

## BOOK REVIEWS

Cyril J. Barber. *Judges, A Narrative of God's Power*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1990. 293 pp. \$18.95 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

The author, presently a counsellor with "Insight for Living," is best known for his work *The Minister's Library*. To his prolific list of books he here adds fifteen readable chapters expounding the whole book of Judges. His exposition displays the high relevance of Judges to Christian life today, showing that present problems were problems in Israel, too—problems such as depression, lukewarmness, idol worship, homosexuality, rape, etc. He directs attention to spiritual solutions for these both in the days of the Judges and now.

"Many see Judges as a dismal record of Israel's failure, but to me it illustrates God's power, a message both timely and relevant" (p. 9). God's Spirit, operating through ordinary men and women, can accomplish the will of God. The work's introduction discusses various views of Judges' theme and concludes it is the power of God displayed through His representatives (p. 24). Barber gears his book for Christian lay people, not scholars or seminarians (p. 9).

Spiritual lessons are plentiful throughout, and aptly worded headings in bold-faced print mark out subdivisions. Short paragraphs carry the reader's thought through the text quickly. Frequent illustrations spice the content. For example, Pogo the cartoon character returns from a battle saying, "We have met the enemy and he is us" (p. 53). A line at the bottom of each page shows the exact verses dealt with on that page. Barber weaves in timely quotes from other sources.

Graphic sections depict Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. Along with Gideon's faith, commitment, and perseverance, Barber is quite candid about the ephod marring his later years (p. 108). He favors the view that Jephthah gave his daughter over to perpetual virginity (pp. 149-50), but his reasons for doing so are sometimes rather arbitrary and not difficult to answer for those who hold the popular view that Jephthah gave the girl as a burnt offering (cf. among evangelicals, J. J. Davis, *Conquest and Crisis* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969] 124-28; F. D. Lindsey, "Judges," in *Bible Knowledge Commentary*

[Wheaton: Victor, 1983] 1:402). A better balance in supporting both views would strengthen the book here. It seems arbitrary to argue, as Barber does, "It is difficult to imagine the Holy Spirit using Jephthah [a man who sacrificed his daughter] as an example of faith if his act was so contrary to God's revealed will" (p. 150). What, then, of other characters who are noted for faith in Hebrews 11, but who also failed miserably at times?

Some will also feel uncomfortable with the book's attempt to bring Samson into a good light, even in cases of possible sexual impropriety (pp. 155-56). An example is Samson's relations with the woman from Timnah, where Barber stresses Samson's good design to bring peace between the Philistines and Israel (pp. 170-74). Here, Barber sees a *Sidḡqā* marriage arranged between the groom and the bride's family. Barber does not condone Samson's immoral conduct with the prostitute at Gaza, but many will not agree that Samson was not motivated by lust (p. 199), but by a desire to ravish her to show his power in defying the enemy. Barber likens this to Absalom's show of authority over David by going in to David's palace concubines in 2 Samuel 15-17. A more balanced view is that Samson was lustful, even if the power factor was present (cf. the recognition of lust by Davis, *Conquest* 138; Paul Enns, *Judges* [Zondervan] 111; Leon Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges* [Zondervan] 325-28).

The section on Samson includes much that is helpful. Barber is sensitive to many areas readers want discussed. No writer covers everything because of space limitations. Still, one could wish that the book offered some explanation for how Samson may have caught and managed three hundred foxes to send on a fiery mission through Philistine fields (p. 185).

Barber sees as reprehensible and unconscionable the Levite's act in submitting his wife to the men of Gibeah for a night of using her for sexual pleasure (p. 227).

Many fine discussions popularly written help the book offset the few places of possible disagreement. Overall it has much to stimulate and benefit preachers, Bible study leaders, and Christians in general who appreciate the colorful tracing of a passage's flow. Barber's endnotes for each chapter reflect his use of good sources. A Scripture index and a person/title index are also beneficial.

Anne M. Boylan. *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790-1880*. New Haven: Yale University, 1990. 225 pp. \$10.95 (paper). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The author, Associate Professor of History at the University of Delaware, has revised her dissertation for publication. The present volume offers a perspective of Sunday School heretofore unresearched. While professedly not a history, "it examines the creation and evolution of Sunday schools in five evangelical Protestant denominations . . . and through the inter-denominational Sunday School Union" (p. 1).

Although its true origins remain uncertain, Sunday School impacted the social climate of nineteenth-century United States. In this respect the Sunday School takes its place as a *social* reformer alongside "houses of refuge, reform schools, orphanages, old age homes and modern hospitals" (p. 2). The book does not ignore the spiritual impact of the Sunday School, but it focuses on the social dimension.

Interestingly, the state—in some cases by its own choosing, in others by pressure from individuals and groups of private citizens—"assumed the functions of many institutions only after decades of management by private volunteers" (p. 2). But unlike many other institutions, the Sunday School remained a voluntary and independent organization, mostly because of its affiliation with the evangelical church, which the author defines broadly as Baptists, Congregationalists, Low Church Episcopalians, Methodists, and Presbyterians (p. 1).

Boylan's work has much information about the British and American Societies as well as the social force of the American Sunday School as an aggressive and sometimes independent agency. For instance, "If the central symbols of British efforts to bring their brand of enlightenment and civilization to the world were the army officer and the bureaucrat, American 'civilizers' were more likely to be missionaries bearing Bibles and Sunday School books" (p. 169).

