

BOOK REVIEWS

James DeYoung and Sarah Hurty. *Beyond the Obvious. Discover the Deeper Meaning of Scripture*. Gresham, Ore.: Vision House, 1995. 422 pp. \$15.99 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

This book challenges the traditional evangelical view that sees a single meaning in a Scripture text, the human author's intent. The writers seek to show more possibility in valid meaning by inquiring how Jesus and the NT writers use the OT. Though seeing basic help in the historical-grammatical method, the co-authors contend that the divine Author in later Scripture takes revelation *beyond* the original human author's intent into new details or even changes in meaning (34).

DeYoung is Professor of New Testament, Western Baptist Theological Seminary, Portland, Ore. Hurty is pursuing Ph.D. studies at the University of Sheffield, Sheffield, England.

The book aims to be clear even for readers not technically trained. It relegates some technical, in-depth comments to extensive end notes. Chapters 2-3 discuss historical and present efforts to find deeper meanings, 4-9 explain the writers' theory, and 10 deals with where the hermeneutical approach leads. Appendices A-F discuss related matters such as the kingdom theme held to be the central, unifying factor for all biblical interpretation. Chapter lengths are 12-20 pages for the most part (Chap. 7 on "Knowing God the Author" is 32).

The authors hold that the literal hermeneutic makes good sense and curbs interpreters from whatever may strike their fancy. The literal method does not go far enough to fit with the NT's use of the OT, in their opinion.

Chapter 1 offers examples of NT texts assuming more meaning than literal interpretation of the OT passages allow. In Ps 102:25-27 the psalmist speaks to Yahweh as creator, etc. But Heb 1:10-12 supplies new information that the God the psalmist addressed is Jesus, who

will endure for eternity. The writers see this as a case where the writer of Hebrews changes (34) the authorial intent of the psalmist. This reviewer wonders if a better word choice would not be "complements" rather than "changes". Naturally OT passages relating to the Lord, by progressive revelation, prepare for and are taken further later in the NT, which has the vantage point of seeing them in the fullest light. Also, one's full and final interpretation of Psalm 102 in historical-grammatical methodology would include sensitivity to factors in all of the Bible (a unity). The method interprets each cogent passage on its own, then as related to how it correlates with other passages, and sees each part of the entire picture in a composite. As on many NT relationships to the OT, direct prophecy and predictive typology, for example, the NT does not "change" meaning as to its essence, but it does "complement" it. It does show God's authoritative reflection on the meaning. Finally one basic essence or core meaning is there. The NT passage comports in unity with this in one broad arena of meaning, but does not introduce a meaning that is of an entirely different essence.

Examples in the present book do not appear to confound this. Galatians 4:24-31 has Paul giving allegorical meanings of Genesis, Mosaic legislation, Jerusalem, and the New Covenant. Old Testament passages do not state these connections (Hagar represents the Mosaic Covenant, Mount Sinai, etc.). Analyzing the OT passages, the interpreter can find that the principle prompting Abram's relationship with Hagar at first was one of trying to gain the promised son by a fleshly method and timing rather than by depending on God, His Spirit, His grace. The principle, evident in historical-grammatical study of the OT passages, is also operative for many who keep the law of Moses as a fleshly effort to please God. The principle is repeated by many in Jerusalem who followed fleshly impulses, not faith's response to grace in the freedom of the Spirit's power. A contrast, essentially, between acting by the Spirit and acting in the flesh as shown by historical-grammatical analysis has its true analogy in principles Paul sees in the Galatians. But, coming later in progressive revelation, Paul's insights apply the same basic principles, His remarks "change" nothing in the essential principle, but "complement" and rightly assess what he comments on. He shows relevantly that some act by the Spirit and some still by the flesh.

The present book is a product of diligent study and a sincere desire to interpret correctly. It places a healthy focus on needing the

Spirit in the entire process of interaction with Scripture, the relevancy of the kingdom theme as the unifying factor, and the importance of fresh stimulus from Scripture. All of these, really, are urgent factors for anyone using the grammatical-historical method.

A statement about Matt 11:11 seems to be a slip. The authors have Jesus saying that John the Baptist "is the greatest person (not just prophet) ever born (v. 11a)" (38). What Jesus actually stressed was John's equality with the greatest, not superiority over all. Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John but, of course, some have been on that high level with him.

The authors say that exponents of the historical-grammatical view cannot "follow Jesus and His disciples" as to methodology, because Jesus and the apostles find meaning that those today do not have the authority to find (42). But those using the traditional methods do "follow" Jesus and the apostles in seeing what they teach as right, in affirming their use of the OT as valid, and in seeking to obey what they say. To represent them as following in theology and ethics but not in method does not put things in truest focus. These endorse whole-heartedly the method of Jesus, believing that He is the authority and His word is true and cogent. They seek to interpret as Jesus did, getting the one essential meaning and understanding that God in progressive revelation "complements" the truth by fuller NT insight. Like Jesus, they never alter the one core sense.

The authors of *Beyond the Obvious* acknowledge that interpreters should not add new truth—i.e., deeper meanings—to the NT (118), because the NT provides "the final, normative revelation" on the definitive interpretation of history and its end. It is surprising, then, to find the book elsewhere advocating that people today need to derive new meanings. The authors define new meaning in terms of light on who to marry, details of schooling, etc. But such areas are examples of God's guidance as a believer *applies* the *meaning* of God's truth that he has already grasped. These are not new meanings; they use the one meaning by applying it to particular cases in deciding a course of action. They are not *interpretations* of Scripture, but come after interpretation as *applications* of those interpretations. New applications of truth in devotional reading is not a deeper *meaning* in the technical sense of the word. It is simply a new way of applying the text's one meaning in a new way that a believer has not seen before. This is totally consistent with the historical-grammatical sense and is

not an interpretive method for seeing "beyond the obvious."

Certain statements of the book will perplex some. One is in creating the impression that in the historical-grammatical method users limit the Holy Spirit "to the end of the method, applying the truth . . ." (127). Some are guilty, but this is by no means a fair description of many who use the method. As long as this reviewer can remember in seminary studies and in teaching, an urgent focus was upon depending on the Spirit in *all* phases relating to Scripture and life. One of the earliest emphases ingrained was to ask God, even in interpreting, to open the eyes enabling a proper view of God's Word.

But many will not agree with the authors that the passages teach that believers throughout the church age can keep getting new, deeper meanings. For example, that John 16:13-14 involves new truth beyond that which God revealed through the then-living apostles is questionable interpretation. One wonders where 1 John 2:27 teaches a revealing of new truth different from what is already in the NT.

