

## Book Reviews

Hamilton, Victor. *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990. 522 pages. ISBN 0-8028-2308-4.

Whenever a new volume of the New International Commentary appears, it is a cause for considerable interest, because this set has established itself as the most notable series expressing a recent, conservative point of view. This is especially the case when the volume deals with one of the major books of the Old Testament, as this one does.

Victor Hamilton is a well-respected teacher at Asbury College and a gifted preacher. His wit, his common-sense and his ability to expound the meaning of the Bible for the present day are all well known. He gained a hearing in the broader world of learning with his widely-used *Handbook on the Pentateuch*.

This volume follows the pattern set by previous ones in the series in that introductory matters—such as structure, composition, authorship, text, as well as a lengthy bibliography—are dealt with in an introduction (here 100 pages). The commentary then proceeds as usual with a paragraph-by-paragraph consideration of the text giving major emphasis to interpretation.

Dr. Hamilton writes clearly and well. The language used is appropriate to the topic and to the presumed audience: well-educated, but not having either high interest in, nor a high degree of training in, the technical aspects of biblical interpretation. There are a few linguistic oddities like "Enter the problematic sons of God" (p. 262), and "temerarious" (p. 279), but examples like these stand out because they are uncommon.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the work is its careful discussion of the literature on any paragraph or topic. Dr. Hamilton is at his best in reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of various arguments. He is able to summarize fully and yet concisely while going to the root issues with generally unerring aim. As would be expected in this series, his conclusions almost always fall with the conservative side, but one does not have the sense that positions with which he eventually disagrees are introduced only to be dismissed.

Another strength closely coupled with this is the careful treatment of the exegetical alternatives on any passage. The reader will learn the range of possibilities, given the particular morphology, grammar and syntax of the phrase or sentence. By and large this consideration will be with the text as it now stands. Dr. Hamilton has little patience with those who dissect the text according to some critical principle and then interpret the hypothesized original.

In a book which stands out in comparison to many other arid treatments of Genesis, one hesitates to point out weaknesses; but, unfortunately, those which occur are serious enough to require comment. If Dr. Hamilton's strength is his evenhanded review of alternatives, his weakness is his failure to adequately support his ultimate conclusions. Too frequently, he will only tell which alternative he chooses as though the discussion of strengths and weaknesses was self-explanatory. But even more seriously, in some cases he ventures no opinion. The most important of these omissions of opinion is of critical significance for the book. It is on the question of historicity. How are we to interpret the first eleven chapters and indeed, the whole book? Does it contain accurate history through which theology is revealed? Or does it record theologically significant material couched in history-like sagas? In vain we look for Dr. Hamilton to take a clear and coherent stand. It appears that he takes such persons as Cain and Noah to have been historic figures, but there is no discussion of whether or not that is even important.

A second weakness has to do with the stated purpose of the series, which is to be expositional. Dr. Hamilton gives his readers fine exegesis, but almost no exposition. That is, he almost never comments upon the theological significance of the text for that time or this, and the comments he makes tend not to be very penetrating. His commendable treatments of the New Testament's appropriation of the Genesis materials suffer from this same defect. To define the grammatical or syntactic meaning of a statement is only to have begun to interpret it.

Finally, while his treatment of the source-critical hypothesis for the structure and sense of the various passages is good, he does not give enough attention to form-critical and tradition-historical matters. Certainly these could not be the primary focus, given the purpose of the series. However, there are a number of instances where it is necessary to ask why certain elements are in juxtaposition with each other in the present text, and these disciplines have offered a number of suggestions. Whether they are right or wrong, it is important to ask the questions they ask. If it is too simplistic to say that Genesis 1 is the P creation story and Genesis 2 is the J story, then how do we explain the origins of the two components? Dr. Hamilton apparently does not believe Moses sat down and wrote them in sequence (and surely not many do). So how did they get into their present order and why?

Despite these criticisms, this is an excellent help for anyone who wishes to understand the book of Genesis better. For an exegetical treatment of the

text as it stands, with careful consideration of any proposed alternatives, it would be hard to improve upon it.

JOHN N. OSWALT

Professor of Old Testament and Semantic Languages  
Asbury Theological Seminary

Clines, David J. A. *Job 1-20*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 17. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1989. cxv, 501 pp. \$25.95. ISBN 0-8499-0216-9.

*Job 1-20* comprises the first volume of the author's projected two-volume commentary on the Book of Job. David Clines is professor of biblical studies in the University of Sheffield (England) and serves as co-editor of the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* and editor of *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. He has also published numerous other books and articles, including the Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther volumes in the New Century Bible.

Though shorter and less satisfying than expected, given the size of the commentary and the provocative discussions Job has stimulated over the centuries, the Introduction provides a readable orientation to the Book of Job. Clines has no clear preferences regarding questions of authorship and date of composition. And though he seems inclined to affirm the literary unity of the prose story and poetic dialogues, he is less certain of the original inclusion of the wisdom poem (Job 28) and the Elihu speeches (32-37). An unusual addition to the Introduction is a series of brief discussions on how Job might be read by those with distinctive presuppositions (thus, "Readings" by the feminist, the vegetarian, the materialist and the Christian). A far more significant contrast would have been the view of Job from the perspectives of the theological determinist and the non-determinist. Is Job resigned ultimately to divine providence actualized meticulously in human experience, or is the book, in fact, a reaction to such a notion? More on this point shortly.

The "reasonably comprehensive bibliography" compiled in the final section of the Introduction may be the most useful this reviewer has seen on Job. It includes citations of important sermons and devotions as well as the technical studies of scholarly articles. Under the heading "Job and Its Influence," the bibliography even lists artistic masterpieces (music, visual arts, drama and literature) which owe their themes and inspiration to Job.

The commentary proper, consistent with the WBC series, follows Clines's outline of Job and includes five interrelated components: 1) a specific bibliography for the unit; (2) an original translation, which admirably attempts to reflect the Hebrew idiom; (3) notes which justify the author's translation and at times give helpful explanation and evaluation of other

standard versions; (4) comment consisting of a detailed, verse-by-verse interpretation of the text and an often stimulating exegetical discussion; and (5) an explanation which concludes each section with a summary of the broad intent of the passage, its theological impact and its relationship to the whole book.

The continual importance of the Book of Job for the community of faith, both past and present, is not lost sight of by this worthy contribution to its understanding and interpretation. Clines rightly sees the central issue of Job as a conflict of faith and experience. It addresses not so much the why of suffering but whether there is any moral order in the world. The biblical writer raises serious questions about how God's justice is to be understood in a world where humans experience tragedy and evil. Those who approach Job from the Reformed theological tradition have historically had difficulty with the speeches of Elihu and of Yahweh. Commitment to meticulous providence would necessitate regarding Elihu's monologues as preparatory to the theophany and his arguments against Job as reflecting the "biblical" view of divine sovereignty. But a careful reading of Job clearly suggests that Elihu's pious pronouncements are actually parallel with those of the other counselors whom Yahweh rebukes! God's sovereignty as creator, then, does not assume His purposes to be the manipulation of good and evil and of reward and punishment in human experience. The believing community can benefit immensely from Job's painful journey by recognizing that suffering is part of the common human experience, that questions of justice and order and God's will are complex and cannot be neatly packaged into pat answers, that the honest expression of our frustrations and hurts to God is theologically and psychologically sound (compare with the psalms of lament), and that compassion for those who suffer is essential to living a life that reflects God's character. Fuller analysis of Clines's treatment of these matters will have to wait for his second volume.

