

Book Reviews

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Ezekiel. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990. x, 242 pp. Hardback, ISBN 0-8042-3118-4.

The *Interpretation* commentaries aim at meeting the needs of the Church for theological exposition of the biblical text, integrating the results of scholarly historical and theological work on the Bible to nurture the life of faith. Several of its entries have met that aim admirably (e.g., E. Achtemeier's 1986 volume, *Nahum-Malachi*). Joseph Blenkinsopp has succeeded in producing such a work on Ezekiel. Professor of theology at The University of Notre Dame since 1970, Dr. Blenkinsopp is known already for his *Prophecy and Canon* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977) and *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983). This work on Ezekiel presents the most exegetical-expositional expression of his longstanding interest in the Old Testament prophets.

The volume naturally follows the format of the *Interpretation* commentary series. A brief (thirteen page) introduction follows the editor's preface and table of contents. In this scholarly but non-technical mode, one could actually wish for more, not less, introductory material. The clear presentation of the writer's general critical conclusions regarding the book, uncluttered by elaborate interaction with the scholarly guild, makes for interesting and informative reading. A brief but good reading list concludes the work, with entries ranging from John Taylor's *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* on Ezekiel to Gustav Hölscher's *BZAW* study of the book. The vast majority of the effort (226 of 242 pages) is devoted to expounding the text of Ezekiel in its canonical order, including excurses on "The Divine Effulgence" related to 1:4-28, historical background related to chaps. 25-28, and modes of interpreting chaps. 40-48.

Blenkinsopp understands the book of Ezekiel as a composition with "continuity, structure, and order...a well thought out whole to a much greater extent than other prophetic books" (p. 3). This remarkable work, he concludes, is the product of Ezekiel's own learning and literary skill, his own speaking and writing, as well as later expansion and editorial work by Ezekiel and others who treasured his words.

According to Blenkinsopp, three main features structure the present book, two of them distinctive of Ezekiel. Most conspicuously, the book marches along paced by the fourteen dates scattered from 1:1 to 40:1, placing oracles and visions from June/July 593 B.C. to March/April 571 B.C. and taking their departure from the

fifth year of Jehoiachin's (king of Judah) exile. These dates serve to cluster materials around the disastrous fall of Jerusalem, focusing attention on reasons and repercussions for the catastrophe. Second, Blenkinsopp notes the book's roughly chiasmic pattern in which the departure of the "Divine Effulgence" (Yahweh's "glory") from the idolatrous temple and Jerusalem in the Temple Vision (chaps. 8-11) finds balanced reversal in its subsequent return in concluding, climactic Vision of the New Temple (chaps. 40-48). This over-arching departure and return of God's Presence accounts theologically for both the destruction and the anticipated restoration of the city in Ezekiel, thus undergirding the entire book. In addition, thematic unities mark smaller and larger units of the book within this book-level flow.

Blenkinsopp discerns seven major parts of the book: Ezekiel's Prophetic Call (chaps. 1-3), The Fall of the House of Judah (chaps. 4-24), Judgment on the Nations (chaps. 25-32), The Fall of Jerusalem (chap. 33), Resurrection and Restoration (chaps. 34-37), Gog and the Land of Magog (chaps. 38-39) and Vision of the New Temple and Commonwealth (chaps. 40-48). Chapters 24 and 33 are pivotal, bracketing the Jerusalem disaster. The intervening oracles against foreign nations "serve both to make the transition from judgment [chaps. 1-24] to salvation [chaps. 34-48] and as a phase of dramatic stasis or *rallentando* as the fate of the city hangs in the balance" (p. 5). One wonders if the latter third of the book has not been overly fragmented in this analysis. The interrelationships of chaps. 33-39 commend them as a literary unit, in spite of smaller units obviously to be identified within them.

