblical thoughts to the present with strong existential strokes. The author, a Presbyterian minister, opens the inner most recesses of his soul as he struggles with the tenets of Christianity. The overall effect is mystical. The reader is swept along with the author as he grabs for straws in the wind on which to build his faith. The one built-in defect of existentialism is that it ignores the past or takes a skeptic's view of it. Its redeeming feature is that the individual is made to feel the totality of the present responsibility. *The Hungering Dark* removes the superficial covering from the soul of man and shows the dark and empty abyss. The darkness is ripe for the return of Christ, who alone can satisfy the longing of the human soul. Buechner entwines content and style into one fabric, so that the reader is continually caught up with the writer. Thus the author

attains his purposes in every word. Pastors who desire to say the same thing, but not in the same old way, could very well imitate this style. Both Biblical and provocative, it could very well be put to good use in an adult discussion group.

*David P. Scaer*

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**BLACK POWER AND CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY.** By C. Freeman Sleeper. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1968. 221 pages. Cloth. \$4.50.

This is a book of exceptional importance in the area of Christian Social Ethics. It ought to be read and pondered and acted upon by pastors and other leaders in Christian congregations. It is, according to the statements of the author, "a book, written not just to describe a fad, but to prepare the churches for the next period in the struggle for racial justice." In discussing black power, the author defines the black power image, which black power proponents seek to foster, as "a refusal of black people to see themselves anymore through white men's eyes." Black power, as defined by Floyd McKissick, means six things: The growth of Negro political power, the building of Negro economic power, the improvement of the Negro self-image, the development of Negro leadership, the encouragement of Federal law enforcement, the mobilization of Negro consumer power.

Black power has been widely criticized, the great fear being that it will inevitably lead to widespread violence. It is however agreed, according to the author, that the white community has few qualms about practicing violence against blacks. It is agreed also that simply appealing to the good will of the white community would not work, as the freedom movement of recent years showed. Negroes not only have to command the personal respect of whites, but they have to bargain with whites on the basis of their own power as consumers, businessmen, and voters. The author observes that the appeal of black power is greatest in those communities where the law protects only the whites, where the police and vigilante groups are free to brutalize Negroes and destroy their property. Black power was not intended to destroy law and order, but to demonstrate that law and order simply did not exist for many black people. The writer, however, acknowledges that the danger of the black power image was that it would encourage extremists, black and white, to associate black power with aggressive violence. The author furthermore states that since the emergence of the black power slogan and the initial response to it, the meaning of the image has been constantly developing, and we may expect that it will continue to do so. The author states that the most militant black power advocates take their direction from Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist who engaged in the liberation movement in Algeria and who recommends violence as the way for colonized natives to gain a sense of pride as well as their independence. This certainly goes a long way to explain the trend toward anarchy which has been evident in our great urban centers in recent years. Advocates of black power insist that whites must be approached with the only language which they can understand, the language of power. Black power describes American economic,

political, social, and religious institutions as being racist in character. It insists that our institutions are designed to protect the power and status of propertied white Americans by perpetuating the subordination of the non-whites and the poor.

Because the author wants to speak of black power and Christian responsibility, he asks what it means to be a Christian in an essentially racist society. Is it possible for us to have an identity which is not based on hatred for someone else? Is it possible for us to accept ourselves as white Christians without having to feel superior to someone else? Christians must admit that there are church members who argue that segregation cannot be a religious issue, because they consider God Himself to be the author of segregation. The author states it as his conviction that black power is one more challenge to the meaning of the Christian faith and to the irrelevance of the church as an institution.

In order to enable the churches the better to come to grips with the questions confronting American society today, and to take a proper attitude and to engage in proper actions, the author then examines Biblical foundations for Christian ethics. He finds the basis in the fact that God has created man for community, and has made community and sharing possible. This idea is traced through the Old and through the New Testament. There is much in these pages that is of great importance for a study of the ethical questions that confront our times. This reviewer regrets that the author's devotion to form criticism is so often evident in these chapters. It would seem to be possible to find the Biblical basis for Christian ethics without this constant intrusion of the form critical method.

Having discussed on the basis of the Old and the New Testament the meaning of Christian community, the author proceeds to examine, particularly in the New Testament, the phenomenon of power. He discusses physical power, as evidenced in the healings reported in the Gospels, and the psychic dimension of power as illustrated in the casting out of demons on the part of our Lord. He shows that power has a social dimension also in that it is mediated through institutional structures. He is, however, particularly interested in the distortion of power, and the power of evil. He says: "When we experience power as the power of evil, we become aware that genuine power is being exercised, but not for the purposes for which it was originally intended. Does the Bible provide us with any criteria by which we can identify power in its distorted forms so that we can deal with it effectively? In order to evaluate those strategies for social action which deal most realistically with the problems raised by black power, we must have some clues to help us distinguish between distorted and legitimate uses of power." He shows that power in its distorted forms confronts us as a disabling context for human decision and action. In this form power is very pervasive, and also very deceptive. Within the individual, this destructive power causes alienation. It may cause a man to isolate himself from society. It takes a more potent form when men under the power of evil cooperate with one another and with the evil power to destroy community among men. He finds the

powers of evil often operating unchallenged in death camps or in urban ghettos. There they create a mood of despair.