The book is a fascinating piece of research. Those interested in history, particularly American, and to a lesser extent, British, will find that the present volume fills gaps in one small area: the contribution that the evangelical Sunday School, broadly defined, has made to the

social and intellectual growth of the United States. Evangelicals will be encouraged to discover how their spiritual forefathers impacted their society broadly while maintaining their evangelistic fervor. The book is highly recommended for those whose motivation will sustain their reading through a revised dissertation.

Don A. Carson, ed. *Teach Us To Pray. Prayer in the Bible and the World.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 362 pp. \$14.95 (paper). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

These twenty chapters by different writers will stretch readers through their breadth of teaching about prayer. This is the third volume by the Faith and Church Study Unit of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Carson, Professor of NT at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, wrote Chapter 1, "Learning to Pray." Edmund Clowney, former Dean of Westminster Theological Seminary, contributed Chapter 8, "A Biblical Theology of Prayer." Most contributors to the book are not well known in America. They hold key positions, mostly in schools outside this country. Topics discussed include Biblical Theology of Prayer, Prayer and Biblical Notions of Spirituality, Lessons in Prayer from the Worldwide Church, and the Challenge to Pray (testimonies to prayer). At the end are notes for each chapter plus indexes of names and biblical passages.

The book is a very helpful small encyclopedia on important aspects of prayer. Much of the writing, however, is so matter-of-fact and academic in style that this reviewer fears will be too general, scholarly in tone, and abstractly heavy for all but the well-educated and seriously-persevering. Yet all who stick with the book will mine an abundance of gold.

The sixteen points about OT prayer (pp. 22-28) are highly profitable: prayer is not restricted to great saints; it transcends national/racial barriers and exposes the heart; it should not be an escape or excuse; it is hindered by unbelief; it should be exercised at all times, all places, and in any reverent posture. Also one should pray and fast, pray and tithe, and pray in the name of the Lord. Further, prayer fights anti-prayer forces, prayer is a cry for miracles in

desperate times, does not always have a happy ending, produces monuments of gratitude, and moves God to send revival. "Rarely will you find regular nights of prayer and fasting in churches and organizations in which nothing is happening" (p. 28). "Who would have thought that the round-the-clock prayer meetings begun in Count Zinzendorf's community in 1727 would have continued for 100 years! The community was, aptly enough, called Herrnhut, 'the Lord's Watch' (cf. Isaiah 62:6-7)" (p. 33).

Fine chapters deal with Prayer in the Psalms, Gospels, and Acts, Paul's writings, the General Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. Knowledgeable discussions also treat a Christian view of prayer and spirituality in Hindu thought, Buddhist thought, Muslim thought, and Roman Catholicism. A moving chapter gives lessons from prayer habits of the church in Korea. This chapter attributes spiritual birth and growth to scriptural preaching and united prayers (p. 231). The prayer was characterized by confession and accompanied by transformed lives. Often in the early work in Korea (1903, etc.) prayer extended from 1:00 a.m. to 4:30 a.m. or overnight. Also, later revivals were steeped in prayer. One section sketches some of the great men of prayer in Korea (pp. 235-39). Current habits there include prayer at daybreak or overnight and fasting.

The chapter on lessons from China is also stimulating. China has had perhaps the most Christians of any country. Conservative estimates claim about 50 million Christians there today, in a population of one billion (pp. 247, 250). Amazing growth has characterized China's churches since as late as 1976 when believers faced persecution. House churches sprang up, and the vast majority worship in these, though others attend open churches. Prayer meetings are as much as 3-4 hours long, most Christians fast often, the tone and volume is intensely earnest, and the spirit is one of unity. Scriptural language is used, with long quotations interspersed and promises claimed. Prayer is on all occasions, in accord with Eph 6:18, with heavy reliance on the Spirit. "Answered prayer is probably the most common cause of new conversions in China" (p. 253). Christians talk to God with empathy, crying while they pray, interceding for persecuted believers and backsliders, and expressing their thankfulness.

Other chapters recount prayer habits of Latin America, Africa, and the Puritans (a chapter just as stimulating as the ones on Korea

and China). The Puritans prayed fervently with an awareness of God's majesty and presence. They were persistent and sensitive to God's will as revealed in His Word. They prayed to enhance God's glory and advance His kingdom. Some gave such a large place to intercession that they had hourly communion with the Lord.

Felicity Houghton, a member of the South American Missionary Society, describes her personal experience. She finds much help in the prayers of others (church and family), praying with others, and letting the Word fill her heart and shape her prayers. A prayer notebook is an asset, in addition to books on prayer, hymns, and prayer letters. Commitment to honor God's name according to the Disciples' Prayer of Matthew 6 is beneficial. A factor that draws out her prayer is the sense that others are counting on her intercessions.

The valuable book has one puzzling statement: "Prayer in Habakkuk, in a country overrun by godless, foreign armies . . ." (p. 20). The foreign army of Babylon was yet to come, but Habakkuk 3 shows Habakkuk's preparedness for it because of God's sufficiency. Not everyone will agree with the writer who says prayers of adoration represent "an advanced and higher form of prayer than those prayers that are full of complaints and requests" (p. 56). If requests are God's will, prompted by His Spirit for His glory, why are prayers of adoration necessarily a higher form? In either case, the person praying is highly pleasing to God. *Scripture* does not rank the aspects of prayer (praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, etc.) in this manner.

All in all, the book blends so many features of prayer that it can be of immense spiritual benefit to a serious Christian who patiently reads it.

Donald E. Demaray. *Introduction to Homiletics*. 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 215 pp. \$11.95 (paper). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The author is currently Professor of Preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary with over twenty years experience in teaching homiletics. The present volume is a thoroughly revised version of his

previous work with an updated bibliography and supplementary readings for each chapter. The author draws heavily from history's gallery of preachers and their experiences. A plethora of brief discussions is arranged sequentially under the headings "the preacher," "the sermon," and "the delivery."