There are, however, at least two hermeneutical issues in this volume that should prompt discussion among evangelical readers. First, Clines is in agreement with other recent evangelical commentators—Andersen (Tyndale) and Hartley (NICOT)—in recognizing the literary nature of the prologue/epilogue. Comparisons with other ancient Near Eastern wisdom writings as well as scrutiny of its content and purpose suggest that the account was based on an ancient story about a sage who suffered. One is not compromising the integrity of Scripture by correctly identifying the "wisdom" genre of the passage and acknowledging that the story was used as a springboard for the theological discussions contained in the poetic dialogues.

Second, the familiar passage of Job 19:25-27 has been understood by Christian tradition as having strong Christological overtones. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," together with the phrase "in my flesh I shall see God," have been etched almost indelibly into evangelical proclamation as a clear messianic prophecy. Clines is in agreement with both Andersen and

Hartley that "resurrection theology" should *not* be read back into this passage. But whereas the latter two commentators—using somewhat different arguments—hold that Job's redeemer (Hebrew *goel*) is to be understood as God, Clines offers detailed rationale why Job's *goel* cannot logically refer to the Deity. Since the lawsuit context pits Job against God, it would be most unlikely that God would appear as a legal attorney against Himself. He argues, instead, that Job's "champion" ("defender" or "vindicator") is the metaphorical expression of his own protestations of innocence. He compares the passage with 16:18-21 where his "cry" is explicitly identified with his "spokesman" and, by implication, with the "witness" and "advocate" in the same context. While Clines's treatment of this difficult text seems strained at times, his suggestions are worthy of thoughtful consideration by evangelical interpreters. A sound hermeneutic always searches for the best and most accurate rendering of a passage within its own context.

GERALD I. MILLER, Ph.D.

Professor of Ancient Languages and Religion  
Asbury College  
Wilmore, Kentucky

Andersen, Francis I. and David Noel Freedman. *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Bible. Eds. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1989. xlii, 979 pp. Hardback, ISBN 0-385-00773-6.

Andersen and Freedman's monumental study of Amos is a gold mine of information and insight—theological, literary, linguistic, philological, historical, rhetorical and more. The length of the book allows breadth and depth of treatment seldom possible, even in full length commentaries. (The 220 pages of frontal and introductory material exceed the length of most full commentaries on the book!). Francis I. Andersen is professor of Old Testament at the New College for Advanced Christian Studies, Berkeley, California. David Noel Freedman is professor of biblical studies at the University of Michigan and the University of California at San Diego. Both Andersen and Freedman are students of William Foxwell Albright and obvious heirs of "the Baltimore school," though their work shows interest ranging beyond Albright's and immersion in current emphases in biblical studies.

The Anchor Bible on Amos includes a new translation of the text by two of the world's finest Hebraists, each published pioneers in the modern study of Hebrew grammar and syntax. Appearing as a whole in the prefatory materials and integrated with the writers' outline of the book, the translation stands again in sections with notes and comments throughout the commen-

tary. Andersen and Freedman take up customary introductory matters, such as method of inquiry in Amos studies, form and genre, the composition and development of the book, the text and language of the book, and the question of authenticity in Amos. In the introduction they also approach at length some unexpected but helpful topics: the historical background of the prophet and the work, the God of Israel in Amos, and geopolitical terminology in Amos. The Introduction concludes with a 466-entry bibliography, rich in twentieth-century resources but poverty stricken in the bare handful of pre-1900 references included, one antedating 1772. The body of the work follows standard Anchor Bible format of translation, unit introduction, notes (textual and exegetical) and comment. After the commentary, extensive indexes to topics, authors, words (biblical and related languages) and scriptural references enhance the commentary's use as a reference tool.

Proceeding as one might expect from their work on Hosea (*The Anchor Bible*, vol. 24), Andersen and Freedman focus their energies on understanding the book of Amos in the Masoretic text as a coherent literary composition. Emphasis here is on the work as a literary product with a design and life and purpose of its own, something other than the oral ministry of the prophet but related with integrity to that ministry. Their meticulous reading of the Hebrew text uncovers scores of rhetorical and structural interlacings in the book of interpretive significance. While they may err on the side of over-analysis here, their evidence for careful, purposeful editing of the book is persuasive. Both as a matter of methodological principle and as a result of their study of the book, they are convinced that the major editorial/redactional work evident is either by Amos himself or by an editor (or editors) fully compatible with the literary intent of Amos himself. Thus the entire book is authentically "Amos."

In addition, they think it arbitrary to refuse the prophet the privilege of a dynamic, developing message of broad scope. Therefore, they are skeptical of approaches which, as a matter of principle, e.g., deny to Amos passages that offer hope over against the book's dominant message of doom or which include the nations (and particularly Judah) within this prophet's purview. Even the radical hope of 9:8b-15 is lodged with Amos, against prevailing opinion.

Beyond their methodological stance, their exhaustive reappraisal of Amos's geopolitical terminology supports these views, they feel (pp. 98-139). With reasonable success they show that, with few exceptions (perhaps 1:1 among them), Amos uses "Israel," unmodified, to refer to the kingdom of North Israel, and uses "Joseph" and "Isaac" as substitutes for Israel in this use. He uses qualifications of Israel ("children of Israel," "house of Israel," "my people, Israel") and "Jacob" to refer *not* to the Northern kingdom but to either larger or historic Israel. I remain unconvinced that "my people, Israel" (in 7:8, 15; 8:2) and "house of Israel" (particularly in 5:4, 7:10 and 9:9) necessarily refer beyond the Northern Kingdom and find the analysis strained at points. But over all, they sustain the claim that Amos's message

was for all Israel, with particular focus on the North. From this base, the references to Judah and the crux at 9:8b look much different.

The authors identify the book's literary forms and genres, passage by passage, and use these insights, where possible, to illumine the text. But Andersen and Freedman lack confidence in scholarly ability to reconstruct the history by which these pieces have come to the present text. Moreover, though they do not disdain the form critical enterprise, they doubt the ultimate value of that quest for understanding the work as it now stands. Thus their commitment to focus on the work in its final literary form.

Andersen and Freedman see the book in four major divisions: The Book of Doom (1:1-4:13), The Book of Woes (5:1-6:14), The Book of Visions (7:1-9:6), and The Epilogue (9:7-15). They think the prophet's ministry may have unfolded in four phases, seen in the Book of Visions and the Epilogue and correlating with sections of the present book (pp. 73-88). Visions 1 and 2 (7:1-6) represent phase one. In connection with the plagues noted in the preaching of 4:6-11, Amos receives the first two visions and embarks on a ministry embracing all Israel, announcing imminent judgment, calling for repentance and offering hope. In response to his intercession, judgment is stayed, though his message falls on deaf ears. Chapters 5-6 derive from proclamation from that period.

Visions 3 and 4 (7:7-8:2) represent phase two of Amos's ministry, with focus primarily on North Israel. Destruction is now irrevocable. Confrontation with the crown and religious establishment probably bring Amos's career to an end (arrest? martyrdom?). The Book of Doom, 1:1-4:13, is built on preaching from this phase, with the oracles of chapters 3 and 4 probably preceding the "Great Set Speech" of 1-2.

Phase three, which may have overlapped the previous phase at points, is represented in the final vision (9:1-4) and focuses on the question of the fate of the leaders and justification of the terrible message of phase two. It correlates with 8:3-9:6. Phase four is connected with the Epilogue, pointing to the future.