Again, it is a manifestation of the evil power when man develops a cynical compromise with evil. The writer finds that this is where, in particular, many church members are in the grasp of the powers of evil. He finds that the cross of Christ enables us to recognize for what they are the manifestations of power in their distorted forms. He finds, furthermore, that it is the same cross, which serves as a paradigm for the power of God, in that in His death on the cross Christ "disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them."

In all this the author has not desired merely to analyze the problem. All along he has been aiming at a realistic program or strategy for dealing with evil. He says that such a program must: a. create an awareness of the extent of evil in the world and of the power with which it operates; b. create a recognition of our own participation in the structures of evil in the world; c. combat the tendency of evil to alienate and destroy the lives of men and institutions; d. attack apathy, which allows evil to operate undisturbed; e. reject cynical compromises which accept and use power for its own sake; f. measure our understanding of the depth of evil by the cross of Jesus Christ.

In the third part of the book the author discusses the problem of communicating the Biblical message with respect to Christian ethics in language which makes sense to our own contemporaries. He states that it is not possible for any of us to apply the Bible to our own situation in a literal way. The Bible simply does not speak in direct terms to a situation precisely like the ethical situation which our country faces today in race relations. He says that the social Gospel movement of a bygone generation "too naively tended to equate the Biblical view of the Kingdom of God with modern notions of social progress. We should not try to discover in the Bible (particularly in the New Testament) answers to complex questions of social ethics, such as race relations." His own way of applying the Bible to our present problems the author states in these words: "We will accept the concern of the social Gospel for Christian influence in the institutional life of our society; but we will seek to provide a more adequate Biblical and theological foundation for that concern, which will give us a more critical perspective on those institutions. We will accept the pietistic emphasis on the Christian community as a context of ethical reflection; but we will try to overcome an exaggerated pietistic individualism and to explore the obligations of the church to the social order. We will accept the existentialist emphasis on the decision-making situation, but go on to stress several other points as well: The social dimension of such problems as power, the specific criteria of responsible decision-making which the Biblical text suggests, the need to develop and to evaluate specific strategies from a Biblical perspective, the relevance of non-Biblical sources of ethical reflection."

The writer sees the Christian churches as organizations where much important work can be done in the area of Christian social ethics. He says: "The church offers us the new life which God has made available



through Jesus Christ. It engages us in a community based on mutual trust and mutual service, so that it becomes a microcosm of the inter-relatedness of all mankind." He speaks among other things of the church as a moral community, a community of responsible persons. He says that the church is the bearer of an ethical tradition. When the church fails to stress this aspect of its tradition, it loses its integrity, if not its very life. The church, he insists, must shape the insight and action of its members. He says that there are no peculiarly Christian problems, but there are Christian insights into the problems which all people, Christians and non-Christians, face. The shaping of insights he says, consists in making ourselves aware of and sensitive to the human implications of those problems. He says that the church should be the place where we can seek insight into the social issues which are too emotionally loaded for us to face in our other professional, civic, or fraternal organizations. He does not see this as something which makes for perfect harmony in the church. He says that a church must be a community of dissent as well as of consent. And finally, he says that it is not enough for the church simply to provide new insights or understandings, the church must also help to shape the action of its members. The writer has much to say that is challenging and instructive in this particular area.

This reviewer would urge pastors and Christian lay leaders alike to study this whole book, but particularly pages 147 to 204 where black power and Christian responsibility are discussed at length and in detail with reference to things that need to be done and which churches in our communities can discuss and do as churches.

*Fred Kramer*

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THE CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTERS ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY  
IN BUSINESS. By Harold A. Gram. Concordia Publishing House,  
St. Louis, 1969. 108 pages. Paper. \$1.25.

This little book can perform a double service. It can inform the busy pastor and the interested layman about the nature of the economic system in our country during the latter half of the twentieth century and about the moral and social problems inherent in this system, and it can point out to the Christian who is involved in this system and its working both the pitfalls he ought to avoid and the guidelines he should follow if he would lead a life worthy of his Christian calling.

The writer, who is dean of the College of Business at Valparaiso University, describes our present economic system as a modified capitalistic system, in which the government plays a large role in telling the great corporations which have developed in our time what they can and cannot do, and what they must do. He also points out that under this economic system with millions of shareholders in our great corporations it is not the owners or even the directors of the corporations who make many far reaching decisions, but the managers who are hired to do so. This in turn places great ethical and social responsibilities on the managers.