An example of the book's numerous helpful correctives occurs in its discussion of illustrations. In asking the question "Do my illustrations persuade?" the author warns against the potential for abuse with illustrations: "Stories can prove, refute, dissuade or persuade. Make certain your depictions do march toward real persuasion of authentic truth" (p. 147). The tendency to use an illustration as evidence in support of an apologetical or polemical point is an all-to-common preaching abuse that should be avoided.

A helpful but controversial contribution is the book's view of pictorial description. The author argues, "Preaching communicates best by pictures" (p. 14). The example of Jesus's teaching as related to left-brain/right-brain research, supports the notion that people think in pictures. "Abstractions deaden; cinema enlivens" (p. 14).

"Growth Sheets" provide the reader with a self-help opportunity to develop more skill in homiletics. Convinced that beginnings and endings are of utmost importance, the author gives substantial practical advice on how to write them. The book concludes with a generous and fairly current bibliography and a topical index.

Douglas Groothuis. *Revealing the New Age Jesus. Challenges to Orthodox Views of Christ*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990. 264 pp. \$9.95 (paper), and Ron Rhodes, *The Counterfeit Christ of the New Age Movement*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 253 pp. \$11.95 (paper). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

Two well-researched and readable books evaluate the Christ that New Age writings portray. Both show why Christians believe their Christ, the true Christ, is far superior. Groothuis is known for two of the best previously written responses to New Age beliefs (cf. James E. Rosscup, "Christian Books on the New Age, A Review Article," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 1/2 [Fall 1990] 177-200). Rhodes

is associate editor of the *Christian Research Journal*. His doctoral dissertation at Dallas Theological Seminary in 1986 was on New Age leader David Spangler.

Groothuis, making intelligent use of good sources, informs readers of NA claims about a Jesus with beliefs different from those of the NT Jesus. He uses NA documents that claim to present the words of Jesus. In Chapters 2-3 he lays the foundation of who the real Jesus is and what He taught according to the Bible. Chapter 4 then critiques the Gnostic heresy of early Christian history, which spawned some of the writings New Agers use. One Gnostic source is leather-bound papyrus books, dated ca. A.D. 350 and found near Nag Hammadi, upper Egypt, in 1945 (p. 77). Elaine Pagels' *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Random House, 1979) won favor with many Americans for Gnostic beliefs about Jesus (p. 78). This favorable spirit surfaces in NA perspectives today.

Groothuis concentrates on Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection, what Gnostics make of these, and what they mean in the NT. Chapter 5 tests the reliability of Gnostic documents that present a Jesus so radically different from the NT picture. Groothuis concludes that the Gnostic texts have no place in the NT canon. Chapter 6 tests the NT witness to Jesus, noting its reliability and superiority to false ideas. Chapter 7 examines NA claims that Jesus between the ages of 13 and 29 studied with Eastern holy men, as those in India, and picked up some of their ideas. The chapter also evaluates the teaching that Jesus survived the crucifixion, slipped away to India, and died there.

Chapter 8 investigates whether or not Jesus was an Essene related to a cult of Jews near the Dead Sea and concludes He was not. Chapter 9 focuses on the 3-volume, 1,200-page work, *A Course in Miracles*, published beginning in 1965. This set that professes to give transcribed words of Jesus has sold more than 160,000 copies (p. 195). Chapter 9 also deals with Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), "the sleeping prophet," who has influenced many with his concepts of Jesus and His teachings. The chapter adduces strong historical evidence for the truth of NT teachings about Jesus. By contrast, *A Course in Miracles* avoids historical detail about the "Jesus" it portrays, detail by which a reader could authenticate its claim to be His voice (cf. p. 210). Chapter 9 also argues for accepting consistent OT and NT warnings about a supernaturalism that denies the true God and the claims of the Bible, one that has its source in supernatural beings called demons (pp. 211-

16).

Finally, Chapter 10 is a probing assessment of the credibility of the biblical and NA brands of Christ. Groothuis reasons that the NT doctrine of Jesus's resurrection is more convincing than the NA theory of reincarnations. He says that if Jesus did rise from the dead as the NT claims, reincarnation is not really possible. Jesus was not reincarnated, but incarnated once for all.

As in his books, *Unmasking the New Age* and *Confronting the New Age*, Groothuis offers brilliant and arresting comments. They arise from a thorough grasp and evaluation of NA thought. He is clear about different kinds of NA belief, as NA writers attack Christianity from many angles, yet have basic beliefs in common. A typographical error in documentation was observed: W. E. Vine is listed as A. E. Vine (p. 44, n. 10). An annotated bibliography and a subject index of nearly 80 topics enhance the book's value.

Rhodes discusses the question, who do people of the NAM (i.e., "New Age Movement") say the Son of Man is? Norman Geisler rates the work as "by far the most comprehensive, biblical, and scholarly critique of any central New Age teaching available today" (Foreword, p. 8). The subtle danger of the NAM is that it says it believes in God, the soul, prayer, life after death, and Jesus Christ. But it invests the terms with a very different theological connotation.

Twelve chapters fit under three sections, the Jesus of the NAM, the Christ of the NAM, and a Look at the Biblical Jesus. Five appendices focus on special issues, such as "The Christ of *A Course in Miracles*."