Andersen and Freedman's approach has the great value of taking the link between the text and the ministry of Amos himself seriously and provides numerous occasions for profitable reflection on the text. Of course, this reconstruction of the prophet's life and the literary correlations linked to that reconstruction are like the historical reconstructions based on form criticism and rejected by the authors. They are intriguing, sometimes brilliant; and the quest is certainly worth the effort. But the picture is plausible at best. The evidence allows little certainty. Fortunately the interpretation of the text itself rarely depends on the reconstruction.

With regard to the division of the book, I have not been persuaded that the rhetorical links between 3:1-4:13 and 1:1-2:16 are strong enough to override the oracular introductions at 3:1; 4:1 and 5:1 and binding chapters 3:1-5:17, at the least, together. This means a four-fold division of the work (1:1-2:16; 3:1-6:14; 7:1-9:6 and 9:7-15) should stand, dividing the "Book of Doom."

Andersen and Freedman's attention to the theology of the book of Amos presents, in this reader's mind, perhaps the most gratifying feature of this entry in *The Anchor Bible* series, and that on three counts. First, they recognize that this work is a theological document and that, as such, any adequate account of it must treat that theology. This they do, in such instructive essays as "The God of Israel in the Book of Amos" (pp. 88-97) and at numerous points in the commentary. Second, they show interest in biblical theology and bring that interest to bear on their understanding of Amos, as, e.g., in the excursus, "When God Repents" (638-679). Finally, and most astoundingly, Freedman and Andersen write as though the God of Amos may well be their God also—a rare find in modern, guild scholarship! They write with spiritual sensitivity and sympathy that appears to grant validity to and seeks to appropriate the significance of the revelation of God to Amos (See, e.g., pp. 95-97).

By far the most obvious weakness of the work, in my judgment, is its operation in a vacuum regarding the history of interpretation before 1850-1900. The work would have been significantly enriched by dialogue with the Church and synagogue's historic understandings of many passages, beyond that accessed through the LXX and Targum. More ruthless editing could have trimmed redundant sections, e.g., the multiple introductions, making room for this dialogue without lengthening the already bulky work. Better production editing would have greatly increased the usefulness of a work this size. Unlike most other *Anchor Bible* volumes, this book's page heading references are so global as to make them nearly useless. For example, "1:1-4:13" stands as the heading reference throughout the entire 273 pages of introduction, notes and commentary on this unit! Locating comments on a single verse is a needlessly arduous task. Even so, what's there is worth plowing through. Not for the lay reader, the work will be most useful to well-informed students of Scripture and serious scholars.

DAVID L. THOMPSON

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

Cole, R. Alan. *The Gospel According to Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*. Revised edition. Ed. Leon Morris. *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989. 340 pp. pb. ISBN: 0-85111-871-2.

In spite of their diminutive size, the Tyndale commentaries on both testaments often rank among the best buys in evangelical biblical interpretation



for pastors. Unfortunately, neither of Alan Cole's volumes on Mark, the 1961 original nor this revision, approach that. Mr. Cole's revisions of his earlier work appear almost entirely in the introduction where three main changes are evident. First, the blatantly apologetic edge of the earlier work has been softened. Second, form and redaction critical readings of the Gospel and topics related to them receive more extensive and more balanced treatment, with fresh attention to works published not just after but also prior to Cole's earlier commentary. Third, new treatment of the structure of Mark's Gospel, of the theology and main motifs of the Gospel, and of questions of interest to current readers of the Gospel almost double the size of the original introduction. These are all welcome revisions.

But the revised work still labors under serious ambiguity regarding critical study of Mark. This not only colors the tone of Cole's work (alternative views are still "perverse," e.g., p. 67) but also introduces inconsistency into the treatment and inhibits insight. For example, eager to distance himself from radical redaction criticism, he argues against (!) "theological" reading of the Gospel (p. 11), positing that Mark adopted no conscious theological position in his work, his arrangement of materials being "quite instinctive and unself-conscious, under...the Spirit's guidance" (p. 57). Yet he wants to discover Mark's purpose in writing by examining the way he put his material together (p. 37). Other results of this ambiguity diminish the force with which he grasps Mark's theology, as does his failure to appropriate insights of recent literary critical readings of the Gospel which would allow him better to get at the structure and logic of the work as a whole.

Mr. Cole is not only at pains to distance himself from "liberal" critical approaches to the Gospel study. Even treating such topics as "The Status of Women" (pp. 74-78) and "Signs and Wonders" (pp. 78-85), his concern not to be identified with Christian feminists or with charismatic/power understandings of Christian experience, liberal or otherwise, mars the essays. Apologetic concerns again block free exposition of Mark's contribution.

Of course there is much of value in the work. The Rev. Canon Cole is affiliated with the Church Missionary Society of Australia and is a lecturer at Trinity Theological College, Singapore. From long-term mission experience in the Far East, he writes with global perspective, with practical, pastoral concern, and fine insight into the book of Mark at many points. On the whole, however, this reviewer looks for more in the Tyndale series.

DAVID L. THOMPSON

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

Morris, Leon. *Reflections on the Gospel of John*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1986. 750 pp. Paper, ISBN 0-8010-6202-0.

Leon Morris has provided a valuable contribution to studies in the Gospel of John with this recent four-volume paperback work, the final volume having been released in 1988. Reading the first volume soon after its publication, I looked forward to the subsequent releases. Morris divides his study of the Gospel among his four volumes in this way: Volume I, *The Word Was Made Flesh* (John 1-5); Volume II, *The Bread of Life* (John 6-10); Volume III, *The True Vine* (John 11-16); and Volume IV, *Crucified and Risen* (John 17-21). He provides his own translation of a few verses at a time, and then gives a commentary on those verses.

The work maintains a delicate balance for the study of John's Gospel. It yields enough scholarship in the way of historical background and grammatical study to satisfy the serious student. However, it is not so weighty in these areas as to lose the man or woman approaching the Gospel of John for devotional purposes. Indeed, Morris states at the outset that "the tone is devotional." These readable volumes are nonetheless replete with excellent discussion and commentary on the essentials of the Gospel, the obvious result of Morris's own long and careful study of the Gospel of John. Many readers will be familiar with other books by this author, including those which deal with John's Gospel.

There are many invaluable aspects of *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, three of which will be noted here. First, some of the background material and word studies, while perhaps familiar to the seasoned scholar, are certainly helpful for the conscientious student. Second, I found Morris's insights into the various people whom we encounter in the Gospel to be intriguing. One sees Thomas, or Peter, or Pilate in a different light—or a more complete light—after reading Morris. Third, the author was faithful throughout the book in drawing out the devotional nature of the Gospel. Morris's application of the teachings of the Gospel of John to the twentieth-century Christian is perhaps the greatest strength of this work, and for that reason will, I believe, be of benefit to pastors and teachers in churches as well as to college and seminary professors and students.

The proof of a work like this is often in its effectiveness in the classroom. I have used these volumes recently in a course on Johannine literature, and found that the students were engaged both intellectually and spiritually by these books. This came as no surprise to one who has used other works of Morris in various courses, and found them equally well received. However, both the challenge and the appeal of this Christian's writing and thinking, as we have come to know them through the years, are still apparent in *Reflections on the Gospel of John*.

ROGER J. GREEN

Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies  
Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts

Wagner, Gunter, ed. *An Exegetical Bibliography of the New Testament*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1987. 350pp. ISBN 0-86554-157-4.

This is the third volume of this series, and deals with material on the Gospel of John and the Johannine Letters. The author, who began teaching in 1958, writes in the preface that he devised in that year "a detailed system for the collection of bibliographical information relevant to New Testament studies, ranging from the Old Testament background to the theology of the Early Church" (p. V). The exegetical material from that collection pertaining to the Johannine literature is presented in this book.