Even though the aim and length of the *Interpretation* commentary does not allow documented conversation with critical study of Ezekiel, Blenkinsopp's engagement with that scholarship is evident. The very fact that Blenkinsopp succeeds in an exposition of Ezekiel of value for the life and ministry of the Church follows from his understanding of the critical endeavor itself and his estimate of his own task in the commentary. As noted above, he sees the book as a "united and well-rounded composition," a fact not to be obscured by necessary discussion of the compositional history of the work (p. 8). He makes it his task to discern and expound the structure and content of the book as a whole (p. 6) and to suggest its consequent contribution to our discernment of "the will and intentions of God for our situation" (p. 10). Thus, he parts company with scholars content to analyze the text into its smallest constituent parts and to reconstruct the alleged history of those parts from their origin to their place in the present work (research dominated, e.g., by Hölscher and Torrey). Blenkinsopp rejects the misleading, "authentic-inauthentic" dichotomy (only occasionally slipping into that language) between Ezekiel and his successors in the text's formation, persons whom he regards as engaged in positive ministries of interpreting and preserving the prophet's words. As a result he is able to attend to the theological significance of the entire present book, even though he puts more distance between Ezekiel and the text than, e.g., Moshe Greenberg in *The Anchor Bible*.

Regarding specific questions of interest to students of Ezekiel, we may note the following. Blenkinsopp rejects as overly speculative and finally unfruitful in illu-

minating the text attempts to discern the psychological state of the prophet (with Zimmerli and Greenberg against, e.g., Irwin and Jaspers). He acknowledges Ezekiel's call as "a personal transformation accompanied by extraordinary experiences and profoundly spiritual and psychological upheaval" (p. 18).

Ezekiel was a prophet and priest from the Jerusalem establishment, widely conversant with the range of priestly teaching and heavily influenced by Jeremiah. He shows learned interest in a broad range of tradition now found in the Old Testament. Blenkinsopp places Ezekiel's ministry "essentially to the Babylonian diaspora," but sees no compelling reasons to exclude an initial call and ministry in the Jerusalem setting (p. 27, against Zimmerli and Greenberg and the present text).

Less significance is seen here than in some recent works in Ezekiel's eating of the scroll (2:8-3:3) and the mysterious silencing of the prophet (3:22-27). Blenkinsopp, like Zimmerli, sees the scroll experience as Ezekiel's "internalization of the divine word" (p. 25), unrelated to the dumbness (pp. 31-32). The widely acknowledged, highly "textual" nature of most of the material in the book and the inability of exhaustive form-critical study (like Zimmerli's monumental work) to place significant distance between "original" forms of units and their present shape in the text point to the significance of writing in the prophet's own work. These facts commend Ellen F. Davis's suggestive studies of the eating of the scroll and the dumbness as features of Ezekiel's pioneering *textual* expression of prophetic ministry (*Swallowing the Scroll: Textuality and the Dynamics of Discourse in Ezekiel's Prophecy*, JSOT 78 [1989]).

As to chaps. 40-48, Blenkinsopp leaves the question of authorship open, but insists the chapters cannot be severed from the book as was customary in critical scholarship earlier in the century. With Zimmerli, Greenberg and other more recent interpreters, Blenkinsopp emphasizes the many mutually illuminating links of these chapters with the earlier portions of the book and the importance they now assume in the structure of this significant prophetic work.

DAVID L. THOMPSON
F. M. and Ada Thompson Professor of Biblical Studies
Asbury Theological Seminary

Nolland, John. *Luke 1-9:20*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word Books, 1989. 454 pp. ISBN 0-8499-0234-7

Had the English-speaking world looked with longing eyes toward the steady flow of German commentaries on Luke (Klostermann, Hauck, Schmid, Schürmann, Rengstorf, Schneider, Ernst, Grundmann, Schmithals), some easement was found in the 1970s with the appearance of commentaries by Danker, Ellis and Marshall. Any lingering envy was surely extinguished by Fitzmyer's monumental two-volume production in the Anchor Bible which dwarfs its predecessors by providing almost everything one could hope for in a commentary. John Nolland's two-volume entry must, unfortunately, ply the turbulent wake of Fitzmyer's deep draft.