Rhodes explains that the NAM Jesus is a way-shower to Christhood. As Jesus became Christ, all men may become Christ, and we will be the collective Christ (p. 14). NAM people substitute their Christ for the biblical Christ by (1) discovering hidden writings, (2) transferring primary allegiance from the biblical revelation of Christ to new revelations via channelers and psychics, and (3) using an esoteric system of interpreting the Bible, reading in hidden and mystical meanings to make Jesus into a NA evangelist (p. 15). Jesus who in NA teaching is distinguished from the Christ (contrary to 1 John 4:1-6) became the Christ by any of several methods. Elizabeth Clare Prophet, for example, claims that he went to India as a child and gained Christhood at the end of a learning process (p. 16).

Rhodes traces NA roots to ancient Gnosticism (chap. 1), and

then gives a Christian response to NA beliefs about Jesus's lost years as proposed in Levi Dowling's *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*. He compares the lack of good evidence for the NA case with evidence from the NT Gospels. Chapter 3 argues that Jesus is not the Teacher of Righteousness of the Dead Sea Scrolls and not an Essene, contrary to some NA belief. It closes with twelve contrasts between Jesus and the Teacher.

New Agers rely on, for example, the claims of David Spangler, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, and rediscovered sayings in the Akashic Records for their view of Jesus. Rhodes describes these claims in Chapter 5 and answers them in Chapter 6. He argues that NA esoterism in these sources is unreliable in its interpretation of the NT Gospels. He dismantles the Akashic Records, a source to which New Agers look as a record of truth from a realm outside this world. Part of his case is to show contradictions between NA false gospels and the NT gospels. Chapter 7 traces NA thought to roots in Theosophy (1875-the present), Anthroposophy under Rudolf Steiner (1912-the present), and the Arcane School and the "I AM" movement with their versions of the Christ. New Agers syncretize elements of these sources. Chapter 8 reveals how Spangler and Prophet as "Evangelists of the Lie" draw from these sources. Then Rhodes delineates reasons for believing that the Jesus of the NT alone is the Christ. Chapters 10-12 offer positive evidence for the kind of Jesus the NT gospels portray, drawn from His words, works, and resurrection. The final chapter, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," contains interesting contrasts between the coming king of the Apocalypse and the counterfeit king of the NAM. Rhodes closes with a brief glossary of NAM terms and a classified bibliography of sources related to the NAM.

Both books have strong argumentation, a readable flow, and broad yet penetrating studies in the principal sources. Groothuis seems to get to the heart of issues a bit faster and to flow better for the reader. Yet both are first-rate in building the case for the authenticity of the NT Jesus Christ and showing how the NAM Jesus and Christ do not measure up.

Elliott E. Johnson. *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. 330 pp. \$19.95 (cloth). Reviewed by

James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

This work is a vigorous attempt to state principles to help expose the meaning of God and His human author in the biblical text (p. 23). The writer is Professor of Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Fourteen chapters are arranged under five headings: Bible Study and Hermeneutics, Recognition, Exegesis, Application, and Validation. The book is printed two columns per page, with documentation in obvious interaction with good scholarship in page-by-page footnotes.

A few of the volume's abundant good features include the following:

(1) Johnson cites six ways that proper use of historical criticism illuminates the historical meaning of a text (pp. 42-43). (2) He demonstrates the oneness of meaning even in biblical poetry, such as in Psalm 46 which can have a unified meaning even with its distinctive components (p. 45). The three interpretations are part of a comprehensive whole, a blend of several aspects. This unity also applies to prophecy, as when Abraham's "seed" turns out to be those of faith among his physical descendants and also those of faith among other peoples, as in Galatians 3 (pp. 47-48). Johnson sees both physical and spiritual aspects as parts of a composite oneness, in harmony with each other.

(3) Though sometimes unclear in his wording, Johnson argues that the human author did not grasp the full import of every detail God used him to write (p. 51; cf. 1 Pet 1:10-11). For instance, if the writer of Dan 9:24-27 did not know the date of the decree, he wrote more than *he* knew but what *God* fully knew (p. 52). (4) Chapter 4 energetically answers eight objections to finding a single and unified meaning intended by God in His use of human authors. (5) Chapter 10, among many other things, deals with prophecy. Johnson agrees that Isaiah was fulfilled when the Medes struck Babylon (13:17), but he finds phrases that point to a more ultimate judgment against the wickedness of Babylon. The passage has a single sense judgment against Babylon but with different times of expressing the judgment (pp. 196-97). Johnson does not say whether literal Babylon must be rebuilt to fit the demands of Isaiah 13 and Jeremiah 50-51.

(6) He states reasons for a literal understanding of the thousand

years in Revelation 20 and of the animals in Isa 11:6-9 (pp. 198-200). (7) He sees four defining characteristics in OT typology (providence, historicity, resemblance, and dissimilarity in extent and effectual fulfillment, pp. 208-9). The fourth is an example of much in this work that needs to have the wording clarified. Why not refer to the "dissimilarity" element by some simpler term such as "elevation"? (8) Pages 278-88 provide help in understanding specific passages. The correction of the Jehovah's Witnesses error about Jesus Christ being a created being in John 1:1 is helpful (p. 280). Further, such explanations would help clarify the writer's point more. (9) The glossary is quite beneficial, defining nearly seventy terms. (10) Indexes of persons, subjects, and Scriptures are a valuable addition.

