
Book Reviews

The Phoenicians, by Gerhard Herm, translated by Carolyn Hillier, New York: William Morrow, 1975. 288 pp. \$8.95.

This German author is well informed and has the facility for utterance and an imagination which tends to make ancient events and names vibrate with life.

Toynbee called the Phoenicians the “first thassalocracy” because they were the first of the world’s great sea powers. These people, while obscure in the annals of history since they left so few written documents, nevertheless are a fascinating and important people in the history of the Middle East. More at home on the sea than on land, they colonized virtually the entire Mediterranean shoreline, especially North Africa. Eventually they were in competition with the Greeks and met their end when Alexander the Great, succeeding where Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon failed, destroyed Tyre. The Romans finished the task when they destroyed Carthage.

The Phoenicians are interesting to us not only because of their relationship with the people of the Bible (the Phoenicians were commercial allies of King David and King Solomon), but also because they gave us our alphabet and the word *Bible* and impinge at various points on the story of western civilization. The author succeeds in reducing to manageable form without excessive trappings of scholarship, a very readable account of this fascinating and important people.

George A. Turner
Professor of Biblical Literature

Baker’s Dictionary of Christian Ethics, edited by Carl F. H. Henry, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973. 726 pp. \$16.95 (cloth).

Here is a reference tool no minister should be without. Evangelical, the work has been done on the premise of a revealed morality. *That* is refreshing in our current world characterized by extremely flexible morals. The need for this book is clear from more than one perspective. The underscoring of a fixed and revealed morality is only one reason. The advance of knowledge is still another.

When one reminds himself, as Dr. Henry does in the Preface, that “drunken driving snuffs out twenty-five thousand lives annually, about twice the number as die by criminal murder,” the need of ethical standards is clear indeed. A further statistic cited – that overall crime escalates by 11 percent per year – is already obsolete! (His Preface bears the date September, 1973.)

But Biblically stable morality allows for creative effort. Such is the case with the emerging new science called Bioethics. Data relevant to Bioethics are widely available in this reference book. Bioethics relates to hunger, population control, pollution, medicine, life-sustaining devices, genetic engineering, etc.

Approximately 260 contributors made possible this massive work. They come from varied disciplines and cultures. The scope of the material covered is noteworthy for its wide range, the attempt being to deal with as many ethical implications as possible. This reviewer is delighted to see aesthetics and the arts included; their moral impact on society is clear enough.

That this work has a strong theological thrust is commendable. Henry himself is one of the outstanding theologians of our time, and many of the writers (Traina, Wood, Pinnock, etc.) are theologians; others have strong theological concerns (Walters the psychiatrist, Trueblood the philosopher, etc.)

Donald E. Demaray
Granger E. and Anna A. Fisher Professor of Preaching

Introduction to the Old Testament, by Otto Kaiser. Translated by John Sturdy. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1975. 420 pp.

It is almost a truism to say that Old Testament studies are in a state of flux. Although the general findings of the nineteenth century higher school are adhered to in almost all quarters except fundamentalism/conservative ones, there is little agreement beyond the broad parameters of those findings. What one scholar says is absolutely so, another says is unlikely in the extreme.

The rise of form criticism and its allied methodology, tradition-criticism, has contributed to this situation in no small part. Few scholars possess the technical training necessary to do form - and tradition - critical work and those who do are often in sharp disagreement over what constitutes valid methodology. The result has been a

significant rise of rather novel theories about the origins of the Hebrew people, literature and faith.

These come after a period where there had been a number of "verities" upon which there was general agreement. Such "verities" were the centrality of the covenant in Hebrew faith, the significance of oral tradition, the importance of the amphictyony, or twelve-tribe league, for understanding Israel as a political entity, the date of the written Deuteronomy in 621 B.C. or earlier, etc.