The author's credentials commend him as one well equipped for the task. His degrees include the Th.L. from the Australian College of Theology, the B.D. from the University of London and the Ph.D from the University of Cambridge. His publications in *Review de Qumran*, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *New Testament Studies*, and the *Journal for the Study of Judaism* demonstrate proficiency within the scholarly guild. Currently he serves as course leader, head of biblical studies and lecturer in New Testament Studies at Trinity College, Bristol, England.

The body of the commentary follows the standard format for the Word series: each gospel pericope enjoys treatment through bibliography, translation, text-critical notes, identification of form/structure/setting, verse-by-verse comment and synthetic explanation. Nolland appears comfortable enough with these divisions of labor and offers helpful cross-referencing at points of overlap between them.

The bibliographies stand as an undeniable strength of the commentary, enlarging upon Fitzmyer's in several ways. Quite naturally they include the past decade which has proven fertile ground for Lukan studies. Then, one can detect a greater interest in titles from the first third of this century, redressing in some measure the myopic tendencies of recent scholarship. Protestant fundamentalists will also note the additions of authors such as J. Gresham Machen and C. C. Ryrie. Most commendable in our view is Nolland's habit of locating valuable discussions found within monographs only tangentially related to the pericope at hand. Yet some price has been paid for these additions: Spanish, Italian and Latin titles found in Fitzmyer's bibliographies are usually missing.

Nolland's translation will occasionally strike the American reader as turgid and archaic or perhaps British ("set at nought" 7:30; "was reckoned" 3:23; "pass the night" 6:12). Instead of simpler expressions such as "it happened that..." or "the disciples told Jesus..." we find "it transpired that..." (9:18) and "the disciples related to Jesus..." (9:10). Surely the demon is too impassive who cries out "What good can come to me from contact with you, Jesus Son of the Most High!" (8:28).

The textual notes appended to the translations flag most important variants. Too often, though, Nolland is content to cite conflicting manuscript evidence without offering evaluative comment or resolution [e.g., the notes on 2:22-40]. We also noted that the textual difficulty at 4:44, important for its implications for the struc-

ture of the whole gospel, receives scant treatment. Furthermore, appeal to the secondary literature of textual criticism is quite rare, a weakness not shared by Guelich's volume on Mark in the same series.

Throughout the sections devoted to issues of form/structure/setting and to the verse-by-verse comment, Nolland appears to be at his best. In the former section source-, form- and redaction-critical issues are handled in some depth and with considerable skill. His constant interaction with a wide range of scholarly literature supports the claim of the editors that the series represents "the best in evangelical critical scholarship." As for the *evangelical* character of the work, we observe that Nolland typically resolves critical issues in favor of the historical reliability or plausibility of the Gospel narrative. For example, though at 6:5 Luke apparently transforms a Markan editorial comment (Mark 2:28) into an explicit word of Jesus, Nolland sees both the comment and its transformation as reasonable understandings of what was implied by Jesus' words and actions. In the verse-by-verse comment, the author weaves together syntactical discussion, OT allusions, parallels with extra-biblical literatures, scholarly citations and much more into an insightful and readable whole. The reader comes away with the distinct impression that Nolland has dealt quite thoroughly with each pericope.

One distinguishing feature of Nolland's work is his construal of Lukan literary structure. While adopting traditional narrative divisions early in the Gospel (1:1-4 [Dedicatory Preface], 1:5-2:52 [The Infancy Prologue], 3:1-4:13 [Preparation for the Ministry of Jesus], 4:14-4:44 [Preaching in the Synagogues of the Jews]), Nolland charts a unique course through the remainder of this first volume: 5:1-6:16 [Making a Response to Jesus], 6:17-49 [A Sermon for the Disciples], 7:1-50 [Something Greater than John is Here] and 8:1-9:20 [Itinerant Preaching with the Twelve and the Women]. Impressed with Theobald's arguments that 5:1-6:19 constitutes a literary whole, Nolland has apparently worked fore and aft to preserve that segment as a major component of narrative structure. Justification for the boundaries of each of these segments is buried within his treatment of the individual pericope, making retrieval of the larger structural program difficult for the reader. Nolland proposes no macro-structure to the Gospel, nor does he defend his own segmentation of the narrative against popular and powerful alternatives (e.g., geographical, symmetrical or salvation-historical structures).