It raises problems when the authors pose a distinction between Revelation given by God in Scripture and revelation (small r) as new meaning believers discover today. Where is any clear-cut revelation today that one can confidently believe? Is it in essence what is already in Scripture, and not "revelation" per se? Is it consistent with Scripture and clearly from God? The book attempts to set forth how a reader can discover a deeper meaning by using the *kingdom* theme (121-22). This reviewer could not see how this method is superior to the historical-grammatical. The kingdom can be vital in historical-grammatical interpretation just as it can in the proposed new method.

The book has many concepts, some commendable, some questionable. This stimulating work's high motivation for interpretive fidelity is commendable. A more convincing case to defend the method can perhaps be forthcoming.

Walter A. Elwell, ed.. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996). x + 933 pp. \$44.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Seminary Librarian

The *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, the newest volume in the *Baker Reference Library* series, continues the high qualitative

standard that has characterized the previous works under the general editorship of Walter A. Elwell.

The volume attempts to make articles dealing with biblical theology accessible to those who may not have facility in the original languages. As noted in the introduction, all the contributors affirm "the full integrity and trustworthiness of the Scriptures," who "not only write with that understanding but live their lives according to it" (v).

Elwell has assembled nearly one thousand individual articles written by over one hundred evangelical scholars. The articles range in length from a few paragraphs to several pages. Most articles have brief, but satisfying, bibliographies. The *Dictionary* transliterates Greek and Hebrew words throughout for the sake of those not well-versed in those languages. It has an immense, eighty-page Scripture index, but it contains no listing of individual articles, which in this reviewer's opinion is a weakness. A helpful addition to the *Reference Library* series as a whole would be a separate volume providing a complete listing of all articles and a subject index.

Robert Yarborough contributes an excellent article on "Biblical Theology," providing a clear framework of what this discipline contributes to evangelical scholarship. Yarborough points out that the preliminary assumptions "without which valid observations about the meaning of the Bible's parts and whole are sure to elude the reader" (62). He lists those assumptions as (1) Inspiration; (2) Unity; (3) Reliability; (4) Christocentric.

Central to the theme of this work are the "Theology of . . ." entries for each of the sixty-six canonical books. Beyond these are several articles that merit special attention: Bruce N. Fisk's outstanding article on "Abortion"; Richard Averbeck's contribution in "Offerings and Sacrifices"; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. on "Prophet, Prophetess and Prophecy"; and Gary T. Meadors on the "Unity and Diversity of Scripture."

Only a few items, such as Blomberg's advocacy of "power evangelism" in the article on "Miracles" (534) and a superficial treatment of eschatological themes, notable for the absence of an article on the millennium, can be cited as weaknesses.

Dr. Elwell's efforts with both the series and this new volume are both singular and significant and *The Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* should find a ready place at the right hand of pastors, teachers, and all students of the Scripture.

John M. Frame. *Apologetics to the Glory of God: An Introduction*. Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1994. xiii + 265 pp. \$14.99 (paper). Reviewed by Eddy D. Field III, Adjunct Professor of Biblical Education, Philadelphia College of Bible, and an alumnus of The Master's Seminary.

John Frame is Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, California. He designed this book as an introductory textbook in apologetics for college-level readers (xi). Though he thinks the apologetic of Cornelius Van Til is the best foundation, he departs from Van Til at some points (xi).

His three reasons for adding to the already crowded list of introductory apologetics books are (1) to translate Van Til's difficult writings into popular language, (2) to eliminate the weaknesses in Van Til's apologetic, and (3) to develop an apologetic based on Scripture (xii).

Frame's apologetic has a number of good points, many of which come in chapter 1. First, he is especially good on the issue of neutrality. He argues that Christ's authority is ultimate and is not legitimately subject to questioning. The unbeliever does not accept this authority because of the noetic effects of sin (7). In fact, the unbeliever already knows God but suppresses that knowledge (7-8). He concludes that neutrality for both believer and unbeliever, is epistemologically impossible and morally wrong (9). Second, Frame explains circular reasoning very well. He is correct that arguments about ultimate presuppositions, for believer and unbeliever, are necessarily circular. Otherwise, they would be inconsistent (10). Third, Frame understands that conversion of the unbeliever is possible in spite of the problems of non-neutrality and circularity. For one, the unbeliever knows God (Rom 1:21) and this affords common ground between believer and unbeliever (11). For another, the Holy Spirit may work in the heart of the unbeliever (11). Fourth, he writes that man has always needed a revelational epistemology, even before the Fall (22-23). Frame has other helpful contributions in the book, including his presuppositional reformulations of the classic theistic

arguments that makes them consistent with Scripture (chap. 4). He shows how evidence for the gospel makes sense from within the Christian worldview (chap. 5). He offers a sound response to the problem of evil, including a critique of Jay Adams' approach to the issue (chaps. 6, 7). He allows Adams to respond in Appendix B. He does an internal critique of unbelief (chap. 8). He gives a sample apologetic encounter (chap. 9). He argues throughout that "all intelligibility and meaning, indeed all predication, depend on God" (91). In Appendix A he includes an essay that critiques the "Ligonier" apologetic of R. C. Sproul, John Gerstner, and Arthur Lindsley. He demonstrates that those scholars have fundamental flaws in their system and have attacked a straw man in their criticisms of Van Til.

A number problems weaken this book, however, most of them relating to Frame's objections in chapter 3 to Van Til's transcendental method. It is impossible to answer all the objections here, but a reply to the main one is feasible. Frame thinks that the transcendental argument is not really distinct from the classic arguments and he uses the argument from causality as an example (76). This is not correct, though, because the cosmological argument takes causality as something intelligible in itself and attempts to trace the chain of events back to the first cause, which is called God. A transcendental argument, on the other hand, is neither deductive nor inductive. It takes any fact of experience and inquires into the preconditions of intelligibility for that fact. With respect to causality, the transcendental argument assumes causality and asks what must be true in order to make sense of causality. In other words, it asks what makes causality possible. Frame apparently thinks that because the classic arguments are attempts to prove something transcendent, these arguments are transcendental (71, 73, 76-77). This is not the case. Additional problems occur with Frame's definition of proof as that which ought to persuade (63, 73), which leads to his affirmation of the classic arguments because they tend to persuade (71-72) and his denial of the certainty of the transcendental argument (77-82). Also problematic is his "blockhouse" approach to defending the Christian worldview (72).

Frame has helped to make Van Til's apologetic understandable to the average person. However, his method is weak when it departs from Van Til's transcendental method. Overall, though, he has been quite faithful to Scripture in developing his apologetic. Except for a few problems in his method, Frame's *Apologetics to the Glory of God* is a

helpful introduction to Christian apologetics.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum. *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*. rev. ed. Tustin, Calif.: Ariel Ministries, 1993. 1,052 pp. \$30.00 (cloth). Reviewed by William Varner, Professor of Bible, The Master's College.