The student of the Gospel or Epistles who has not yet discovered the volumes in this series will find this an extremely helpful source. Entries are given for entire chapters, or sections, or verses, so that the material listed will be beneficial regardless of how broad or focused the research being done. Because the entries are taken from voluminous sources, they are given in many languages. However, the student who may be limited to English or to English and only one other language need not fear—there are many invaluable sources provided in this volume.

There are two practical matters about the book which I appreciated. First, in each entry the author's last name is given in capital letters so that it is quickly identified if one happens to be looking for Brown's or Metzger's contribution to a particular verse or to a section of the Gospel or Epistles. Second, the entries for each section are given, not in alphabetical order by authors' last names, but in chronological order, so that one can see at a glance the building through the twentieth century of the books and articles germane to a verse or a section of Johannine literature.

It is impossible to imagine the work which has gone into this and other volumes of this series, and it is hard work which sometimes goes unappreciated. Nevertheless, access to this bibliographic resource is invaluable, and continues to fulfil the original purpose which was "to enable the student as quickly as possible to get down to research without wasting days, even weeks, on the search for the literature" (p. V). One anticipates the author's forthcoming fourth volume on major Pauline Epistles. This is, however, intended only as a beginning for the student, and the good student will want to follow this course by continuing his or her own bibliographic reference file in order to keep up with the material published since the completion of this very useful work.

ROGER J. GREEN  
Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies  
Gordon College  
Wenham, Massachusetts

Barth, Markus. *Rediscovering the Lord's Supper: Communion with Israel, with Christ, and Among the Guests*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1988. 113pp. ISBN 0-8042-3749-2.

Markus Barth here offers a clear and original exegesis of New Testament passages that deal directly with the Lord's Supper. Barth conducts this exegetical endeavor from the perspective of a New Testament scholar who is profoundly dissatisfied with the way in which the Lord's Supper is understood and practiced in the contemporary Church. In fact, the present volume is meant to provide an alternative interpretation of the Eucharist over against the prevailing notions, as these are reflected in the famous Lima Document of 1982.

Barth identifies four major corruptions of the Lord's Supper: (1) a radically individual and mystical emphasis that leaves no room for social concerns; (2) the adoption of non-biblical and irrelevant language, such as "transubstantiation"; (3) an understanding of the Lord's Supper that is exclusivistic, manifested ultimately in the use of the Lord's Supper to enforce excommunication; and (4) the fundamental problem of introducing philosophical-religious elements which have replaced biblical concepts. Barth examines the institution texts of the synoptic Gospels, the teaching of Paul regarding the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 10-11, and John 6 in order to counter each of these four distortions. The book closes with an "epilogue," directly attacking the sacramental theology of the Lima Document.

Barth is to be commended for providing a discussion of the Lord's Supper that is exegetical, concerned with the practical life of the Church, responsive to contemporary thinking and issues, and Christocentric. There are, however, two limitations to the present work. First, the fact that Barth brings specific concerns to the text causes him to focus only on certain dimensions of the relevant passages, and to deal even with these dimensions in a rather narrow fashion. A more comprehensive examination of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament will be found in studies such as that by I. Howard Marshall. Second, in the desire to make his theological points, Barth sometimes overstates his case, and draws conclusions that go far beyond the evidence. Highly problematic, for example, is Barth's claim that the Eucharist, standing as it does in continuity with the Passover, proclaims that Jews and Christians together are the people of God. Barth reaches this conclusion because of his desire to emphasize the *inclusive character* of the Lord's Supper; but it contradicts what he says elsewhere regarding the centrality of Christ and the rejection of sacramental activity as the basis for unity.

In spite of such limitations, this book is a major contribution to the biblical understanding of the Lord's Supper, and an eloquent appeal to the Church to recapture and live according to that understanding.

DAVID R. BAUER  
Associate Professor of Biblical Studies  
Asbury Theological Seminary

Carson, D. A. *How Long O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. 275 pp. ISBN 0-8010-02556-7.

I have believed for some time that the problem of evil renders Calvinism untenable. So I approached this book on the subject, written by a representative of the Reformed tradition, with considerable interest.

The problem of evil is especially troublesome for Calvinists for the following reason: If God's sovereignty means that He controls all things in the way Calvinists teach, there seems to be no reason why He could not eliminate all evil. He could, but He will not. I will come back to this in a moment.

But first I want to say what I appreciated about this book. It is a straightforward, tough-minded, pastorally motivated treatment of the problem of evil. Carson writes, not as a philosopher trying to give an account of evil to skeptics, but as a biblical scholar addressing fellow believers who struggle with the challenge evil poses for their faith. He warns that his book is not primarily for those who are in the midst of a crisis brought on by suffering or tragedy. Rather, he aims to provide "preventative medicine" which can lessen the shock of evil when it comes.

As Carson recognizes, unbiblical and unrealistic expectations multiply the pain when tragedy strikes. He wants to help his readers bring their beliefs and expectation in line with biblical thought, and thereby inoculate them against unnecessary anguish. To this end, he devotes the bulk of his book to a study of "Biblical Themes for Suffering People." Among the themes discussed are the following: social evils, poverty, war, illness, death, hell, natural disasters and the suffering of God. Carson reminds his readers what it is like to live in a fallen world, emphasizing that Christians should not expect to be exempt from hardship, suffering and tragedy. Those who take to heart what Carson says here will find themselves strengthened in mind and spirit to deal with the trials of life.

The final part of the book is the most intellectually challenging, but even here the author succeeds in his purpose of producing material useful for "general readers." Carson's task here is to tackle the "mystery of providence." More specifically, he takes up the difficult question of the relation between divine providence and human freedom. The difficulty is exacerbated for Carson because of his Calvinistic convictions.

Carson identifies his own position on the matter as "compatibilism," by which he means that it is true both that God is absolutely sovereign, and that human beings are morally responsible creatures. Now the term "compatibilism" is a common one in the philosophical literature on freedom, but it is typically used there to signify the view that freedom is compatible with *determinism*. Absolute sovereignty need not imply determinism, however, so Carson is using the term in a somewhat distinctive sense. Indeed, as he initially defines these terms (pp. 201-202), I would have little quarrel with his claims.

My disagreement comes when he spells out more fully the nature of the

freedom he believes is required for moral responsibility. At this point, it becomes clear that Carson's view is, after all, essentially the same view called "compatibilism" or "soft determinism" in the current philosophical debate on freedom and responsibility. For he endorses the view of philosophical compatibilists that the heart of freedom is voluntarism. A free action, then, is one which is done willingly (p. 214). This is what makes it possible to hold that there is no inconsistency in saying that a person is free and responsible *and* that his actions are causally determined. So God can determine all a person's actions, but this does not destroy his freedom or diminish his moral responsibility. Why? Because his will is also determined and he acts in accordance with his will, not against it.

The debate over freedom seems likely to rage on indefinitely in secular philosophy. (There, of course, actions are thought to be determined by physical causes, not God.) In theology, however, I am convinced that there are decisive reasons for rejecting compatibilism. In a nutshell, the problem with compatibilism is that it is incompatible with God's perfect goodness, given the evil in our world. As I suggested at the outset, if freedom is compatible with determinism, then God could control things in such a way that all persons would *freely* make only good choices. He could, but He has not, if compatibilism is true. If God could eliminate evil and suffering in our world, while keeping our freedom and responsibility intact, but will not, then He is not a perfectly good Being.