The most serious weakness of the work is its introduction. Sensing this shortcoming at the outset, the author remarks that "the time has not yet come for the introduction to be able to function as an overview of the whole endeavor. At this point it is still a work in progress" (xxvii). Obviously the order of research and writing followed by Nolland is in some tension with the customary publishing order of the components of a commentary. While certainly competitive with the introductions of many one-volume commentaries on Luke (e.g., Schweitzer), this introduction fails to deliver the implied promise of a two-volume critical commentary. Here the shadow of Fitzmyer looms especially large, for whereas Fitzmyer devoted 283 pages to introductory matters, Nolland manages 14. Most noticeably, the bibliographies which show up as standard fare throughout the remainder of the volume are missing here. Furthermore, the scholarly audience which was treated

throughout the body of the commentary to the intricate details of source-, form- and redaction-criticism and which will use with profit bibliographies loaded with German, French and Dutch titles is nowhere in sight. Instead, the introductory article on textual criticism (to take one example) reads like a thumbnail sketch of the discipline for a complete novice. Finally, synthetic treatments of such important topics as Lukan theology and Lukan literary and narrative technique are absent. In the light of intense scholarly interest swirling about these matters in recent decades, some collected comments about them are most sorely missed.

Consequently, Nolland's work is one of feast and famine. Bibliographies, summaries of discrete critical discussions (except literary), and verse-by-verse comments may be used and read with great profit. For the remainder, one must look elsewhere.

JOSEPH R. DONGELL
Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies
Asbury Theological Seminary

Rosell, Garth M. and Richard A. G. DuPuis, eds. *The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney. The Complete Restored Text*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan-Academie Books, 1989. xlvii-736 pp. ISBN 0-310-45920-6.

For a century, the scholarly world took James H. Fairchild, Finney's successor as president of Oberlin College and the editor of his memoirs, at his word. Fairchild stated in his introduction to the 1876 edition, "In giving it [the memoirs] to the public, it is manifestly necessary to present it essentially as we find it. No liberties can be taken with it, to modify views or statements which may sometimes seem extreme or partial, or even to subdue a style which, though rugged at times, is always dramatic and forceful" (p. xlvii). This turned out not to be the case. In 1976, Rosell, while studying a microfilm of the original manuscripts for another research project, discovered that Fairchild had indeed edited out significant material. The subsequent partnership between Rosell and DuPuis to provide an authoritative, definitive edition of this crucial text for the history of revivalism and North American religious history has been eminently successful.

There are a number of features which enhance the usefulness of the volume for scholars. A critical apparatus describes various levels of redaction within the textual tradition (emendations by Finney and/or editors). The original text of the memoirs is printed in boldface type. The notes reflect the assiduous detective work of DuPuis and Rosell in tracking down persons identified only by an initial in the manuscript as well as references in the text which escape even informed readers. The bibliographic section, "Sources and Selected Bibliography," is quite extensive and provides an excellent introduction both to Finney research and to the historical period. An extensive index facilitates use. Well chosen plates (32) and maps (5)

are both interesting and helpful. The care with which this edition has been produced by both editors and publishers will make it the definitive edition of this important text. It is hoped that its availability will spark a resurgence of research on Finney, his influence, his associates and his causes.

The introduction to the volume discusses the literary history of the *Memoirs*, tracing their journey from Finney, through the hands of a number of supporters and would-be editors, to the Fairchild edition. The narrative involves prominent heirs of the Finney revivals including Lewis Tappan and Boston publisher Henry Hoyt, as well as Fairchild. We are informed that Finney's purpose was to write an apologetic to argue, against detractors of the early nineteenth-century revivals, that the events had indeed been divine moments. His method was to provide a detailed introduction to the methods used, the doctrines preached and the results within the context of his ministry as a revivalist. It also reflects the perspective of the one instrumental in attempts to institutionalize the results of the revival.