The fruit of Fruchtenbaum's research for a doctoral dissertation at New York University, this massive work comes from a leader and one of the finest scholars in the Hebrew Christian/Messianic Jewish movement. At the forefront of this movement as it has sought for about two decades to define itself, Fruchtenbaum has contributed *Jesus Was a Jew* in 1974, *Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History, and Philosophy* in 1974, and a monograph devoted to eschatology, *The Footsteps of the Messiah* in 1982. He presently directs Ariel Ministries.

He "affectionately dedicated" *Israelology* to Charles C. Ryrie on whom he is somewhat dependent in his books, but that does not mean he always agrees with him and Dallas Seminary professors in their position on the role of Israel in the divine plan. In fact, their weakness in the matter of Israel's present role led to his producing this volume.

The author defines "Israelology" as "a subdivision of Systematic Theology incorporating all theological doctrines concerning the people of Israel" (2). "Israel is viewed theologically as referring to all descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, also known as the Jews" (2). Fruchtenbaum holds to this definition of Israel consistently throughout the Scriptures, a conviction that sets him apart from most theologians, even some of the premillennial persuasion. This single point is the "crux interpretum" on which his construction of an "Israelology" stands or falls. That is probably his greatest contribution to theology in this work.

In chapters 2-7, the author explains and critically evaluates the "Israelology" of three other theological systems: postmillennialism, amillennialism, and historic premillennialism, called "covenant premillennialism" in this work. His three-hundred page critical evaluation of the three sees a common flaw. They all have an inconsistent hermeneutic in understanding the meaning of "Israel." They differ from one another in the degree of inconsistency, but the

same basic flaw renders them all incapable of expressing a biblical "Israelology."

Dispensationalists already familiar with the flaw in these systems will profit most from chapters 8-10 where Fruchtenbaum has five hundred pages explaining and evaluating the traditional dispensational view of Israel's role, past, present, and future. He writes, "Dispensationalism has developed a well-thought out Israelology insofar as Israel Past and Israel Future is concerned—Chafer's statement on the Jews is a good example of this—but it has been weak in developing a comprehensive theology of Israel Present" (415). He critiques—sometimes favorably and sometimes not—the works of Chafer, Walvoord, Pentecost, and Ryrie of Dallas Seminary; McClain and Hoyt of Grace Seminary; and Feinberg of Talbot Seminary. He does not have an exclusively future fulfillment of the new covenant for Israel (634-36), an issue on which the listed dispensationalists disagree. Yet he rejects the ideas of progressive dispensationalism (e.g., Blaising, Bock, Saucy), because he does not agree with the progressives that Jesus currently occupies David's throne. A weakness of the book is its failure to address issues raised by the progressives, something the author could have included in his 1992 revision. This reviewer suspects that he would apply his criticisms of covenant premillennialism to progressive dispensationalism.

Chapter 10 has Fruchtenbaum's contribution to the discussion, "A Dispensational Israelology," which argues persuasively for including "Israelology" as a subdiscipline of systematic theology. The three-hundred page chapter deserves publication in a separate volume. He adds nothing new under Israel past and future, but develops original material regarding "Israel Present." He addresses with thoroughness and insight such issues as the Jewish believer's present relationship to the law of Moses (640-79), the identity of believing Jews in this age (Hebrew Christians or Messianic Jews, 745-62), and the present role of the State of Israel in God's plan (494-98). Further, he has an excellent summary of how Romans 9–11 handles these issues (720-44).

This reviewer can see room for some improvements in the volume. The author could have given some space to dispensational writers prior to Chafer who tried to interpret Israel's role in the divine plan. He never mentions the "Old Scofield" authors and their

theological colleagues, nor does he notice the writings of such Hebrew Christian giants as Adolph Saphir and David Baron or the great British authors Canon Lukyn-Williams and John Wilkinson. Wilkinson's work *Israel My Glory* was a very good attempt at constructing a "theology of Israel." Besides these, some current Messianic writers in Israel (e.g., Menachem Benhayim and David Stern) deserve at least some mention. Their failure to be labeled as "dispensationalists" does not mean they have nothing to contribute to the subject. Also missing are those affirming a "dual covenant view"—i.e., that the message of the gospel is not for Jewish people since they have their own covenant with God—even though they address directly the present salvific status of the Jewish people.

The volume has four excellent appendices (857-1012). In three of them Fruchtenbaum describes his interaction with two different perspectives regarding the degree Jewish believers should maintain their "Jewishness." He supports a middle position between the "Messianic synagogue" approach and the "local church" approach. Those interested in this, the current hottest topic in Hebrew Christianity, will find these pages very informative.

Undoubtedly, some will find various positions of the author a bit too novel. Readers of David Cooper's books, published between 1930 and 1950 by the Biblical Research Society, will recognize Cooper's influence on Fruchtenbaum in some of these interpretations. Nevertheless, those who neglect *Israelology's* contributions in these areas will incur intellectual risk. The book has much to inform evangelicals about in a greatly neglected field, the present role of a people who are the main characters in the Bible.

J. T. Greene. *The Role of the Messenger and the Message in the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989. 346 pp. \$68.95 (cloth).
Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Professor of Old Testament.

This work draws upon the author's 1980 Ph.D. dissertation at Boston University, "The Old Testament Prophet as Messenger in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Messengers and Messages" (University Microfilms 8024188).

That the OT writers portray the prophets as messengers from

God to His people has long been recognized. The present volume proposes to draw on ancient Near Eastern documents for information about the messenger in order to investigate the character and behavior of OT prophets. In so doing, it follows a standard comparative methodology using the messengers of Israel's neighbors to illumine the role and character of biblical messengers.

The three main chapters are "the Messenger in the Ancient Near East," "The Message in the Ancient Near East," and "The Messenger and the Message in the Hebrew Scriptures." The purpose of the third chapter is "to ascertain whether the messengers of the Hebrew Scriptures truly share all of the characteristics of their overall ANE counterparts" (77).

Several weaknesses mar the volume. It is mistitled because less than 70 of its 300 pages treat the broader ancient Near Eastern matters of the messenger and message which the title promises. The title of the author's dissertation would have been more representative of the book's contents. The other two-thirds of the book address the comparison of the ancient Near Eastern messenger and message as they illumine the OT prophet and prophetic utterances.

In a comparative study, care in orchestrating the method is important. Messenger activity cannot be separated from either the processes of administrative correspondence or the royal postal system. In Greene's research, material used to compare with Scripture comes from a number of sites, but without in-depth analysis of any one site. This means that the data with which he compares Scripture is a composite sketch of the messenger and message rather than an internally coherent system. In support of his approach the author argues, "For nearly three thousand years, according to the literature studied herein, the understanding of what a messenger was and did as viewed by the inhabitants of the ANE was everywhere the same" (133). Textual evidence for the messenger does not support that assumption. The author has over-generalized a complex set of characteristics.