Today every one of these is challenged or modified in ways which will make them even less palatable to the conservative. To keep abreast of such new trends is a very difficult task. The book here being considered would be a helpful means of doing so. The author, a German scholar, is near the forefront in European Old Testament studies. He is thus well-positioned to report on present trends. He does so with clarity, brevity and in readable style. By comparison with Eissfeldt's standard *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, this book is less encyclopedic, but it is thorough and complete and probably more easily read. Attempts are made to weigh and analyze recent theories and trends, and recent bibliography (preponderantly German) is included.

Conservatives will not find much encouraging here, but will find needed information presented in helpful form.

John Oswalt
Associate Professor of
Biblical Languages and Literature

Structural Analysis of Narrative, by Jean Calloud, translated by Daniel Patte, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 108 pp.

A current fad in Biblical studies is structural analysis, originating in France and concerning itself with secular literature. Bible scholars have found it stimulating and are seeking to apply it to a study of the Scriptures. Its advocates claim scientific exactness in the process of breaking a passage of literature down into its smaller segments, labeling them and seeking to find relationships. However, they disclaim any desire to interpret or to apply the meaning of the text. Analysis seems to be an end in itself. In pursuit of this object, workers in this format use a variety of esoteric terms which appear strange and recondite to the uninitiated, analogous to the jargon of citizen's band radio enthusiasts. The reader, therefore, must acquaint himself with the configurations attached to the specialized terminology. For example, the "lexie" is de-

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defined as “the best possible space in which one can apprehend meaning” (p. 12). Among modifiers in this category are “preformancial,” “actancial,” “lexematic,” “syntagmatic,” and “canonic.” One is reminded of George Foote Moore, Harvard’s Professor of the History of Religions, who, in the book review, remarked that if an old idea was phrased in new technical terms it is hailed as something altogether new.

The method is applied to the temptation of Jesus by Satan. Some readers will be bemused by a list of things that are self-evident. For example, we are told that “fasting is the negative transformation of eating.”

Anything that will help one understand and appreciate the message of Scriptures is to be welcomed. Paul would agree that to expect the end without the means is presumptuous. Likewise, the method employed should contribute to the end of comprehension. The author concludes, “Not everything has been said about the semiotic function of this text and even less has been said about its semantic content. Nevertheless, the preceding analysis permits an evaluation of the method we’ve used. This is our goal.” Some readers may find difficulty in ascertaining the writer’s goal and the extent to which the method achieved it.

George A. Turner
Professor of Biblical Literature

Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, by J. Herbert Kane, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976. 328 pp. \$9.95.

In this publication Dr. Herbert Kane has made another valuable contribution to a series of books on Christian Missions that he has produced in the last few years. He speaks with authority out of his long experience as a missionary in China and then as professor of missions in several institutions. At present he is Professor of Missions in the School of World Mission, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL.

To the author the mission of the Church is still a viable option, an urgent responsibility; not an outdated concept. For him the foundation for the global mission lies in the Word of God itself. The author without apology adheres to a high view of the Scriptures as the reliable, authentic, and authoritative revelation of God. Likewise, he believes that the Church is still God’s chosen instrument for His mission to the world.

Writing from this perspective, Dr. Kane deals with his subject under five major headings. In part one he discusses the Biblical basis of missions, portrayed first in the Old Testament, then in the Gospels, and finally in the Book of Acts. God is a missionary God, and Israel was called to be a missionary people. Christ came as a missionary in the incarnation and He sent His disciples out as missionaries. Paul was the missionary model of the early Church.

In part two the author deals with the Trinitarian dimension of missions, comprising the sovereignty of God, the Lordship of Christ, and the enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The theological imperatives of missions are the focal point of part three. The missionary mandate is grounded in the character of God, in the command of Christ, in the nature of the Christian Gospel, and in the condition of mankind. The author's finest thinking is evident in this section, as he deals with the difficult questions of the fate of the heathen and the uniqueness of the Christian faith.