Written years after the events, the detail is often imprecise. However, the volume provides an account of the life and work of one of the most influential persons of the nineteenth century whose career as revivalist, educator, pastor, writer, social reformer and author defined traditions which still shape American culture. One branch of his legacy has found form in the Wesleyan/Holiness and Pentecostal traditions which carried an understanding of his vision for revival, "higher life" spirituality, social reform and education throughout the world. Few Wesleyan/Holiness educational institutions of the late-nineteenth century did not have an Oberlin connection. Most developed their curricula and educational philosophy on the basis of the Oberlin model. Many faculty of these institutions had been educated at Oberlin. Generations of Wesleyan/Holiness and Pentecostal pastors and evangelists have found Finney's efforts a model for their own.

The new material varies in substance and importance. Many details such as names, professional titles and place names will be of more limited interest. Other materials, such as accounts of Finney's problems maintaining an egalitarian interracial community at Oberlin and accounts of revival efforts and conflict in Great Britain, add significantly to our knowledge of the period. Important nuances to previous Finney research can now be made. Thanks to the careful efforts of Rosell, DuPuis and the publishers, this seminal text of Finney has been made available in its unexpurgated form.

DAVID BUNDY

Associate Professor of Christian Origins
Collection Development Librarian
Asbury Theological Seminary

Barbour, Ian. *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990. xv, 290 pp. ISBN 0-06-060383-6.

Ian Barbour's most recent work, *Religion in an Age of Science*, was originally presented as the Gifford Lectures at the University of Aberdeen during the autumn term of 1989. In preparation for this series, the author did extensive research at the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS) in the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, California. Such careful preparation was, no doubt, necessary in order to undertake the significant and timely project of this book; namely, to explore, explicate and interpret the contemporary relationship between religion and science and also to offer some guidelines for future discussions—a task complicated by recent developments in both fields.

The central argument of the work moves through three major phases: religion and the methods of science, religion and the theories of science, and philosophical and theological reflections. In the first part, Barbour astutely distinguishes scientific fact from fancy by laying out the basic parameters of the scientific method itself. Interestingly, one recent and very popular violator of these methodological constraints is none other than Carl Sagan who, after correctly presenting some of the discoveries of modern astronomy in his TV series *Cosmos*, was then emboldened to launch into unsupported metaphysical speculation and to attack Christian ideas of God at a number of points (p. 5). Barbour rightly takes this astronomer to task and explores alternatives to the extremes of scientific materialism, on the one hand, and biblical literalism on the other.

Though his background is largely a scientific one, Barbour's understanding of the field of religion is, at times, impressive. "Above all," he writes, "religion aims at the transformation of personal life, particularly by liberation from self-centeredness through commitment to a more inclusive center of devotion"—a definition which enshrines a simple truth too-often forgotten by clergy. However, Barbour's argument in the area of religion will be less satisfactory to traditional Christians when he expresses his unswerving commitment to religious pluralism in such a way as to obscure the uniqueness of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Of the relationship between science and religion in particular, Barbour sets up a parallel between the data and theories of science with those of religion. However, in the latter field, the data are obviously not quantifiable facts, but instead are such things as religious experience, story and ritual, and it is religious beliefs themselves which fill the important role of scientific theories (p. 31). Drawing on the insights from his earlier work, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms*, Barbour maintains that all data, both scientific and religious, are theory-laden; theories are paradigm-laden; and paradigms in turn are culture-laden and value-laden. Consequently, both science and theology are social constructions, and they therefore necessitate a position of critical realism; that is, theories and models, both scientific and theological, must be taken seriously, but not literally.