Johnson's emphasis on a single meaning for each passage is well taken (chap. 3). He contrasts this with multiple meanings as proposed by Origen and Augustine. But the illustration from Jas 2:14-15 is misleading (p. 32) in taking "save" to refer to the salvation of a person from his lack of food or clothing through another person's act of faith in performance of works to relieve (i.e., save) him. That meaning strangely clashes with what the text says, because v. 14 deals with whether faith can save professing Christian A and v. 15 introduces professing Christians B or C as the ones who are in need. So the issue is, can the faith Christian A professes save *him* (professing Christian A, not the ones in need) when that faith allows him to shun B or C? Rather than giving a textually based meaning, the discussion changes what the text says.

Sometimes the book uses many sources, reflecting various views. This at times works against clarity for readers by its ponderous complexity and verbosity. Laborious discussions linger on and bring in numerous issues. Yet in this maze of details the serious student with strong perseverance will find considerable valuable information.

The title of Chapter 5 is too general to be definitive: "The Task of Recognition." A recognition of *what*? Why not use a more direct title such as "Recognizing the Meaning of the Text"? The author eventually states this as the topic (pp. 75, 82).

Why is "Recognition" listed in sequence (p. 75) *after* "Meaning" and before "Exegesis"? It would appear to belong before "meaning" or after "exegesis," because preliminary-reading recognition suggests the meaning and some exegesis must be done before an interpreter can recognize the essential point of the text? Further, what is the

difference between (1) "Meaning," (2) "Recognition," and (3) "Comprehension" (p. 76)? Recognition is defined in the book as recognizing the divine author/human author's intended meaning by grasping the general meaning of the whole text, i.e., in an essential summary (p. 76). Following a listing of these items in an apparently arbitrary and repetitive order is not easy. Much clarification is needed here. On the other hand, discussion under some subpoints is clear and rewarding. For example, the section about discerning the "Subject" has a helpful list of what this entails (pp. 83-84).

A better title for Chapter 6 would be "Literal and Historical Premises in Recognizing the Meaning," and for Chapter 7 "Literary and Theological Factors in Recognizing the Meaning" would be an improvement.

Why is it necessary to complete one's inductive study of a text *before* doing exegesis (cf. p. 135)? Is this not included *in* exegesis`i.e., a part of "leading out" the meaning of the text?

The treatment of application in Chapters 11-12 is sometimes too complex. Chapter 12 is too long and tedious (41 double-column pages). A possible remedy would be to divide it into smaller segments to highlight each idea more effectively.

Much of Chapters 13-14 is cast in complicated phrases that hinder readability. On the subject of "validity" Johnson has an extensive section on a biblical worldview. For purposes of hermeneutics, the discussion is too general, and affords little direct help for interpretation.

To single out ten interpretations of John 15:1-7 is arbitrary. Several of the ten only partially represent what authors hold, because some may actually be in agreement with others, while simply stating a view differently from someone else. One of the ten might actually concur with another of the ten if more of what he holds were correlated (pp. 292-93). This possibility *could* reduce the number of different "views." The rest of the comments on John 15 add to the confusion. They do not teach clearly what John 15 in the context of John or the Bible is saying because of an artificial control on some of the chapter's ideas and an omission of elements that could lead to a different conclusion. Selection of a simpler passage would illustrate the relevant hermeneutical principle better than the book's discussion of this allegory.

This reviewer has commented on both positive and negative

aspects. All in all, the book is of a ponderously informative nature. Interpreters seriously willing to think, weigh, and persevere will often find it *very* rewarding. That the author has read relevant literature is plain, and that he has given *much* thought to many issues is apparent. With the high value of this edition, perhaps a later edition can improve a *good* book into a *better* book, even one of a quality usable as a primary seminary text. The author's painstaking work earns the volume a right to be read, though improvement in several areas is needed. One need is smoother readability; another is to show the relevance of long sections that go into minute detail. Chapter titles can be more specific, and more discussion of specific passages to illustrate hermeneutical principles would be beneficial.

David L. Larsen. *The Anatomy of Preaching: Identifying the Issues in Preaching Today*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 203 pp. \$11.95 (paper). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The author, Professor of Practical Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and a former pastor of nine years, observes that preachers "need a sharply focused awareness of the key issues facing the pulpit today" (p. 9). Consequently, each of the fifteen chapters of his book "seeks to identify a pressing current issue and to chart a reasonable and prudent course for preachers today" (p. 9).

The author builds his discussion of various issues on a theology of preaching. Beginning with a historical survey of Ezra's rudimentary principle (Ezra 7:10) and practice (Nehemiah 8), he selectively surveys the history of Christian preaching. Several objectives characterize the biblical preacher of all ages: "He keys his message carefully to his audience, his aim is clear (Acts 2:36), he uses a definite arrangement in his argument, and he moves aggressively to his conclusion and application" (p. 16). A brief history of preaching after the biblical era follows.

In the third chapter the author reviews extensive recent research on what the preacher faces as he addresses a congregation. On the one hand, he must not shrink from being counter-cultural in embracing and proclaiming the Bible's message, but on the other, he

must be aware of the obstacles to clear and cogent communication. Pulpiters face an onslaught of opposition: overstimulation, desensitization, enervation, depersonalization, preference for the nonverbal, and confusion all wage war against effective communication. In response, preaching should be pictorial, personal, practical, participative, and pointed.

Other helpful discussions include spirituality, sermon structure, sermon flow, variety, relevancy, creativity, intentionality, manipulation, story preaching, Christocentricity, style, and improved delivery.

Several themes appear sporadically throughout the book. The author's discussion of the relationship between the New Hermeneutic and the New Homiletic warns of the ways Bultmann's influence has affected the preaching process from interpretation to delivery. A second pervasive theme is the requisite commitment of the preacher as a whole person. Spirituality, including the preacher's prayer life, has sadly been omitted from homiletical discussions. Yet personal relaxation and voice care, although lesser issues, are not to be ignored either.