For example, at ancient Nuzi the messenger's character and role are basic. He carries out simple local deliveries of commodities and escorts people to court. Greene's caricature of the messenger is based not on the small-scale local messenger, but on the international diplomatic messengers of whom it was said, "Upon his shoulders is the word of the king." The latter messengers were often high officials

of an empire builder such as Hammurabi. The two roles differ significantly. The Nuzi local messenger comes from a brief period of time and one small site. Greene's data comes from all over the ancient Near East and dates from 3000 B.C. to 30 B.C. His overgeneralized assumption impairs his conclusions. The author may be correct in many of his observations, but he does not provide the reader with arguments rooted in clear systemic evidence of the sort needed.

A third concern is the price of the book (\$68.95). A similar study, much more carefully executed (and titled), is Samuel Meier's *The Messenger in the Ancient Semitic World*. The latter work sells for about \$14.00. A conspicuous absence of any allusion to Meier's book or 1986 Harvard dissertation is unfortunate.

These matters aside, the book stimulates creative thinking about who the prophets were in light of the language used to describe them. This interesting study exhibits much creative thought.

David Hagopian and Douglas Wilson. *Beyond Promises. A Biblical Challenge to Promise Keepers*. Moscow, Idaho: Canon, 1996. 268 pp. \$14.00 (paper). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

This book is very clear in most places, readable, well-researched, and creatively fascinating in its writing style. It compliments the Promise Keepers (PK) men's movement where it can, but pleads for corrections the authors feel are urgent.

Hagopian is a business litigator in the California office of an international law firm, and lives in Southern California. He has a B.A. in history from the University of California, Irvine, and a J.D. from the University of Southern California. Wilson earned an M. A. in philosophy at the University of Idaho, pastors Community Evangelical Fellowship, Moscow, Idaho, and has written two books on marriage and child-rearing—*Reforming Marriage* (Canon, 1995) and *Standing on the Promises* (Canon, forthcoming in 1996)—and a *Latin Grammar* (Canon) and other works.

The book appeals for corrections in the largest men's movement in the United States today with a brotherly Christian spirit that seeks not to score cheap points but rather to evaluate PK ideals by the

biblical "Bureau of Standards," God's Word. One quickly gains the impression that the movement has grown so rapidly that it has not with proper discernment assessed ideas being taught in its publications. Many PK speakers and writers promulgate opinions that are misleading and not reflective of what God's Word teaches. One big corrective would be to replace speakers and writers who spin questionable or non-Christian theories off their heads with those who have depth and fidelity to Scripture.

The writers commend PK aims to help men gain wholeness in a Christian sense and count for the right in every area of life. They also commend PK help in getting men converted to Christ, combating racism, and showing a proper biblical leadership in the home.

Yet most of the book defines areas of correction. The authors want to help, not just criticize. They call for a sounder biblical basis for PK ideas (23, 34). In a manner that attempts not to offend Christian brothers, the authors constructively suggest the following problems that need to be set right:

Too often the PK gospel is a brand of moralism, the authors reason. It slights God's grace gift and creates impressions that to be saved, men need to *do* something, i.e., "live to please Him" (38). Or to live the Christian life men need to commit to seven promises, leaving the impression that transforming power lies in making promises. The problem is that rules such as the ten commandments prove human inability to obey perfectly and should drive people to Christ, the only true promise keeper. God alone transforms; in conversion one begins and then he continues by the Spirit (Gal 3:1-3). Christ offers His perfection in man's place, as his righteousness, holiness, and redemption (1 Cor 1:30).

Another correction needed is in PK's concept of biblical masculinity. The authors fault PK use of Robert Hicks' *The Masculine Journey* and its *Study Guide* which stops at nothing (they say) to shock the conscience. It even promotes fetishism, and encourages men to share with each other intimate private sexual matters such as their first wedding night. It advocates celebrating the male phallus and having church elders *congratulate* young people who have sinned for being human, before moving on to confession and restoration (102). Hicks endorses the error that six Hebrew Old Testament words for man (Adam, etc.) teach six normative stages of development for men, seasons of life, and twists the idea of manhood in Scripture. Men are

to worship God as phallic kinds of guys, rather than the biblical emphasis of men and women worshiping God in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

The writers acknowledge that PK leaders have finally (after about two years) withdrawn use of Hicks' book, but observe they have not issued a public statement acknowledging the lack of discretion in using it as an official PK tool in earlier stages of the movement (105, 106).

Other problems exist in PK teaching, the writers say. One is in reconciling pop psychology to Christianity, as in pushing self-esteem (affirming one another) rather than recognizing human sinfulness and overcoming it through God's forgiveness and enablement. Christ died for those whose acts were as filthy rags, who were children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins. Only God is good. To exalt self-esteem as PK writers do is to reduce Christ's cross to a meaningless gesture by claiming man's basic goodness (82).

Signs of careful analysis mark this book, so sensitive PK attention and response could profit the movement and get it on sounder footing. Yet the book has some faults, not doctrinal ones, but in its failure to give explicit positive remedies after criticizing PK for giving the impression men are to accomplish good through their own promises and determination. What are the biblical commands believers *are* to heed—the many imperatives—and how do they correlate with depending on God's power to fulfill them? At the end of chapter 8, for example, where is any positive counsel on how to obey the Lord? Another weakness is the book's disjointedness in early chapters, bringing up criticisms briefly, then leaving them without a thorough discussion, and picking them up in later chapters that take up the PK's seven promises one by one.

Despite occasional lapses in clarity, the book is usually an incisive, articulate, good-spirited appeal for PK to deal with problems and become accurate and more effective. Otherwise the PK movement will, with whatever good it does, foster considerable error in the guise of biblical and Christian truth. Otherwise, it will be part of the problem, not a solution that men need to it.

David Larsen. *Jews, Gentiles & the Church*. Grand Rapids: Discovery

House, 1995. 380 pp. \$19.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Trevor Craigen, Associate Professor of Theology.

How refreshing to read a book which unashamedly presents Israel as having a place in God's plan and purpose for the ages, doing so with a nice blend of examining Scripture and surveying history. Larsen has produced a work deluged with Scripture references and studded with facts, names, places, and dates. He laces his work with incredibly diverse bibliographic information, and spices it with comments well worth remembering from different authors, diplomats, and politicians. One cannot help but exclaim over and over again, "Good stuff!" In chapters dealing with history, a listing of one or more appropriate Scripture references opens each chapter and sub-section to keep readers from forgetting the Scriptural footing. An opening section entitled "The Scriptural Footings" (chaps. 1-3) and a closing section called "The Prophetical Future" (chaps. 13-18) bracket "The Historical Flow" (chaps. 4-7) and "The Sequential Facts" (chap. 8-12), reminding the reader that what has happened in history and is happening today is not without biblical warrant.