Though Barbour repeatedly offers a many-leveled view of reality as a corrective to past reductionism, his argument seldom rises above the plane of human experience with the result that transcendence is virtually lost. For example, the doctrine

of creation is not seen as a rational articulation of the revelation expressed in Genesis; instead this doctrine is deemed an utterly human product and "represents the extension of...ideas of redemption to the world of nature" (p. 144). In fact, in one place, Barbour argues that the story of creation reflects "the assumptions of a patriarchal society" (p. 205), a standard claim of feminists. However, this leveling tendency will perhaps be most disturbing to the Christian community in the important area of Christology, for not only does Barbour minimize the significance of the substitutionary atonement (p. 213), but he also champions a remarkably low Christology: "I am suggesting that in comparing Christ and other people, as in comparing human and nonhuman life, we should speak of differences in degree" (p. 213). Consequently, what is unique about Christ is not his metaphysical substance ([contra] the Johannine Prologue, Nicea and Chalcedon), but his relationship to God (p. 210).

In the last section of the book, after exploring the area of religion and the theories of science in terms of quantum theory, the Big Bang and evolution, Barbour concludes that Whiteheadian process philosophy is consistent with what we currently know about biological and human history (p. 234). Not surprisingly, the process *theology* of Hartshorne is apparently Barbour's choice of a model which can best adjudicate the conversation between religion and science in the future, though in one place he admittedly advises a multi-model approach (p. 270). But perhaps here is precisely where the fundamental flaw of the book lies, for the ultimate standard or norm which informs even the choice of an appropriate theological model is not Scripture or revelation, but the presuppositions of modernity as expressed in the form of a scientific world-view. Those philosophies and theologies, therefore, which are most in accord with the latest scientific models are favored, those which are less so, like classical orthodoxy (which Barbour refers to as the monarchical model), are not. Nevertheless, it is awkward and difficult at times to maintain that process theology adequately reflects some of the basic truths of Scripture, for this philosophically-informed theology is markedly adverse to the supernatural and to the potent, decisive and instantaneous acts of God (miracles). For example, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the resurrection of Jesus and the future resurrection of the saints are all embarrassments here.

In short, not only has Barbour failed to distinguish theological doctrine, which is a human construction, from revelation, which is not (at least not entirely), but he also has little place for, and virtually no discussion of, the notion of revelation itself, that some truths transcend the limits of human reason (though they don't contradict it), and therefore must be both given and received. In light of these observations, it is perhaps better and more accurate to have entitled the work not *Religion in an Age of Science*, but *Religion Under the Paradigm of Science*.

KENNETH J. COLLINS
Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion
Methodist College
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Wilcox, John T. *The Bitterness of Job, A Philosophical Reading*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989. i-x, 243 pp. \$29.95. ISBN. 0-472-10129-3

John T. Wilcox is professor of philosophy at the State University of New York at Binghamton whose work has centered on Nietzsche and process philosophy and theology. He states (p. viii) that his purpose in this book is to revive a tradition, virtually dormant since the nineteenth century, of Western philosophers writing on Job. The book, he believes, was surrendered to the specialists in Near Eastern languages, whom he respectfully admonishes for concentrating on details while ignoring the larger philosophical and theological options. The philosophers who have informed this study are Friedrich Nietzsche, Charles Hartshorne and John Rawls. For required specialist scholarship he relies on the commentaries of S. Terrien, R. Gordis and M. H. Pope.

In this work he questions some long-accepted conclusions of Joban scholarship while offering radical new insights. Initially he refutes the idea that the orthodoxy of Job's friends and Elihu is the simplistic doctrine that good is always rewarded and evil punished, as the explanation for suffering. He contends that the speeches of Eliphaz and Bildad require and those of Zophar and Elihu allow the conclusion that the traditional view of evil will admit that sometimes the weak are abused, the wicked prosper and the upright suffer. Orthodoxy attributes this to the sinful nature of all humans who deserve punishment. The righteous, however, who confess and repent will ultimately be protected and rewarded (5:17-27). Job asserts that his experience does not bear this out. This breaks no new ground, since recent commentaries on Job take similar positions.