The writer makes clear that there is not one set of principles for personal ethics, and a different set for social and business ethics, but that the Ten Commandments provide the basic guidelines for all sound ethics, personal, social, and business. He points out many ethical questions which arise in the course of the performance of a manager's duties. Often he does not answer these questions directly, but stimulates the reader to think them through and to find his own answers.

The book would seem to lend itself well for discussion in Men's Clubs and other church organizations. It is herewith heartily recommended.

*Fred Kramer*

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DIE DELITZSCHSCHE SACHE: EIN KAPITEL PREUSSISCHER KIRCHEN UND FAKULTAETSPOLITIK IM VORMARZ. By Karl Heinrich Rengstorf. Arbeiten zur Geschichte und Theologie des Luthertums. Lutherisches Verlagshaus, Berlin und Hamburg, 1967. 86 pages. Paper. 12.80DM.

Professor Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, whose fame and reputation rest primarily in the field of Judaic and New Testament studies, has made an outstanding contribution now in the area of nineteenth century ecclesiastical and political history. The renowned German exegete Franz Delitzsch was perhaps the first theologian of strong and definite commitment to the Lutheran Confessions, who had to wrestle with the problem of serving on a theological faculty within the Prussian Union. Much of the material is based on the correspondence between the government officials and Delitzsch when he was called to professorships in Breslau and Königsberg, both schools within the Union. Rather than forsake his Lutheran convictions, he refused appointments to either school. These personal tragic disappointments for Delitzsch ended with success when he was subsequently appointed to the faculties at Rostock, Erlangen and Leipzig. Of course it is obvious that Rengstorf has more than an historical interest in preparing this monograph. He is the director of Delitzsch Institute For Jewish Studies at the University of Münster. But perhaps there is an even more striking parallel. Rengstorf, though a professor at a theological school within the Prussian Union, is a committed Lutheran as was Delitzsch and he is also a member of the "Breslau Synod", the spiritual descendants of those nineteenth century Lutherans who protested the Lutheran-Reformed Union and with whom Delitzsch identified himself. Many of the books printed in this series already have been translated into English. This would have particular interest for the history of the Missouri Synod as Delitzsch came from the same vine as did Martin Stephan, Walther and other fathers of the Missouri Synod. Missouri Synod professor, Dr. John Hall Elliott, assisted Rengstorf in gathering materials from the Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis.

*David P. Scaer*

ALL THE HOLY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS. By Herbert Lockyer. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968. 283 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

This is a book of sermons and sermon outlines for national and religious festival days by a man who has more than a dozen books to his credit, all dealing with the Bible—its prayers, parables, miracles, doctrines, men and women, etc. Lockyer is an uncompromising evangelical who possesses some extraordinary expository gifts. He has served as a parish pastor in England and Scotland, and has been a freelance Bible conference speaker under the auspices of the Moody Bible Institute in the United States and Canada. Since 1955 he has lived in England at Bromley, Kent.

These are homily type sermons, informal in their approach, with the texts often covered in great detail. The style is simple and direct, and there is much use of Scripture and poetry. The sermons sometimes suffer from too many divisions, which would very likely confuse the listener. There are sermons here for April Fools' Day, for Mother's Day, for Father's Day, for Independence Day, for Labor Day, for St. Patrick's Day, for Valentine Day, for Graduation Day, and for critical national days. Sometimes the author takes too many liberties with the text, as for example when Acts 1:26 (the choosing of Matthias) is used as the text for a national election day. And there is sometimes too much allegorizing, for example with I Corinthians 11:26, which is the text for a meditation on Veterans' Day entitled "Lest We Forget." Despite these weaknesses, the book provides useful exegetical insights and application ideas.

*Gerhard Aho*

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- A His Reader.* Essays on Guidance. Essays on Love. Essays on Prayer. Inter-Varsity Press, Chicago, 1968. Each approx. 100 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
- Judges Ruth.* By Arthur E. Cundall and Leon Morris. Inter-Varsity Press, Chicago, 1968. 318 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.
- The Foundations of Social Order.* By Rousas John Rushdoony. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Nutley, New Jersey, 1968. 232 pages. Cloth.
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- Plain Talk on John.* By Manfred George Gutzke. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1968. 213 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.
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- Holy Book and Holy Tradition.* By F. F. Bruce & E. G. Rupp. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1968. 244 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.
- The Reformation in Germany. Vols I & II.* By Joseph Lortz. Herder and Herder, New York, 1968. 488 pages in Vol. I; 414 pages in Vol. II. Cloth. \$22.50 (for 2 vols.)
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