This problem is seen most sharply in view of the doctrine of eternal hell. In his book, Carson tells of a young woman who feared that her father had gone to hell, and mentions some helpful things he could say to her (pp. 105-106). The bottom line, however, is that Carson really has nothing comforting to say to such a person if he is true to his Calvinism. For if Calvinism is true, then God could surely have drawn her father to Christ in such a way that he would have come, in the words of the Westminster Confession, "most freely." If her father was not a believer during his life, it is because God had not elected to draw him to Christ. And if he is damned forever, it is ultimately for the same reason. Not surprisingly, Carson's Calvinism does not show its face at this point of the discussion.

As I have already said, there is much in this book that will be helpful to Christian believers of all traditions. But it also illustrates afresh that the problem of evil is an insuperable one for the "truly Reformed."

JERRY L. WALLS

Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion  
Asbury Theological Seminary

Smith, Jonathan Z. *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*. School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion, XIV. Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. xiii, 145 pp. ISBN 0-226-76362-5.

Every once in a while a scholar is able to stand back and see the philosophical structures and the development of an intellectual tradition with a clarity which escaped even the creators of that tradition. Such was the case with Albert Schweitzer's *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben Jesu-forschung* (Zollikon/Zurich: Evangelische Verlag, 1947). Jonathan Z. Smith has provided a comparable analysis of the comparative project which has dominated the study of Christian origins for the past four centuries.

The book's five chapters provide an introduction to the seminal publications as well as an analysis of their role in the scholarly tradition. The primary structural problem of the volume is apparent at the outset: the original function of the chapters as self-standing, self contained individual lectures remains determinative for the presentation in the published medium. However, few will be able to read the volume once! After Smith's intent for the volume becomes clear, most readers will, of necessity, engage in the "divine drudgery" of rereading the earlier portions. The thesis that emerges is that contemporary New Testament and Patristic scholarship, like that of the last several generations, is dominated by the "Protestant hegemony" (p. 143) which imaged a "'pristine' early Christianity centered in Paul and subjected to later processes of 'corruption'" (p. 143), an orientation which does not provide an adequate basis for comparative studies.

Chapter one, "On the Origin of Origins," (pp. 1-35) examines the influence in North America and Britain of Joseph Priestley's *Socrates and Jesus Compared* (London: J. Johnson, 1803) and posthumous *The Doctrines of Heathen Philosophy Compared with Those of Revelation* (Northumberland, PA: John Binns, 1804), discussing Priestley in the context evolving personal relationships of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and John Q. Adams. From Priestley, it is suggested, comes much of the terminology which has figured heavily in the comparative project. However, the thesis of Priestley had already been formulated by continental Lutheran writers in polemic against Roman Catholicism and used in turn by Pietist scholars against the established Lutherans. This earlier tradition is acknowledged by Smith, but not explored here. The same is true of the transmission by which the Lutheran/Pietist historiography came into the English context where analogic comparisons became weapons in the Caroline and Wesleyan periods (Conyers Middleton, Wesley's protagonist, receives significant attention, pp. 23-25). While it is certain that Priestley is important for subsequent developments, most of the same comparative terms were used by Pietist and Caroline writers long before Priestley, and with the same intent.

The second chapter (pp. 36-53) reflects briefly on the problems posed for comparative studies by unexamined assumptions of uniqueness. These assumptions are frequently guarded by using Judaism as an insulation, suggesting that similarities between Judaism and early Christianity indicate a lack of assimilation of "pagan" ideas, values and structures by the Early Church. Over against this he places a summary of his constructive approach to comparison, a theory which he has discussed and illustrated in other publications.

Chapter three, "On Comparing Words" (pp. 54-84) examines the "word study" tradition of nineteenth- and twentieth-century biblical studies. While noting that the preoccupation, fostered by such giants as E. Hatch, A. Deissmann, H. A. Kennedy and A. D. Nock, has produced quite useful tools for historical, theological and philological study, he argues that this tradition has been motivated and controlled by the same ideological strictures. The same is argued in chapter four with regard to "On Comparing Stories" (pp. 85-115) as he reviews the "life of Jesus" discussions, the comparisons of Paul and the mystery religions, and the use of theories of development to differentiate the stories of biblical characters from their contemporaries.

This leads into the final chapter, "On Comparing Settings" (pp. 116-143). Smith begins with an analysis of the 1950 Haskell Lectures at Oberlin later published as *The Old Testament Against Its Environment* (G. E. Wright) and *The Old Testament Against Its Environment* (F. V. Filson). Here, too, he finds a preoccupation with "uniqueness" as an assumption, and an inadequate theoretical base to deal with the data for comparison. The evolution to "soteriological" or sociological models has not necessarily, he suggests, improved either situation. Smith concludes his essay with additional suggestions regarding adequate paradigms for comparative studies.

Smith's analysis is an articulate, profound, passionate and accurate critique of the historical and theological enterprise as it has been practiced in the Anglo-Saxon world (with occasional acknowledgements of German scholarship). Unfortunately, there is little dialogue with French historical scholarship, some of which, under the influence of the Structuralist tradition, has developed less ideologically determined structures for comparative study. It would also be interesting to bring Smith's constructive paradigms regarding comparison into discussion with folklore studies where it has been necessary to confront many of the same problems. However, Smith's challenge to those concerned with Christian origins to develop more useful ways of seeing Christianity in its various contexts and of evaluating divergences and convergences, both within the larger tradition and with other religious systems, points toward a scholarly agenda for the next decades. The intellectual climate of both the contemporary academy and the restructure of international relations will not allow facile, unexamined and unexamined assumptions of privilege to be maintained for any religious tradition.

Despite the shortcomings of structure, especially the lack of an introduction and an index which is too brief for a book with no systematic bibliogra-



phy, the volume is one which will probably grow in stature as time passes and as scholars continue to wrestle with these issues of historical method.

DAVID BUNDY

Associate Professor of Church History  
Christian Theological Seminary  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Tuttle, Robert D., Jr. *Mysticism in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1989. 204 pp. ISBN 0-310-75430-5.

For reasons not always clear, John Wesley's relation to mysticism has frequently been minimized or ignored by his biographers and interpreters. John Telford, in his 1924 biography, blatantly and inaccurately stated that by the time Wesley left Georgia he had parted with the mystics. Others have been less sure, but no more helpful in giving us a more accurate picture.

In my opinion, Dr. Robert Tuttle (E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois) has given us the most accurate and comprehensive study to date. Drawing on more than twenty years of scholarly study of this topic, including a Ph.D. dissertation on the subject, Tuttle advances our knowledge in a balanced and helpful way.

For those in particular who realize that the issue is by no means as simple as Telford stated, the book sheds welcome light on a neglected dimension of Wesley studies. But even for the more general reader, Tuttle successfully uses mysticism as a "window" through which to see important issues in Wesley's life and thought.

Although the book has no formal parts, as such, it does have stages of development and progression. Chapter one gives the reader a compass to use in navigating the rest of the book. Tuttle provides an overview of mysticism, offers a controlling definition ("intimate union with God"), and shows the more precise aspects of mysticism with which Wesley dealt (i.e., Catholic Reformation mysticism, for the most part). One leaves this chapter with a readiness to travel on.

Chapters two, three and four are primarily historical in nature. Tuttle charts Wesley's course from Epworth up to ten days before Aldersgate. These chapters are a virtual mystical compendium, filled with names and significant concepts. On the whole, this is slow reading, and a background in church history is helpful. But Tuttle is not hopelessly complex. His style is readable and he carries one along from phase to phase. I know of no finer history of Wesley's experience of mysticism.