Undoubtedly his book resulted from much thinking and research for which, in his words, "a life-long interest in and love for the Jewish people" (11) were the motivation. A fascination with the course of Jewish history and with the explosive growth of the Jewish State in Israel brought forth what he calls "a modest contribution to the contemporary debate and discussion among evangelical Christians on many issues related to Israel and the Jews" (11). The work is far more than a modest contribution; it is rather a significantly important masterpiece that this reviewer hopes will become "must reading" for everyone in seminaries, colleges, and local churches. In the very least, pastors ought to read and assimilate and perhaps plan a series of studies or sermons on the hope of Israel, on the return of and ultimate restoration of Israel to her divinely granted land. Even a fast reading will fill the mind with so much information and in particular with so much Scripture that one could only conclude that leaving Israel out of the divine plan and replacing her with the church is wrong. To take it further and put it quite bluntly, to summarily dismiss a millennial kingdom is dreadfully shortsighted, prophetically abusive, and eisegetical.

The wealth of information, the pertinent comments, questions,

and evaluations on this subject of Israel and the church and on the abundant detail in God's revealed promises and prophecies may cause one to wonder whether amillennialism, postmillennialism, or any other system or worldview embracing "replacement/displacement theology" is guilty of leaning toward anti-Semitism. Advocates of such systems would, of course, vigorously deny that label, but reflecting upon Romans 11 (52) raises the question of whether they fall under God's charge of arrogance, conceit, and self-esteeming wisdom. Larsen reminds the reader that the future of Israel taught so clearly in Scripture forbids her being submerged into "an amorphous ideal people of God or the church" (200). He notes that divine prophecies cannot apply in spiritual fulfillment to the church. He pulls no punches when citing H. L. Ellison on Ezekiel 36–37: "Unless . . . [expositors] can give full weight both to the transformed land of Israel in Ezekiel 36 and to the national resurrection of Israel in chapter 37, . . . [they have] no right to banish the Israel of the Old Covenant from the picture in favor of the Church" (190). Well said!

How encouraging to be reminded of many different men of the past who accepted without apology and hesitation the clear promises of God about His people in the future. How enthralling to observe the providential bringing into existence of the State of Israel—the right men with the right attitudes stirred by the revelation of God in His Word were there at the right time both inside and outside of Palestine. How troubling to read of centuries-long, worldwide anti-Semitic hatred, and, yes, of Jewish brutality, disregard, and hatred for the Arab, and to realize that Arab and Jew face each other in an irrepressible conflict that perhaps will not resolve itself short of the Messiah bringing in His kingdom. Larsen's love for Israel is not blind to her faults. He neither condemns the Arab out of hand nor applauds Israel without criticism.

How saddening to ponder the incredible savagery and atrocity of the Holocaust, as well as the shameful treatment of budding Israel by the British army so soon after having fought to free them and many others from the Third Reich's willfully iniquitous and "Assyrian-like" pernicious domination.

How encouraging to be reminded that Bible students, both pre- and post-Reformation, held to a millennium. What a surprise to discover that before A.D. 1649 over eighty books on the subject of Christ's millennial reign were available in published form. What a

surprise to discover just who it was who acknowledged that Scripture clearly promised the return of Israel to the land of her fathers (e.g., Owen, Mather, Simeon, M'Cheyne, Bonar, Ryle, Spurgeon, and Girdlestone, to name a few). Historian Ernest Sandeen accused England of having been drunk with millennialism in the nineteenth century (129), a far cry from the church's teaching in modern England that no longer takes seriously God's written promises and prophecies. The author's evaluation of the negative impact of Augustine's "facile equation of the church and the kingdom" is quite correct. Augustine's teaching did much disservice to the proper, biblical understanding of the millennial reign of Christ for many, many years after his death and right up to modern amillennialism (116, 122-23).

How enlightening to read Larsen's concise but most informative survey of Islam and her resistance and opposition to Israel and of militant Islam's pathological hatred of the Jew (153-68). Without reference to what God said in Scripture, one cannot clearly understand the past history of the conflict, and without God's prophetic Word a person cannot accurately estimate the future history of Arab and Jew alike (see 164-68, "The Outcome for Islam").

How satisfying to benefit from a well-written quick summary (chaps. 13-17) of the church age, of end-time events and personages in the tribulation—including the rebuilding of the Temple—of the conversion of Israel, and of the coming of the kingdom.

How challenging to read the final chapter, "Our Faithful God and the Responsibility of the Church," where Larsen gives an invitation to justice, to hopefulness, to vigilance, to witness, and to readiness (325-36). The church should concern herself about justice for all. The church's preaching and teaching on premillennialism is a position that pulsates with hopefulness—the sovereign God will bring to fulfillment all His promises to Israel. The church must be vigilant and take a public stand against all forms of anti-Semitism, and should show concern about media inaccuracy in reporting from the Middle-East. The church must witness lovingly, graciously, and prayerfully to the Jew too. She should be ready always for her upward call, the rapture of the saints, especially in view of the "constellation of signs of the approaching end of the age, particularly in relation to Israel" (335).

Buy, read, think, and let the incongruity of affirming the inerrancy of God's special revelation while disclaiming a place for Israel challenge both mind and heart.

Wayne A. Mack and David Swavely. *Life in the Father's House: A Members Guide to the Local Church*. Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1996. 211 pp. \$9.99 (paper). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Senior Vice President and Dean.

This recent release by Dr. Wayne A. Mack, Professor of Biblical Counseling at The Master's College, and David Swavely, a 1996 graduate of The Master's Seminary, addresses the primacy of the local church. It deals with the kinds of issues and commitments that are essential for individual Christians to understand, grasp, and enact in their life.

The volume is thoroughly biblical and should be well received by pastors of every local church. Actually, every local church should use this volume in their new members' class and provide a free copy for every existing member. If Christians in every local church would embrace the principles extracted from Scripture and articulated in this volume, the church of Jesus Christ in the 21st century, should the Lord Jesus delay His coming, will be just as vibrant as the one we read of in the book of Acts.

Abraham Malherbe. *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988. 88 pp. \$18.95 (cloth). Reviewed by Dave Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The Bible contains many letters. The OT records the activities of messengers as well as their messages. For example, in Ezra and Nehemiah the author either records or speaks of many letters between the provincial government and Palestine. The Bible describes prophets (Hag 1:12), priests (Mal 2:7), and even kings in the language of messengers and their missives.

In the NT the same applies. Almost all the NT books are letters sent throughout the ancient world to spread the news of God's grace. Even Acts and Revelation, which may not be letters, per se contain letters. It is also important that much of the language of the NT that

speaks of the spread of the gospel and the establishing of churches is in messenger language: "gospel" is the message of a herald-type messenger; "preach" is the action that the herald performs; "apostle" was one of the common words for a messenger who delivered mail and oral messages. God used the correspondence system of the day to communicate to His people in many ways.