The book is clearly and interestingly written, and offers numerous helpful suggestions, often neatly structured in lists. The volume is indexed at the back by subject and Scripture reference. The author does not pretend to address every issue or any one issue exhaustively, but seeks to stimulate further research and reflection.

Samuel T. Logan, Jr. *The Preacher and Preaching*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986. 463 pp. \$16.95 (cloth).  
Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

Thirty leading Reformed pastors and homiletics professors were consulted regarding their opinion about the primary deficiencies in Reformed preaching. Each chapter was written by an author regarded as the most competent to write on each of the topics emerging from the poll.

The introduction, fittingly written by J. I. Packer, responds to the question "Why Preach?" Surprisingly, Dr. Packer first speculates

about why so few seem to believe in preaching. This leads him to define what preaching`in contrast to other modes of Christian instruction`is and should accomplish: "Preaching is God's revealed way of making Himself and His saving covenant known to us" (p. 15); "preaching communicates the force of the Bible as no other way of handling it does" (p. 17); "preaching focuses the identity and clarifies the calling of the church as no other activity does" (p. 19); and "preaching has some unique advantages as a mode of Christian instruction" (p. 21).

The book's organization follows the cherished and conspicuous three-point alliterated outline: I. The Man, II. The Message (subdivided into discussions of message content and message form), and III. The Manner.

Lack of extensive footnoting and in some cases little or no footnoting marks the volume as fresh and creative. Each of the contributors draws upon his breadth of experience and years of research. The more technical entries, such as Samuel Logan's "The Phenomenology of Preaching" and Hendrik Krabbendam's "Hermen- eutics and Preaching," are exceptions to the sparse-documentation characteristic. Both of these are stimulating and clearly written, and organize discussions that focus on current issues related to their respective topics. Samuel Logan challenges readers to reconsider the issues distinguishing existentialist and more traditional preaching epistemologies; Hendrik Krabbendam discusses the question of intentionality and its implications:

The meaning of the text is to be discovered, recognized and validated by means of the grammatical, syntactical and semantic study of the text, which ought to account for the total linguistic structure in general and for every linguistic component in particular (p. 217).

Careful readers may discover discrepancies between these two furtive entries, but such merely underscores the freedom of conviction permitted by the editor, Samuel Logan himself. Krabbendam pursues the current and not happily-resolved issue of the "exemplary" versus "redemptive" historical methods. Readers may not agree with the either of the authors, but the discussion is stimulating.

To those not familiar with Jay Adams work on sense appeal in

preaching, his essay on "Sense Appeal and Story Telling" will be interesting. His suggestions are aimed at correcting the tired, banal lectures too often heard from the pulpit.

David A. Dombek's "Reading the Word of God Aloud" addresses the sadly neglected need for appropriate public reading of Scripture. The embarrassing way in which the Word of God is often read, merely as a warm up for the sermon, is disheartening. Dombek's practical suggestions, particularly the admonition to read interpretively, provides instruction that will inspire public reading of a quality befitting the Word of God.

This volume is enthusiastically recommended to all who proclaim God's Word. Some may not agree with its every detail, but breadth and freshness make this a significant contribution to the field of preaching.

I. Howard Marshall. *1 Peter*. IVP New Testament Commentary, Grant R. Osborne, ed.; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991. 184 pp. \$14.95 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

This recently begun series seeks to justify its place among an already existing glut of commentaries on NT books by writing concisely for the church an explanation of the text and showing its present relevance and application (p. 9). It is based on the NIV, and geared for pastors, students, Bible teachers, and small-group leaders. The exposition appears on the upper part of each page with more special detailed comments at the bottom in notes.

Marshall believes that if a Christian were "to be ship-wrecked on a desert island and allowed to have only one of the New Testament letters . . . 1 Peter would be the ideal choice . . ." (p. 12). It takes up many subjects vital for Christians.

The author pays tribute to outstanding, detailed, older commentaries by E. G. Selwyn and F. W. Beare, to J. N. D. Kelly for his helpful work for students, and to C. E. B. Cranfield for his exegesis and exposition of 1 Peter as God's Word for today (pp. 11-12). The epistle, he says, has three lines of crucial instruction: help for recent converts, direction in Christian ethics, and aid for facing persecution.

He furnishes a good five-point defense of authorship by Peter versus a pseudonymous writer (pp. 22-23), a nine-point list of key points in Peter's theology, and a six-part outline. The main headings for the core of the book are basic characteristics of Christian living (1:13`2:10), social conduct (2:11`3:12), and the Christian attitude to hostility (3:13`5:11).

The book is concisely articulate regarding Peter's message. Much of the commentary is excellent, written in a clear and stimulating style. Valuable remarks about trial are in 1:6-7, a very profitable section on "Purity and Growth" in 2:1-3, and many worthwhile tie-ins with life today. He often points out a number of views on how a text has been interpreted, as in the five possible interpretations of Christ's suffering in the flesh in 4:1. He does not favor a link with Paul's idea of death/life with Christ in Romans 6, but favors saying that the Christian's preparation to suffer unjustly shows his commitment to a principle of opposing and refusing sin, an ideal but not universally true fact (pp. 133-34). Perhaps he dismisses too quickly the similarity to Romans 6.