Chapter five is the "center" of the book. With the previous journey in

mind, Tuttle rings the changes on Aldersgate in terms of its immediate and long-term benefits. He shows how the Atonement was the "missing link" not only in relation to Wesley's experience of mysticism, but also in his overall Christian life. Tuttle argues that once the Atonement was in place, Wesley could make positive use of the mystics (separating their "gold" from their "dross") for the rest of his life.

Chapters six and seven are implicational. The first draws out abiding influences for the Wesleyan tradition, including perseverance, Christian perfection, prayer, simplicity and social justice. The seventh chapter looks at issues especially relevant for our time: a radical monotheism, "right-brain" awareness, a warning against "new-age" thinking and a reminder of God's presence and work in the world.

What are we to make of this book? Since there is so little previous work on the subject, it is difficult to evaluate it on the basis of comparison. Personally, I found the book to be substantive, reasoned, well-organized, readable and contributive to Wesley studies. Its footnotes and bibliography alone are sufficient to guide one on a major study of the subject after the book is read.

I confess some hesitancy to "take it all in," as I do whenever I read a book which views Wesley through one particular lens. Special-interest books must always be read carefully. It is possible to be more deductive than inductive—that is, to "read into" Wesley more than you "read out" of him on the subject. However, I believe Robert Tuttle survives this problem quite well and writes with overall scholarly objectivity and accuracy.

Those persons for whom the term "mysticism" is negative, or even dangerous, may find the book hard to swallow. The erroneous substance and spirit which Telford represented (albeit well-intentioned) is not dead in the Wesleyan family. But if one will approach the book open-mindedly, the result may be for us what Tuttle says it was for Wesley: an opportunity to separate the "gold" from the "dross" in the mystics.

J. STEVEN HARPER

Professor of Spiritual Formation  
and Wesley Studies  
Asbury Theological Seminary

Carden, Allen. *Puritan Christianity in America: Religion and Life in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. 239 pp. Appendix, select bibliography and index. ISBN 0-8010-2543-5.

In his introduction, historian Allen Carden, now president at Spring Arbor College, describes three goals for his work on seventeenth-century Puri-

tan Massachusetts. They are (1) "to provide the reader with an overall perspective encompassing the multifaceted experiences of Puritan Christianity in America"; (2) to correct the errors of previous historians, in particular Perry Miller, for their inattention to Puritan spiritualism and biblicism; (3) and to show that "[t]he Puritans who lived in New England three centuries ago can teach modern Americans much about how to live" (pp. 12-13). Regarding the first, Carden turns in a respectable job; as for the second, I will suggest that his position is seriously flawed; and regarding the last, he makes no effort to support it and, in fact, only mentions it occasionally in passing.

What Carden primarily offers is an overview of the American Puritans that integrates social, intellectual and religious history. He presents fourteen chapters of varying length and complexity on Puritan intellectual and social roots in England; Puritan theology; their cultural and economic life in America; their understanding of church-state relations; their view of the family's and the community's relationship to the individual; and the life, training and ministry of their divines. The work is nicely laid out with footnotes rather than endnotes, a useful chronology of relevant Puritan history, a biographical overview of ministers and a select bibliography. However, surprisingly absent is much of the best work of the 1980s on Puritan theology and religious life. For example, no mention is made of Charles Cohen's impressive, *God's Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (1986) or more surprisingly of Harry S. Stout's superb, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (1986). Additionally, he detracts from his synthesis by too frequent judgments of the Puritans which invariably suffer from being anachronistic. For example, he too often chides the Puritans for being intolerant or ethnocentric (p. 109) without realizing that his judgments are not the product of a more enlightened or morally superior culture but rather one that no longer believes that it has access to clear and consensually held truths, and of course the Puritans knew themselves to possess such truths in the Scriptures. Such reservations clearly detract, but not fatally so, from his competent synthesis of the most impressive recent studies on Puritan religious life and New England social history.

In addition to his primary goal of synthesizing the work of others, Carden also advances an original thesis concerning the centrality of Puritan spiritualism and biblicism, and the inattention paid to both by secular historians who he argues overemphasize Puritan reasonableness. His best case is made in chapter three, "The Biblical Basis of the Puritan Way." Unfortunately, his effort suffers from a failure to recognize the seamlessness of the seventeenth-century Puritan rational intellectual and religious world, one unlike ours where revelation and rational knowledge are frequently seen as in competition. This oversight has led to his treating proleptically and naively the Puritans' reliance on Scripture and their traditional understanding of biblical inerrancy.

In effect, Carden creates a straw man, though one corroborated by copious and intelligent reference to published sermons, as he "persuades" his reader of the Bible's centrality to the thought of Puritan divines. He writes as if it were a novel discovery "that biblical infallibility was accepted dogma. Not only was the Bible viewed as the Word of God, but it was also seen as absolutely reliable, accurate, and complete" (p. 26). Carden believes that by demonstrating the primacy of the Bible to the Puritan mind he is correcting the error of secular historians whom he takes to be overly concerned with the logic and learned assumptions of the Puritan divines' hermeneutics. However, since no serious student challenges the Puritans' reliance on Holy Scripture, the more pressing question must be what kind of learning and interpretive strategies they employed in their quest to understand God's Word correctly. It was exactly because the Bible was their most critical source of knowledge that one must attend carefully to their hermeneutics. In contrast, Carden suggests that the American divines approached being biblical literalists. These were men, we must remember, almost all of whom were trained in Greek, Latin, Hebrew and several Near-Eastern languages, as well as Classical Pagan, Renaissance, Humanist and Scholastic learning—all with one intention in mind. Yet, more importantly, as inhabitants of the seventeenth century they would not have felt any need to adopt such a radical, epistemologically naive, exegetical strategy as simple literalism. Carden is, thus, far off the mark when he writes that Miller and other historians, in their desire to understand the various influences on educated Puritan divines, have attempted "to secularize and rationalize Puritan theology to make the Puritans more acceptable in the modern age" (p. 34). In truth, it is Carden who deforms and modernizes them in his implicit effort to make their seventeenth-century inspired mode of exegesis instructive to the dilemmas of contemporary Christians living in a world of hermeneutics shaped by a split between faith and reason, higher criticism, and increasingly powerful strategies of textual analysis.

Is this, then, a work worth reading? It is not if one seeks a sophisticated treatment of the Puritans' complex theology, most particularly because Carden rarely discusses their theology's diverse problems. Nor should it be read if one seeks a scholarly treatment of the intellectual, social or religious historical themes treated therein—for that, one is best served by turning to the monograph literature (for an introduction, see David D. Hall's, "On Common Ground: The Coherence of American Puritan Studies." *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 [April 1987]: 193-229). However, Carden's work is well suited for an undergraduate class in American religious or colonial history, and for such use, I recommend it. Nevertheless, even in this capacity, if I were teaching a talented or demanding group of juniors or seniors I might very well choose instead to use a collection of scholarly monographs such as Vaughan's and Bremer's ed., *Puritan New England: Essays on Religion, Society, and Culture*, or make use of photocopied selections taken from more narrowly focused books than Carden's, with its impressive sweep of concerns.

In sum, Carden provides an acceptable synthesis of the work of others on American Puritanism in the seventeenth century, yet, ironically in regard to his own thesis, he deforms their thought anachronistically in his effort to rescue the Puritans from the interpretive clutches of secular historians who, in fact, have much less reason to modernize their thought than might a contemporary Christian.