With that background, a reader can appreciate the contribution of Malherbe's book. The author has collected ancient classical sources of information about ancient letters. Beyond the introduction which includes an interesting discussion of letter writing in schools, the author simply allows the sources to speak. In clear translation, the reader can hear the ancient writers express in their own words their perspectives on the nature and purposes of letters. Of particular interest are the definitions given to epistolary genre:

A letter is one half of a dialogue (Dem. 223) or a surrogate for an actual dialogue (Cic. *Ad Fam.* 12, 30, 1).

In it one speaks to an absent friend as though he were present (Cic. *Ad Fam.* 2, 4, 1; Sen. *Ep.* 75, 1; Ps. Lib. 2, 58; Jul. Vict.).

The letter is, in fact, speech in the written medium (Cic. *Ad Att.* 8, 14, 1; 9, 10, 1; 12, 53; Sen. *Ep.* 75, 1).

A letter reflects the personality of its writer (Cic. *Ad Fam.* 16, 16, 2; Sen. *Ep.* 40, 1; Dem. 227; Philostr.) (12).

Some ancient epistolary theorists viewed letters as organized into styles that served social functions and atmospheres. In the following list, some of the styles may have been employed by biblical writers:

(1) paraenetic, (2) blaming, (3) requesting, (4) commending, (5) ironic, (6) thankful, (7) friendly, (8) praying, (9) threatening, (10) denying, (11) commanding, (12) repenting, (13) reproaching, (14) sympathetic, (15) conciliatory, (16) congratulatory, (17) contemptuous, (18) counter-accusing, (19) replying, (20) provoking, (21) consoling, (22) insulting, (23) reporting, (24) angry, (25) diplomatic, (26) praising, (27) didactic, (28) reproofing, (29)

maligning, (30) censorious, (31) inquiring, (32) encouraging, (33) consulting, (34) declaratory, (35) mocking, (36) submissive, (37) enigmatic, (38) suggestive, (39) grieving, (40) erotic, (41) mixed (67).

Though the potential for forcing correspondences of style on Scripture is ever-present, understanding how Ezra, the Apostle Paul, and others learned to compose letters as well as what were the expectations of their readers is helpful in understanding the letters and language of correspondence in Scripture.

The reviewer enthusiastically recommends this work to students of the Bible who would like to understand how the people who first received the Bible might have understood the documents and their messages.

George A. Mather and Larry A. Nichols. *Masonic Lodge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995. 83 pp. \$5.99 (paper).
Reviewed by Eddy D. Field III, Adjunct Professor of Biblical Education, Philadelphia College of Bible, and an alumnus of The Master's Seminary.

This book is an entry in the new series, *Zondervan Guide to Cults and Religious Movements*, edited by Alan W. Gomes. Its format is unique: it is an outline designed to achieve concision. The outline has five points: (I) Introduction, including history and organization, (II) Theology, (III) Witnessing Tips, (IV) Selected Bibliography, and (V) Parallel Comparison Chart. This format is helpful as a quick reference guide, enabling the authors to include much helpful information in a few pages.

Part I is a very helpful introduction to Freemasonry, detailing its origin, structure, and related organizations. Also included in this section is a look at the important connection between Masonry and Mormonism, and an exploration of the response to Masonry by the Southern Baptist Convention.

In Part II, the authors argue that Masonry is a religion that is at odds with Christianity, and they compare the major Christian doctrines with what some Masonic scholars have written. Yet their

failure to refer to the "Masonic View" of certain doctrines flaws their methodology. For "Arguments used by Masons," they refer primarily to writings of non-authoritative Masonic scholars and not to the Masonic rituals and monitors themselves. A Mason may express disagreement with those scholars and cite other Masonic scholars with a different view. The authors also neglect the most difficult problem in discussions with Christian Masons: relativism in interpreting Masonic ritual. Also, in their discussion of various doctrines, the authors make a serious mistake in ignoring Masonry's teaching of salvation by works. They omit mention of salvific rituals such as the Lambskin Apron, the Common Gavel, and the Perfect Ashlars. This omission leaves the Christian virtually hamstrung in responding to a Mason about the heart of the gospel. Naturally, this weakness carries over to Part III, Witnessing Tips, and Part V, Comparison Chart.

Part IV, Bibliography, has a list of sources on Masonry, both sympathetic and critical, that will aid in research. It does not include a number of important works, though, including those by Jim Shaw, John Ankerberg and John Weldon, and John Robinson.

Masonic Lodge provides a useful, concise outline of the history and structure of Masonry. However, its methodology is unsound and it omits information crucial to understanding Masonry and to dealing with Masons.

Alister E. McGrath, ed. *The Christian Theology Reader*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995. xxiv + 422 pp. \$29.95 (paper). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Seminary Librarian.

This work, designed as a companion volume to the author's *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Blackwell, 1994), provides supplementary readings for that work. McGrath has selected excerpts from the writings of theologians from the Ante-Nicene era to the modern day and used them to illuminate various aspects of the discussions in his *Theology*.

He has sought to "make available a series of 280 seminal texts of Christian theology, drawn from 161 different sources, arranged on a broadly thematic basis, to allow its users to engage directly with the intellectual richness of the Christian tradition" (xvii). The arrangement

of the work is clear, with the selections numerically coded (with full bibliographic information) to correspond to the various sections of the *Theology*. McGrath has included brief but helpful biographic entries for each author cited, as well as a glossary of terms and subject index.

Though designed to supplement the author's *Theology*, this work serves well as a stand-alone theological anthology. The strength of the selections lies in the Reformation and Pre-Reformation citations that particularly highlight some of the often neglected medieval. Unfortunately, readers are likely to be disappointed in the selections from the modern era, especially those from the last 150 years. The latter represent only scantily conservative theologians of this period, but give prominence to those of the liberal, neo-orthodox, and feminist branches of theology.

Those criticisms aside, this work accomplishes its purpose quite well and will be a valuable resource tool.

Kelly Monroe, ed. *Finding God at Harvard*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. 368 pp. \$17.99 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

The volume's ten chapters gather 42 testimonies of intellectuals who discovered truth when they found God. All are professors, staff members, alumni, or students of Harvard, America's first college. They tell how God is meaningful to them in life-shaping reality amid academia.

A group of Puritans founded Harvard and named it after John Harvard, a Puritan minister who left the school half his estate. Of the original nineteen guidelines adopted soon after the school began, one called every student to consider "the mayne end of his life and studies to know God and Jesus Christ . . . and . . . lay Christ in the bottome, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning." The early mottos were *Veritas* ("truth," 1643), *In Christi Gloriam* ("to the glory of Christ," 1650), and *Christo et Ecclesiae* ("for Christ and the church," 1692). In early years, whatever field a pupil studied, Harvard's guideline was, "Seeing the Lord giveth wisdome, every one shall seriously by prayer in secret seek wisdome of him."