The commentary on 3:19-21 is good (pp. 122-29). He explains the main views, but prefers the concept that Christ went to a prison in the heavens after His resurrection as He ascended, and proclaimed His victory of the cross and God's defeat of disobedient spirits (evil supernatural beings). He objects to a universalist view that allows a second chance for the lost to hear and be saved (p. 128). On 4:6, he sees a reference to Christians who now are dead physically, but had received the gospel before death (p. 137). His discussion of the "crown of glory" (5:4) is general and obscure, and does not offer a good explanation of a possible relation in this same context between leaders receiving this crown and believers in general receiving glory (v. 10). On 5:13, he says "She who is in Babylon" is the church at Rome. "The Jews applied the nickname to Rome after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but long before this date Roman writers themselves had begun to characterize their own city as another Babylon in view of its luxury and increasing decadence" (p. 175). He does not document his reference to Roman writers.

Marshall is usually an excellent commentator even when brief, but as all writers do, he sometimes offers an arbitrary opinion. An example is his fault-finding with Christians who pray, "Lord, we just want to praise you, Lord, for this, and, Lord, we just want to ask you

for that, and Lord, we ask you to bless so-and-so." Perhaps he finds this too general at times, but fails to explain *why* it is necessarily weak before the Lord who knows the heart's intent (p. 35). One of his more helpful statements is that salvation can have various thoughts, "rescue from danger, healing from illness, deliverance from the threat of death and entering into a state of well-being" (p. 39).

As a whole, this is a richly stimulating, brief commentary that hits the target much of the time. It will be useful to those for whom it is chiefly designed. It freshly shows the relevance of Peter's first-century words to the twentieth century.

Bruce Mawhinney. *Preaching with Freshness*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991. 258 pp. \$12.95 (paper). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

This is an insightful and creative approach that models the freshness it prescribes. The book narrates the trials of a young preacher. These serve as a vehicle for prescribing homiletical principles. Paul, a frustrated pastor about to leave his church because he has lost his zeal for the pulpit and pastorate, meets with his former homiletics professor while visiting the old seminary campus. Dr. Vickerson seizes the opportunity to encourage his former student before he joins the ranks of countless others who found the hurdles of ministry insurmountable. Paul soon discovers that he has given up the ministry of the Word to serve tables, the exact opposite of what the Scriptures prescribe, but the course that too many preachers choose because of a wrong view of servanthood. The book is both a homiletics text with life and breath reality clothing its bare-bones principles and a story whose characters live out a successful conclusion to the tensions that so often ruin preachers.

The book concludes with a "preaching with freshness checklist" which ties together in one outline (two formats) the principles taught in the narrative. Because Bruce Mawhinney's new book is enjoyable and helpful, it deserves a place in a preacher's library. Hopefully, it will help preachers whose seemingly unending pulpit struggles could be reduced with a little encouragement and some sage advice.

J. Gordon Melton *et al.* *New Age Encyclopedia*. 1st ed.; Detroit: Gale Research, 1990. 586 pp. \$59.95 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

The purpose of this book by the Director of The Institute for the Study of American Religion and others is to furnish reliable information on the New Age Movement (hereafter NAM). It seeks an "objective, nonjudgmental approach" (p. vii). The authors say, "The overwhelming majority of literature on the movement has been extremely hostile—particularly the books produced by Evangelical Christians who feel threatened by it" (p. vii). This conclusion is borne out in an earlier article by this reviewer ("Christian Books on the New Age, a Review Article," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 1/2 [Fall 1990] 177-200). Other literature on the NAM, such as works by religious skeptics, dismisses the movement as a result of psychological aberrations and social dysfunction (p. vii). So this encyclopedia seeks "a balanced, objective, and comprehensive overview" (p. vii). It gives no opinions on the NAM viability or its ultimate religious or philosophical value.

Over three hundred alphabetically listed articles give information on NAM themes, practices, spokespersons, organizations, and terms needing definition. Before this listing the work has a 21-page essay, "An Overview of the New Age Movement," that deals with origins, history, roles of main leaders, and capsule statements on the distinctive tenets and ideological loyalties. A list of chief works definitive of the NAM that the authors consulted is included. Also, a four-page "Chronology of the New Age Movement" (pp. xxxv-xxxviii) lists dates and developments from 1875 to 1990. The encyclopedia provides great clarification on the NAM relation to other movements such as the occult and metaphysical. It shows that some in occult and metaphysical groups embrace selected NAM features; it also reflects that some disclaim any association with NAM thought or practice (p. viii).

The encyclopedia begins with "A. R. E. Clinic" (a holistic health center in Phoenix, AZ) and ends with "Zone Therapy." The latter cross-references "Reflexology," which is a form of therapeutic massage based on ten zones in the body and believed to lead to better

functioning of other body parts (p. 379). Definitive entries deal with topics such as acupressure, acupuncture, Aquarius (Age of), applied Kinesiology (bodywork that combines aspects learned from chiropractic and acupressure), art therapy, astrology in the New Age, Atlantis, Blavatsky, cancer cures, holistic health, Edgar Cayce, Channeling, Chinese medicine, *A Course in Miracles* (nearly 1,200 pp. produced in 1965-1973 claiming to give words of Jesus), Benjamin Creme, Crystals, John Denver, Marilyn Ferguson, Findhorn Community in Scotland, Firewalking, hypnosis and self-hypnosis, integral yoga, other forms of yoga, J. Z. Knight, Maitreya, Ruth Shick Montgomery, Music and the New Age, New Age Politics, Past-life therapy, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, Reincarnation and Karma, Kevin Ryerson (channel/medium of Shirley MacLaine), David Spangler, Theosophy Society, UFO Abductions, etc.

The entries on NAM leaders provide basic information on their birth, career, marriage, when and how any NA experience began, success in writings, tapes or seminars, schools they founded, societies they started or shared in, etc. At the end of each entry the book lists bibliographic details on sources for further study. Further sections at the end list U. S. institutions that offer NA courses, and alphabetical and keyword indexes.