BARRY ALAN SHAIN

Assistant Professor of Political Philosophy  
Colgate University  
Hamilton, New York

Hardman, Keith J. *Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875, Revivalist and Reformer*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. xvii, 521 pps. Paperback, ISBN 0-8010-4348-4.

The shadows cast by Charles Finney over American social, religious and political history are extensive, profound and often difficult to document. The difficulties in defining the parameters of that influence have been directly related to questions concerning the biographical and personal intellectual structures of Finney's life. Hardman has made a significant contribution to the analysis of these matters. On the basis of extensive research in both primary (some unpublished, previously unexamined) and secondary literature, the structures of Finney's life are delineated.

The volume begins with an introduction which provides a cultural base for contextualizing Finney, drawing upon, and nuancing, the theoretical work of William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings and Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Describing the revivalistic traditions of New England, Hardman observes, "the 'mix' was right for the emergence of a new type of evangelism among American Calvinists, possibly similar to what the Methodists had been practicing for years" (p. 23).

Finney's life is narrated in detail, drawing heavily upon Finney's own *Memoirs* (1876). Realizing that this source was written years after the events described, and designed partially as an *apologia* for his life, Hardman uses the discrepancies between these later recollections and earlier accounts by friends (and enemies), correspondence, ecclesiastical documents and other archival material to illumine the transitions in Finney's perspective. The Finney thus discovered is an ambitious, rapidly evolving western New York country boy who accomplishes the metamorphosis, first to country lawyer and then to the urbane evangelist who would be at ease in the drawing rooms of New York, Philadelphia and Boston. The circle is completed when,

back in the "Old Northwest" at Oberlin College, he taught deportment to ministerial students (Practical Theology) with specific instructions about dress and brushing of teeth!

Theologically he is portrayed as a person whose mentors attempted to form into a Calvinist Presbyterian minister, but who never achieved solid theological footing before coming under the influence of perfectionist theologians and reformers, especially Asa Mahan and the Tappan brothers. Thus influenced, he developed a concern for the Methodist doctrines of sanctification which Hardman dates to about 1836 (pp. 324-349). Hardman traces the perfectionist interpersonal networks back to the Oneida community of Noyes as well as to other New England and New York perfectionist figures, although the closest relationship was certainly with Mahan. However, it is the Presbyterian motif in the life of Finney which Hardman finds to provide the interpretative theological framework for Finney's life. It functioned, he suggests, positively, as with his finding a cooperative ministerial network in the "New School" Presbyterianism which he helped define, or negatively as an orthodoxy against which he reacted, but to which he would eventually conform.

This paradigm of deviation from the theological norm and the possible subsequent increasing conformity of Finney, in his later years, to the Presbyterian tradition raises important issues. It would appear that there are other possible interpretations. The problem of the intellectual and praxis structures of Finney's early ministry can be better understood as continuous with the early Methodist traditions of New England which Nathan Bangs sought to eradicate. Lorenzo Dow is mentioned only twice in the volume and then as an instance in a list of examples. Dow's methods, rhetoric and goals are not significantly different from those of Finney in the pre-1840 period. The differences are primarily the social class within which those are expressed. The efforts to trace Finney's intellectual and ministerial development as reactions against an orthodoxy which he could not adequately comprehend, is too simplistic. It does not give sufficient weight to the cultural, economic and ideological context. The convergences with the "despised Methodists" are too great, and in geographical proximity, to be accidental. It is therefore unfortunate that the suggestion of Hardman in the introduction about Methodist style is not explored. The research of Timothy Smith, Donald Dayton, Richard Shiels and Douglas Strong, as well as the more recent volume of Nathan Hatch (*The Democratization of American Culture* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990]) as well as Winthrop S. Hudson ("The Methodist Age in America," *Methodist History* 12 [1974]: 3-15) suggests that the Methodist factor in the development of revivalist religion (and the attendant intellectual and social structures) on the frontier and its importation to the eastern cities needs to be taken seriously.

It is also unfortunate that only one chapter (pp. 424-448) was devoted to the last quarter century of Finney's life and thought. Here it would have been helpful to explore and document more thoroughly the stated

trend toward declension of interest in both the social and theological aspects of perfectionism. From the narratives of the earlier chapters one could contend that arguments such as those of James H. Fairchild ("The Doctrine of Sanctification at Oberlin," *The Congregational Quarterly* 18, 2 [1876]: 237-259; unfortunately, this article was not cited) were efforts to distance Finney from an increasingly unpopular tradition of radical piety. However, Hardman's preoccupation with Presbyterian orthodoxy tends to suggest agreement with the basic stance of Fairchild. The arguments of Victor B. Howard (*Religion and the Radical Republican Movement 1860-1870* [Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990]) merit attention when further research is done on the life of Finney.

These concerns are not intended to detract from the very useful and stimulating treatment of this major American religious figure. It is to be hoped that Hardman and/or other scholars will explore more fully the formative influences and later decades of Finney's life. Even then, Hardman's treatment will remain a sensitive, balanced, readable standard interpretation of Finney. A carefully selected bibliography, notes and an index facilitate access to the myriad details in the text and supportive of the narrative.

DAVID BUNDY

Associate Professor of Church History  
Christian Theological Seminary  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Crews, Mickey. *The Church of God, A Social History*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990. xvi, 252 pp. ISBN 0-87049-634-4.

The Church of God (Cleveland) traces its beginning to a meeting on August 19, 1886, in Cokercreek, TN, presided over by Richard G. Spurling. Since that modest beginning, the denomination has grown into the second largest North American Pentecostal church and the third largest North American Wesleyan/holiness church. As a "bridge" denomination between the two revivalistic traditions, it self-consciously maintains the insights of the Pentecostal tradition as well as the distinctively Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification. As demonstrated by the analysis of world Christianity by David Barratt, *et alia* (*World Christian Encyclopedia* [Nairobi, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982]), the denomination has maintained an extensive and successful mission program. If the non-North American members are included, it is second in size only to the Salvation Army among the holiness churches. It is also one of only two major North American denominations which have achieved significant levels of racial inclusiveness

(the other is the Church of God [Anderson]).

The volume by Crews had its genesis as a Ph.D. dissertation submitted at Auburn University under the direction of historian J. Wayne Flynt. In its published form, it is the first history of a Wesleyan/holiness denomination to be published by a university press. It endeavors to replace the excellent work of Charles W. Conn [*Like a Mighty Army Moves the Church of God, 1886-1955* (Cleveland, TN: Church of God Publishing House, 1955)] as the standard history of the denomination in the United States. Crews, who has been associated with the Church of God (Cleveland), is presently chairperson of the department of history and social science at Troy State University.

The goal of the volume is to present a history which draws upon social analysis. Unfortunately, this is usually limited to placing the denomination in its "larger social context." What it generally fails to do is to place the denominational development in the larger socio-religious context. The controlling hermeneutic is that the Church of God (Cleveland) began as a sect and, through cultural accommodation, is becoming a denomination. Instead of developing a wholistic approach to the Church of God (Cleveland), the decision was made to focus on selected issues in which the shifts of perspective of the adherents could be observed. The result is a series of essays which explore specific issues over wide-ranging chronological periods. It is especially unfortunate that no attention was given to the formal and informal networks of relationships which have been determinative to the history of the denomination. In this context, it is also surprising that the stance(s) of the denomination on racial issues which led to its racial inclusiveness, quite a remarkable phenomenon in the early twentieth century in the South, are not discussed in any detail.