However, Wilcox moves directly to a penetrating examination of Job's character. Job is found to be a psychologically extraordinary individual with a high degree of moral righteousness, one who deals with his fellows in an exemplary moral fashion. It is crucial to his argument that Wilcox believes Job to be truly innocent, and, thus, justified in his refusal to repent. This introduces his main thesis that Job, tested by extreme suffering, is driven to a moral bitterness which will, in turn, force him to curse or blaspheme God; an idea that Wilcox claims is unique. Job is not motivated by self-interest, despite Satan's insinuation (1:9-10), but Satan is correct in predicting (1:11; 2:5) that Job will curse God (p. 58). Blasphemy he defines as the regular and repeated attribution to God of unseemly qualities, even immoral behavior in his dealings with the innocent, including Job. Wilcox finds that Job is a moral man who expects a moral God, but whose bitter disappointment issues in cursing.

Ironically, it is Job, "awesome in blasphemy" (p. 99), who elicits God's response, who honors blasphemy while rebuking it. Chapter seven, "A No to Job's No," is pivotal, effecting the transition from the discussion of Job's psychology and his motives in cursing to the response of God's speeches in the theophany. The author believes that tradition and psychological health demand that Job's blasphemy cannot be the final despairing word. Doubtless, Job's heroic railing at heaven appeals to modern readers who cavil at the "happy" ending of the epilogue, but the moral bitterness that prompts it is unhealthy, contagious and poisonous.

The perceptive point is made that the friends were right to share Job's suffering (2:3), but also right in rejecting his bitterness. The theophany, says Wilcox, rebukes the blasphemy, taking Job and testing him in areas beyond the moral world-order that he craves.

The first divine speech (38:1-40:2) underlines the wrongheadedness of blasphemy by humbling Job and forcing him to see his ignorance and weakness. The normative character of the theophany forces Wilcox to conclude that the tenor of the book is "profoundly skeptical, agnostic, its message largely a counsel of silence" (p. 122). Knowledge is power and vast areas of the cosmic order are independent of and unknown to humanity; yet even these in their alien nature praise God. So blasphemy spoken in ignorance and weakness is not justified. The second speech (40:6-41:34) continues this theme in the strange figures of Behemoth and Leviathan. The theophany states that humans are profoundly ignorant and do not see deeply enough to comprehend the problem of evil and innocent suffering. Wilcox says that this does not contradict the prologue which he views as only *describing* Job's sufferings, not *explaining* them (p. 174). So, for the theophany to be understood as offering no answer is in harmony with the rest of the book—a subtle but telling distinction. The idea that God must uphold the human-oriented and provincial moral world order is rejected. Therefore Job is correct in his perception but misguided in his cursing. The theophany contrasts human weakness and God's omnipotence, however that is to be interpreted, though the book of Job is understood to place no limit on His power. He deftly links the actuality and the recognition of ignorance and weakness to the epilogue. In Job's discovery of human finitude there is a blessing of which the epilogue is symbolic, though its details are not to be taken literally. He concludes that the book calls for a return to a religion centered on nature rather than on the moral world order. The value of the book lies in its vigorous reappraisal of the central issues of Job from the perspective of Nietzsche's Moral World Order and "yes-saying," Hartshorne's studies of divine omnipotence in Job and Rawls' discourse on moral attitudes. Wilcox's conclusions that Job blasphemes in ascribing immoral behavior to God and that the centrality of a moral world order is rejected, will assuredly spark discussion and dissension. The psychological study of Job is particularly well drawn and convincing. His arguments are closely reasoned, his style of writing clear and inviting. The concern for the conceptual and thematic unity of the book is praiseworthy and aptly demonstrated. Any weaknesses occur when he is forced, inevitably, to grapple with textual matters, competing translations or other aspects of specialist scholarship: these he acknowledges (p. x). They do not detract substantially from a work that diverges from the traditional channels of Joban scholarship but that rewards a careful reading.