The entry "Christianity and the New Age" appears on pp. 111-15. It offers basic information and lists the top authors responding against the NAM as Russell Chandler, Constance Cumbey, Douglas Groothuis, Karen Hoyt, Walter Martin, Paul and Terri Reisser and John Welton, and Ruth Tucker.

If the book is used to gain basic, reliable, compact information about persons, organizations, and definitions, it is a very handy source. For example, if one wishes information about Shirley MacLaine's NAM connection, he would turn alphabetically to "MacLaine, Shirley" (pp. 270-72), and even find a listing of five of her books as well as other key sources that discuss her. The article "Skeptics and the New Age" covers pp. 417-27. Data about David Spangler is on pp. 428-29. That about Firewalking is on pp. 175-77, about Benjamin Creme pp. 135-37, and about Helena Petrovna Blavatsky on pp. 71-74. But evangelical perspectives and evaluations based on Scripture must be sought elsewhere. It is beneficial to compare the encyclopedia's entry on a NAM leader with reactions in books by evangelical Christians. Thirty-two of these books are

evaluated in an earlier issue of *The Master's Seminary Journal* (see documentation above).

Claus Westermann. *Genesis 37-50: A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986. 269 pp. \$25.95 (cloth). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

Twenty years of labor went into this monumental work on Genesis by Claus Westermann. The original German publication appearing in the series *Biblischer Kommentar Zum Alten Testament* has been translated into English by J. J. Scullion. The present volume was preceded by two others, Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12-36, published in English in 1984 and 1985 respectively. Upon publication the first volume was declared by some to be the most exhaustive and finest work on Genesis 1-11.

The commentary abounds with shrewd comments from many perspectives. Several examples bear this out: *historically* the title "Pharaoh" often is followed by the individual name (e.g., Raamses), but "before the 22nd dynasty he is always without a proper name" (p. 74, citing O. Procksch). *Philologically*, the author's knowledge of the Hebrew language extends to the advanced discussion of terms relating to Joseph's prison experience. The use of the Hebrew term *mshmr* in 40:3 "does not describe a place, namely, the prison, but a situation, detention" (p. 74). *Literarily and critically*, the author is also sensitive to literary cues such as the role of Gen 40:23 in providing a transition to Chapter 41. In the first episode Joseph's rise is followed by an undeserved fall. In the second a well founded expectation of release is followed by disappointment. This prepares for the turn of fortune in Chapter 41 (p. 78) where Joseph will be led from danger to Pharaoh's court. *Text-critically*, variants are brought out in a clear and accessible manner: "The Greek, Syriac and Samaritan Pentateuch all have 'without God one can give no assuring answer'" (p. 84). *Theologically*, the author challenges the reader to look beyond explicit references to God in the Joseph narrative to see God at work behind the scenes. "God was with Joseph: His path leads into the depths, but God's support accompanies him even there" (p. 250); "God is also with Joseph as he undertakes to interpret the dreams" (ibid.) and "God's

action also follows the steps of the brothers," for example, when the brothers cry out in their guilt, "What has God done to us?" (Gen 42:28).

Westermann treats the Joseph story as a literary unit and places it within the Jacob episode of the patriarchal history (p. 45). His discussions of Tradition History, literary form, and redaction critical issues may prove foreboding. Also, several typographical errors confuse the sense of the commentary (e.g., "They thus intend to destroy the dreams [should be "dreamer"?] and his dreams" (p. 41). But for the careful student of Scripture, Westermann's work is a wellspring of helpful philological and theological insights. A good working knowledge of critical methodologies is essential to a prudent use of Westermann's work.

Edwin, M. Yamauchi. *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 578 pp. \$34.95 (cloth). Reviewed by David C. Deuel, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The author, known for his ability to draw together textual and archaeological data, writes so that "readers of such books as Daniel, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah may better appreciate their historical and cultural backgrounds" (p. 12).

Biblical persons and events are viewed within the larger framework of Persian history. This fresh perspective sheds light on the causative elements within the Persian experience. Biblical references to the Medes, Cyrus the Great, Darius, Xerxes, Artaxerxes I, Susa (the capital of Elam), and Ecbanta (the capital of the Medes) are interspersed throughout. Several studies focus on biblical issues: the order of Ezra and Nehemiah; Ezra and the renewal of the Law; Nehemiah the cupbearer of Artaxerxes I; Nehemiah a Eunuch? Nehemiah the Governor; Nehemiah's opponents; Nehemiah the Reformer. Several studies in the Book of Esther examine the identity and roles of Ahasuerus, Vashti, Haman, Esther, and Mordecai.

The author chronicles the scholarly debate and makes his own contribution regarding the identity of "Darius the Mede" (Dan 5:31; 6:1-2; 9:1-2; 11:11). He also draws together recent research regarding the Behistan inscription and the Delphic Oracle. Other helpful discussions include the Greek words in Daniel, the Magi including

their historic relationship to the origin and dissemination of Astrology, and Zoroastrianism and Mithraism, including the latter's connection with fixing December 25 as the date of Jesus's birth.

In the appendix, the author discusses the once-widespread Apis cult which eventually interfaced with and was rivaled by Christianity at Alexandria in A.D. 391, and then finally on the island of Philae near Aswan about one-half century later.

The book is indexed by subject, place name, and other geographical designations including rivers, deserts, mountains etc., author, and Scripture reference. A select bibliography, combined with meticulous documentation, offers a wealth of primary and secondary source material.