The chapters, therefore, are unrelated to each other. Chapter one, *Populistic Religion: The Social Origins of the Church of God* (pp. 1-18), briefly describes the social and cultural nexus in which the early Church of God (Cleveland) evolved. The second chapter (pp. 19-37) summarizes the development of ecclesiastical structures from the beginning of the denomination until 1987, with most of the material being devoted to the financial and leadership struggles of the early 1920s. Here questions which might have been raised about style and structure of leadership in response to changing cultural expectations are not addressed.

Chapter three, *Come Out From Among Them* (pp. 38-68), is perhaps the best chapter of the volume. The effort is made to interpret the social mores and taboos established by the denomination in light of the theological perspectives which sustained them and made them viable for the adherents. As Crews suggests, "External adherence to the Holiness code was simply a product of an internal experience" (p. 39). The processes by which these evolved are described, as the tensions within the leadership structures of the denomination which attempted to slow the acculturation and participation in the larger cultural matrix. Crews asserts that the influx of urban members after World War II began to dissipate the "moral rigor" of the denomination.



No statistics, however, are given to substantiate a trend of urban expansion.

Perhaps the least satisfactory chapter is that entitled, *With Signs Following* (pp. 69-91). The early Church of God (Cleveland) believers attempted to actualize the claims of the New Testament, basing their understanding on a common sense reading of the text. That hermeneutic led members to experiment with practices as diverse as healing and snake handling. The efforts are described as "eccentric practices" (pp. 67, 91). The social, psychological and theoretical structures which sustained the practices are not examined sympathetically. Instead, people who experimented and believed are presented as credulous, self-deluded sectarians. If the practices described had been placed in the context of the American healing movement, and its implementation analyzed in terms of group formation and identification, the presentation would have been much more helpful. A similar critique can be made of the discussion of the role of women in the church (chap. 5, pp. 92-107). It does, however, contribute by providing a preliminary sifting of some of the primary documents relating to women in the Church of God (Cleveland).

The discussion of the positions taken by the Church of God (Cleveland) on pacifism and involvement in the military (chap. 6, pp. 108-137) is helpful for its presentation of denominational decisions and their social results. Because of eschatological concerns, understandings of corporate sin and personal responsibility, the Church of God maintained a pacifist stance through World War I, in the face of significant persecution. During World War II, evasion of the military draft was not encouraged, and the denomination maintained (but feared to publish) its pacifist stance. Only at the end of World War II, was the constitution changed to allow for individual decision, while committing the church to support conscientious objectors. No statistical data is provided to demonstrate the results of the relaxation of policy, and once again, the early position of the church is characterized as an eccentric phenomenon. No effort is made to understand it as a considered moral decision which was shared by large numbers of revivalist adherents and denominations throughout this country and in Europe.

A final chapter (pp. 138-172) describes the institutional, ecclesiastical and numerical development of the Church of God (Cleveland), arguing that the process of acculturation to mainstream American values has progressed quickly since World War II. Once again, minimal statistical support for the assertions is provided. The Epilogue restates this observation, suggesting that it is the major theme by which the history of the denomination is to be understood.

The footnotes which lead the scholar to primary and secondary literature are generally helpful, albeit quite brief. The bibliography (pp. 201-248) is a major contribution. It includes periodicals and, especially, theses and dissertations related to the Church of God (Cleveland). Unfortunately there is little dialogue with the secondary literature, or with other ways of looking at the material. The historiographical issues mentioned above significantly

and adversely affect the resultant book. Sect theory combined with suggestions of cultural accommodation were more appropriate in the 1950s and 1960s than they are today. They do not address the deeper relational and structural issues related to a denomination's history or to its self-understanding. As a history, it does not replace the work of Conn which still provides more detail and basis for subsequent analysis, despite its having been written nearly four decades ago.

DAVID BUNDY

Associate Professor of Church History  
Christian Theological Seminary  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Green, Roger J. *War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth*. Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1989. 141 pp. Hardback. ISBN 0-86544-355-7.

Roger J. Green, professor of biblical and theological studies at Gordon College, challenges recent arguments that William Booth initiated his Darkest England social program in 1890 to stop his Salvation Army's decline in Britain's slums. The Army, according to Green, was still a vital force when Booth turned it in the direction of social reform by 1890. Instead, Green holds that Booth underwent a theological change which permitted him to follow the lead of Salvationists and others who were urging him to embrace a program for Britain's social redemption.

In this popular adaptation of his doctoral dissertation, Green defines Booth's theology in its earliest stage as a focused commitment to individual soul salvation and sanctification. Booth's revival ministry began as a result of his personal conversion in 1846 and his admiration for American Methodist revivalist, James Caughey, who first preached in England in the mid-1840s. Booth institutionalized his theology of personal redemption in 1865 when he founded an East London home mission, which he renamed The Salvation Army in 1878.

Apart from a general survey of Booth's theology, Green's concern is with a pivotal question over which Salvationists and historians struggle: Why did William Booth change his theology to include social salvation in 1889-90? Early historians simply noted the change without curiosity as to the reason for it. But in 1963, K. S. Ingalls argued that the change came as a result of The Salvation Army's decline in urban slums by 1887, a decline which was observed by Anglican clergy as Booth's "unique failure" to save the "heathen masses." Booth disagreed with his clerical and newspaper critics and Green defends the general's assertion that the change came when he

saw that the poor needed social redemption as well as personal soul-saving. Without disputing the statistical data of an urban downturn, Green holds that Booth embraced a social salvation theology that led him to publish *Darkest England and the Way Out*. Booth, aware of London's "bitter cry" for reform and of efforts by Salvationist women and lay persons to aid prostitutes and drunkards, developed a new theology of "a double mission" for social as well as personal redemption.

Green argues that until 1889 Booth made "no public pronouncements" about social redemption. Herein he breaks with Salvationist writers who hold that Booth was a consistent social reformer from his boyhood commitment to Chartism in 1848. Only in 1889 did Booth begin to preach "salvation from pinching poverty" and "two gospels of deliverance."

Green devotes fifteen percent of his brief treatise to Booth's 1888-90 post-millennial views wherein he placed the coming kingdom of God on earth and legitimized The Salvation Army as God's "chief instrument to bring about that kingdom." This optimistic view of how man could be God's instrument for perfecting a flawed social system joined Booth to the era's leading utopian thinkers.

Inglis's mistake in placing emphasis on The Salvation Army's failure among the "heathen masses" as the prime motive for Booth's social program was, in Green's view, to concentrate on Booth's history rather than on Booth's theology. Green admits that Booth was not a systematic theologian, but he does not conclude that this made him more susceptible to the winds of the era. Rather, Booth's "theological loyalties," an apparent reference to his Wesleyan moorings, provided "theological legitimacy for a dual mission." Yet Booth, who too was not a systematic social thinker, turned to Frank Smith and W. T. Stead to develop the social scheme which encouraged him to expand his views of redemption to embrace "whole-sale salvation."

It is difficult, Green admits, to make a non-theologian speak in systematic terms. He compares Booth to no other contemporary Wesleyan, such as Hugh Price Hughes, who may have taken a similar theological journey in the 1880s. Nor does Booth tie his doctrinal formulations to previous or contemporary creeds. Green also finds it difficult to confine Booth's statements to time limits he establishes for his intellectual evolution.

Possibly more important than his study of Booth as theologian is Green's challenge to scholars who follow K. S. Inglis's views. Green requires that they reassess their institutional answers to the question of why Booth the revivalist became Booth the social reformer in 1889-90. No doubt there are those who will challenge Green's thesis that a change in Booth's Wesleyan theology is the primary answer to this question.

NORMAN H. MURDOCH  
Associate Professor of History  
University of Cincinnati