Kelly Monroe is a chaplain to graduate students at Harvard.

She also advises senior independent studies in C. S. Lewis, media, and film. She says that a truer title for the book is *Found by God at Harvard*. The book is a response to Ari Goldman's conclusion in *The Search for God at Harvard*. Goldman dealt only with Harvard Divinity School and said he found *nobody* there to speak of the gospel or the person of Jesus Christ. The present book finds many in the larger university setting willing to speak up for Christ.

Some writers are well-known to many readers: Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Elizabeth Dole, Mother Teresa, Elton Trueblood, and Charles Malik. This reviewer was pleased to see a chapter by Jeffrey Barneson, a product of and missionary from his local church, Calvary Baptist, Whittier, Calif., who ministers at Harvard with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

The book shows that the truth claims of Jesus Christ are not peripheral but central to human experience (19). Contributors raise and explore questions on truth and meaning, such as why crime exists, how it is possible to possess virtue, why people become angry, how they can forgive, and where they find hope.

The chapter by psychiatrist Robert Coles could challenge some to trust in Christ. He illustrates trust in a six-year-old girl, placed in a New Orleans school by federal authorities and walking to and from the school daily, past whites who threatened her life. Ruby astounded Coles by her calm trust in Jesus and her prayers for those who wronged her.

Solzhenitsyn's chapter, "A World Split Apart," is part of a 1978 commencement address at Harvard arguing the impoverishment of humanistic ideas. He sees many in the Western world seeking values that give no peace and favors seeking spiritual values in a relationship to God. A fascinating account is that of a Jewish doctor, Boris Kornfield, in a prison treating Solzhenitsyn's cancer of the intestines in the 1950's. Kornfield witnessed faithfully to his patient during the operation. Solzhenitsyn, at intermittent times when conscious, saw his need of Christ and forgiveness.

Krister Sairsingh's chapter on the emptiness of Hinduism and the fullness he found in Christ is intriguing. Another Christian converted from Hinduism witnessed to him, he read the gospels, was drawn to Jesus Christ, and finally received Him and forgiveness that his belief in karma—i.e., every sin must be paid for in the next life—could not give. Sairsingh then led his mother, grandmother, brothers,

sisters, and a cousin to Jesus Christ.

Barneson's chapter recounts his bid to obey biblical appeals to care for the poor, forgotten, and strangers (Mic 6:8; Isaiah 58). He found a way to suffer the disgrace that Jesus bore (Heb 13:11-14) as he and his wife since 1984 have led graduate students in doing summer work in impoverished villages of Guatemala and Honduras.

One of the finest chapters, one by Elizabeth Dole, is forthright about the difference Christ makes in her life. Mrs. Dole uses the challenge of Esther's commitment for her people and the example of her grandmother who loved God's Word and sacrificed to help ministers and foreign missionaries. Near the end of her chapter, Mrs. Dole testifies of feeling "the power of Christ rest upon me, encourage me, replenish my energy, and deepen my faith—power from God, not from me" (243). She adds that a life of total commitment to Christ is "the only life worth living, the only life worthy of our Lord."

Mother Teresa, Albanian nun known for exemplary help to the poor and dying, has several good things to say. One is, "For God, it is not how much we give but how much love we put in the giving" (317). She also exhorts people to give a beautiful thing on their wedding day, "a virgin heart . . . body . . . soul" (315). She does not explain that cleanness is only by the pardoning power of Christ. And her response to visiting American professors' request to "tell us something that will help us to become holy" is a disappointment. Mother Teresa replied, "Smile at each other—because we have no time even to look at each other" (315). That response reflects tragic emptiness!

Amid many excellent emphases and illustrations in the book, careful readers will find other things that disturb them. An example is the word of Owen Gingerich, Professor of Astronomy and History at Harvard and a Mennonite church goer, who acknowledges a creator God but assumes an evolutionary chain of four billion years leading to man (272). Aware of the "mixed bag" nature of the book, readers will still find much that stimulates richly. It testifies to a growing number worshiping Christ at a school that has, since drifting from its early purposes, often found no place for Him. Stimulated far more often than disappointed, the reviewer found the book a catalyst to freshened commitment.

Iain H. Murray. *Spurgeon v. Hyper-Calvinism: The Battle for Gospel Preaching*. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1996. xv +164pp. \$9.85 (paper). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Seminary Librarian.

Studies and writings about the multi-faceted life of Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92), seemingly have single-handedly been a fulfillment of Ecclesiastes 12:12. However, Iain Murray's latest addition to Spurgeon studies is neither "wearying to the body" nor superfluous in its content.

Murray, perhaps the pre-eminent Spurgeon scholar of the present, has provided a valuable work covering the first and perhaps the most forgotten of several controversies that arose during Spurgeon's ministry. Sensing that a "resurgence of Calvinistic belief has occurred across the world" (xiii), Murray has ably chronicled and evaluated the battle Spurgeon has with so-called Hyper-Calvinism. The reason for the study is "when evangelical Calvinism is again being recovered in many parts of the earth, the danger of Hyper-Calvinism is once more a possibility and the lessons to be drawn from this old controversy have again become relevant" (41).

Hyper-Calvinism was difficult to define in Spurgeon's day as it is today. He said, "I do not think I differ from any of my Hyper-Calvinistic brethren in what I do believe, but I differ from them in what they do not believe" (38). Murray himself comments "the danger with Hyper-Calvinism is not so much what it believes, but what that it does not believe enough" (xiv). Because of this situation, misunderstandings of the differences between Calvinism and Hyper-Calvinism are frequent. Murray thoroughly summarizes the Hyper-Calvinistic position:

For a preacher to convey to his hearers the impression that they are called to receive Christ, and to believe in him for salvation, is to deny, in the opinion of Hyper-Calvinists, the sovereignty of divine grace. It is to represent salvation as available to those whom God has excluded by the decree of election. Gospel preaching for Hyper-Calvinists means a declaration of the facts of the gospel but nothing should be said by way of encouraging individuals to believe that the promises of Christ are made to them particularly until there is evidence that the Spirit of God has begun a saving work in their hearts, convicting them and making them "sensible" of their need (69).

Murray recounts the early public controversy between Spurgeon and James Wells (1803-72) on this issue. As was normal for that era, the printed debate appeared in the magazine of Charles Waters Banks (1806-86), the *Earthen Vessel*. Murray appends Spurgeon's views on the necessity of clear gospel preaching, a "universal proclamation of good news" (75) and his "four-fold appeal to Scripture" (66-99). He describes the aftermath of the controversy and draws four lessons for the modern church from this episode in Spurgeon's ministry. He includes five short appendices of illustrative material, including excerpts from two sermons by Spurgeon on 1 Timothy 2:3-4 (149-54) and on "The Injury Done by Hyper-Calvinism and Antinomianism" (155-57).