JOHN BARCLAY BURNS
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Morris, Thomas V., ed. *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 1988. 300 pp. ISBN 0-268-01570-8

Ever since St. Paul warned the Colossians to beware of vain philosophy, many Christians have viewed philosophers with suspicion. The concern is not without warrant, of course, for many philosophers, particularly since the "Enlightenment" have been openly hostile to traditional Christianity. Remarkably however, our generation has witnessed, particularly within the last two decades, a growing openness to Christian faith within the circles of academic philosophy. Perhaps the best indication of this change is the founding and growth of the Society of Christian Philosophers. Founded in 1978 with about 200 members, the society presently numbers approximately 1,000 in membership.

The enhanced presence of Christians in the field of philosophy has impacted the discipline of philosophy of religion, and is likely to influence theological and biblical studies as well in days to come. Many contemporary philosophers of religion have moved beyond discussions of issues germane to generic theism, and have begun to explore the philosophical dimensions of specifically Christian doctrines and truth claims. This volume is a shining reflection of these developments and a harbinger of future directions.

The book is comprised of an Introduction plus ten essays, divided into three sections: Sin and Salvation; God, the Good, and Christian Life; and Christian Doctrine and the Possibilities for Truth.

In the first section, Richard Swinburne discusses "The Christian Scheme of Salvation," focusing on the concepts of guilt, atonement and forgiveness. The topic of atonement is further explored in a beautifully written paper by Eleonore Stump. She expounds Aquinas's theory of the atonement, and shows how it can avoid the difficulties in what she calls "the unreflective account" of the atonement. William Wainwright takes up the doctrine of original sin, particularly as defended by Jonathan Edwards, and offers a critical but sympathetic assessment of Edwards's views on the matter. Finally, Marilyn Adams dares to "trespass into the field of New Testament studies" with a provocative paper entitled "Separation and Reversal in Luke-Acts." She compares and contrasts the teaching of Luke-Acts with apocalyptic theology, especially the apocalyptic view of how God will separate the righteous from the wicked and bring about a reversal of their destinies.

Some of the papers in the second section will be of particular interest to those in the Wesleyan tradition. In one such paper, William Alston is concerned to explain and illuminate just how the Holy Spirit brings about moral transformation in the process of sanctification. Robert Adams examines a cluster of moral issues in his essay entitled "Christian Liberty." Adams defends a Christian ethic of devotion and argues that there is room in such an ethic for supererogatory actions. Morris aptly characterizes this paper in his Introduction as "exciting and edifying" (p. 9). The next paper, by Norman Kretzmann, is a discussion of issues surrounding weakness of will, as related to various interpretations of Romans 7, most prominently that of Aquinas in his commentary on the passage. Kretzmann's approach was to "see how a medieval philosopher's position on certain philosophical issues

affects and is affected by his treatment of certain passages in his biblical commentaries" (p. 173). The last paper in this section is one of the most fascinating in the volume, namely, "Suffering Love," in which Nicholas Wolterstorff mounts an impressive case against the traditional doctrine of divine impassibility. This paper, like Kretzmann's, displays the subtle interplay of biblical, theological and philosophical considerations in the formation of doctrinal convictions.

The two papers in the final section are rather technical, particularly Peter van Inwagen's paper on the Trinity. van Inwagen employs a logic of relative identity to show that classical trinitarian claims are formally consistent. James Ross brings the book to a close, appropriately enough, with an article entitled "Eschatological Pragmatism." The aim of the paper is to suggest how the beliefs of Christians from different ages and cultures can all come out true in the eschaton.

As this brief survey indicates, the contents of this volume deal with a wide range of topics usually thought of in connection with systematic theology. It is remarkable to see well known philosophers writing in defense of Christian beliefs, given the notion, still common in some quarters, that philosophy and Christian faith do not mix. Indeed, as Morris comments in the Introduction: "There is no little irony in the fact that this comes at a time when a great number of respected academic theologians have, on *philosophical* grounds, largely abandoned the traditional claims distinctive of the Christian faith throughout most of its history" (p. 2).

If this volume is any indication, there is reason to think that orthodox Christian beliefs can again gain a hearing in serious academic circles.

JERRY L. WALLS
Assistant Professor of Philosophy of Religion
Asbury Theological Seminary