In part four, Dr. Kane discusses the historical context of missions in connection with the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Second Coming of Christ, as well as the event of Pentecost in the lives of the disciples. In the final section he elaborates on the spiritual dynamics of missions, in which the wiles of Satan, the wrath of man, the obedience of the Church, and the power of prayer are all engaged in the continuous missionary conflict.

In a day when the missionary enterprise is under fire and when its very motives, methods, and goals are being called into question, *Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective* calls us back to our Biblical foundation and authority and then drives us forward to complete the unfinished task still before us. The book is primarily intended as a textbook in the classroom, and so is challenging more to the serious student of Christian Missions rather than the casual reader.

John T. Seamands

John Wesley Beeson Professor of Christian Missions

Love Leaves No Choice: Life Style Evangelism, by C. B. Hogue. Waco: Word, 1976. 160 pp. \$5.95.

As the sub-title suggests, this is a plea for living evangelism — “that life-giving, life-sharing expression of one’s faith that begins with the new birth experience and ends with the last breath.”

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The story unfolds around the personal ministry of the author who is now director of the evangelism section for the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. It throbs with the homely joy of one whose own life overflows with Gospel love.

I appreciate this emphasis. While the book does not go into the specifics of winning and discipling men, it points the direction that we should go, and gently prods us to get moving. After all, the love of Christ really leaves us no choice. Reading these pages will help bring this mandate into focus in terms of everyday experience.

Robert E. Coleman
S. E. McCreless Professor of Evangelism

One Nation Under God, by Sarah W. Miller. Broadman Press.

The central character of this play, Jennifer, is assigned to write a paper on the theme: "One Nation Under God." Caught up in the spirit of the age, she resents "flag-waving." Her grandmother attempts to show her that our nation is "one under God." The playwright, using historical playbacks, chronicles events of our early struggling days before and after our nation was born. He utilizes short scenes about the pilgrims, Roger Williams, John Peter Zenger, John Adams, and James Madison. The conclusion, as expected, is Jennifer's admission, "I think I can write my paper now." The play makes it clear that our nation is not without mistakes and it is still growing. The play could be easily produced in the chancel with a minimum of characters.

Charles Killian
Associate Professor of Speech – Preaching

Psalms 73-150, by Derek Kidner, Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1975. 492 pp.

Derek Kidner, former Old Testament professor in a theological college setting and now warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge, gives us volume two of his *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries on Psalms*. The *Tyndale* series is well known and this volume comes up to the standard expected. Kidner has also done the volumes on *Proverbs* and *Genesis*.

Writing with a nice flow, Kidner makes his work at once readable and

helpful. "Insightful" might be a better term, for his analysis of materials provides a freshness of thought rewarding both to the curious reader and the teacher/preacher. Mr. Kidner's knowledge of Hebrew, theology and literature provides him rich background for commentary. But he is also a first-rate musician (I recall with delight sitting in his living room at Cambridge as he played his grand piano with the skill of a concert artist); clearly, musical sensitivity contributes to this commentary on the Songbook of the Hebrew Nation.

Useful footnotes, homiletical assistance (e.g. p. 303 where he discusses the three uses of "blessed" in Psalm 84) and discussion of critical questions also contribute to the value of this commentary.

Donald E. Demaray

Granger E. and Anna A. Fisher Professor of Preaching

The Making of a Christian Leader, by Ted W. Engstrom, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 214 pp. \$6.95.

In recent years Christian leaders and institutions have been awakened to the need for a better understanding of the principles of good leadership and management. Frequently, however, the effort to become more businesslike has been too uncritical of systems and principles which are adopted or adapted without regard to their Biblical and theological implications. Many have forgotten that Christ said, "it shall not be so among you" when He contrasted His principles and goals in interpersonal relationships with the power politics of sinful men. Engstrom's book will be helpful to those who want to understand a style of leadership which is not divorced from Biblical insights and demands which speak to the leadership roles which Christians may be called upon to assume.

M. E. Dieter

Associate Professor of Church History