With his clear writing style Murray has brought his usual historical insight to bear on this subject. Along with Murray, many have noted the resurgence in the last several years of "Calvinistic" belief within evangelicalism. This volume will encourage new Calvinists toward a biblical Calvinism as embodied in Spurgeon's ministry and warn them away from the unbiblical practices of Hyper-Calvinism and its errors.

Thom S. Ranier. *Giant Awakenings: Making the Most of 9 Surprising Trends that Can Benefit Your Church*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995. 198 pp. \$17.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Senior Vice President and Dean.

Thom S. Ranier, founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville has brought great insight and balance to understanding what is happening in the local church today. Most pastors feel like they are caught in the cross fire of two sides at the "OK corral." On one side are those advocating the "traditional church" in opposition to those who are promoting the "contemporary church." Ranier brings a fresh perspective on being a "biblical church."

He looks back over the last ten years (1986-95) and surveys the scene of major and potentially alarming trends and change in the church that are rooted in the soil of "contemporary church growth" and "being contemporary." Based on his recent visits to a large

number of churches around the country, his opinion is that the tide is turning back to the Scriptures to evaluate what the church should be and what the church should not be. He very optimistically looks forward to the next ten years (1996-2005). In this reviewer's opinion, his assessment and advice are thoroughly biblical, worthy of prayerful consideration by every pastor in America.

Ranier places a strong emphasis on the following essentials for the local church: (1) a biblical model of ministry, (2) expository preaching, (3) holy worship, (4) scriptural evangelism, (5) lay involvement, (6) fervent prayer, and (7) a rapid return to theology as the foundation for all that is done in the church.

Steven Tsoukalas. *Masonic Rites and Wrongs: An Examination of Freemasonry*. Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1995. xii + 241 pp. \$12.99 (paper). Reviewed by Eddy D. Field III, Adjunct Professor of Biblical Education, Philadelphia College of Bible, and an alumnus of The Master's Seminary.

Steven Tsoukalas began his examination of Freemasonry because he heard that Freemasonry was not compatible with Christianity, and yet his father was a Christian and a Mason. His study led him to conclude that the two are opposed to each other, and it is this thesis that Tsoukalas defends in the book (ix-x).

Tsoukalas' methodology has four phases: "(1) to cite various rituals and monitors from Grand Lodges, (2) to support the conclusions of Masonic scholars by these sources, so as to avoid the allegation that these are the opinions of particular Masonic scholars, (3) to draw similar conclusions, and (4) to show how they conflict with Christianity" (xi). This methodology is sound: though other investigations focus on the possible occult background of Masonry, or on what non-authoritative experts on Masonry say, Tsoukalas' study refers directly to Masonic rituals and monitors. Another commendable feature of the author's approach is his reference to rituals and monitors from different areas of the United States and the rest of the world. By this he shows that Masonry is consistent in all these locations.

The author divides the book into two parts: the Blue Lodge and the Scottish Rite. As membership in the Blue Lodge is requisite to

membership in the Scottish Rite, study of the latter is somewhat superfluous, though nonetheless helpful.

First, Tsoukalas addresses the question, "Is Freemasonry a Religion?" Using nine "religion-making characteristics" from *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, he demonstrates that Masonry is, in fact, a religion. This is a point of contention with many Masons, though, because it depends on the definition of "religion," and because many Masons already affirm another religion. While Masonry is religious in nature (a sort of meta-religion), this fact is really beside the point, and not likely to be advantageous in reasoning with Masons.

Most helpful is the author's demonstration that Masonry affirms a specific Deity and teaches entrance to heaven by works. Masonry requires belief in a "Supreme Being," but does not define this Being. Yet the Supreme Being of Masonry encompasses all the varied deities of Masons and Masons designate it "The Great Architect of the Universe." It is this Deity that all Masons worship and give devotion to. Further, Tsoukalas proves that elements from the Masonic rituals teach that the Mason gains admission to the "Celestial Lodge above" by his good works. For example, the Lambskin Apron, the most important object in Masonry, reminds the Mason of "that purity of life and rectitude of conduct so essentially necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above."

This leads to a crucial consideration that Tsoukalas is careful to address. Many Christian Masons respond that they interpret Masonic teachings in accord with Christianity. For instance, they respond that, *to them*, the Great Architect of the Universe is Jehovah and none other, and the Lambskin Apron reminds them of Christ, the Lamb of God. Tsoukalas responds to this difficult problem of relativity several times (18, 61 n. 22, 50, 72, 90), arguing that the true evaluation of Masonry must be by what it objectively teaches, not by how a Mason subjectively interprets that teaching.

The author explores the corporate nature of Masonry and proves that it is not a mere fraternity, but rather a spiritual union that God forbids in 2 Cor 6:14-18 (69-71).

Tsoukalas also discusses the important and controversial legend of Hiram Abif. He refutes the interpretation that it teaches resurrection, and makes a strong case that it teaches salvation.

Stephen Tsoukalas' work here is superb. His arguments are sound and his documentation thorough. *Masonic Rites and Wrongs* is

the most searching critique of Masonry known to this reviewer, and the author's conclusion is correct: a Christian can be a Mason, but he should not be (225-26).

Gunter Wagner, ed. *An Exegetical Bibliography of the New Testament: Romans and Galatians*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University, 1995. xiv. + 379 pp. \$35.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Seminary Librarian.

The fourth and most recent volume in this proposed six-volume series, is a delight to both the librarian and the biblical researcher. The editor has developed a remarkable method for listing significant articles on individual verses and passages in the NT.

Wagner has brought together an immense amount of research and organization to "enable the student to get down to research as quickly as possible without wasting days, even weeks, on the search for literature" (ix.) The design of the work is remarkably simple: in a verse-by-verse arrangement Wagner has listed all the articles that deal specifically with the particular verse or passage.

The sources correlated are extensive, if not exhaustive (for example there are over two hundred citations for Romans 12:1-2). He has indexed over three hundred theological journals from around the world. The book's beginning has a very helpful list of journal abbreviations. In addition to journal literature, it contains citations from significant theological works, multi-author works and *festschriften*. The format is clear and readable and the type-set is easy on the eye.

This volume will be valuable primarily to those in graduate or post-graduate biblical studies and those doing significant in-depth writing on NT themes. No theological library can afford to be without it (and the rest of the series). Although not intended for pastors, it would help them save research time on special projects.

In a day when technology has taken over almost every aspect of research, it is refreshing to see a book that shows computer wizards how a bibliographic database should look.