

BOOK REVIEWS

The Layman's Parallel New Testament, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970. 943 pages. \$7.95.

Four popular translations and paraphrases of the New Testament are published in parallel columns for easy reference and comparison: The King James Version, The Amplified New Testament, The Living New Testament, and The Revised Standard Version. Together, they constitute a rather broad summary of interpretation of the New Testament, almost amounting to a concise built-in commentary.

The familiar beauty of the oldest version leads with its concise and stately style. Sharing the same page of the double spread is the expanded and explanatory interpretation that has furnished so many of the fruits of scholarship to laymen in recent times. Beginning the second page of the spread is the new interpretive paraphrase by Kenneth Taylor. This is a thought-by-thought restatement of the content of the New Testament, based on the American Standard Version of 1901. In the last column is the version that was made in the hope of replacing the King James and that has come nearer to achieving that goal than any other attempt.

In a day when few have the patience or can spare the time for detailed study of the Scriptures, this modest investment provides quick insights into the Word of God. While paraphrases and expansions also furnish shocks and disappointments to those who are familiar with the passages in a more traditional and beautiful form, there is a genuine value in any device that induces people to read and understand the New Testament. The explanatory paraphrases also furnish a bridge from the archaic expressions of the older English to a proper insight into the meaning of the most widely used modern revision. On the whole, this volume is a convenient and useful tool for reading and study.

Wilber T. Dayton

The Prophecy of Ezekiel: The Glory of the Lord, by Charles Lee Feinberg. Chicago: Moody Press, 1969. 270 pages. \$4.95.

The essential contents of this book first appeared serially in *The*

Chosen People, a missionary magazine. Feinberg interprets Ezekiel literally. This prophecy is no mere literary reflection on historical events; rather, it is a record of the authoritative and predictive acts and utterances of a man of God moved by the Spirit of God. What Ezekiel predicts comes to pass—after the fact of prediction. But Ezekiel's message is more than a simple seer's oracles concerning coming events; it is a declaration of the Shekinah glory of the Lord. Prediction—fulfillment is only substantiation of the essential message. Prediction is never prediction *per se*; it always exists as part of this larger message.

The Prophecy of Ezekiel is a chapter by chapter exposition; each chapter by Feinberg deals with a chapter by Ezekiel. The author divides Ezekiel into four large units: "Prophecies of Jerusalem's Destruction" (chapters 1–24), "Prophecies Against the Nations" (chapters 25–32), "Prophecies of Israel's Blessing" (chapters 33–39), and "The Millennial Temple and Sacrifices" (chapters 40–48). He analyzes and interprets the contents of the respective chapters. In so doing, he marshals background materials of many sorts, both Biblical and extra-Biblical: historical, archaeological, geographic, linguistic. He demonstrates a wide knowledge of the scholarly problems involved. Having trained as a Rabbi before his conversion, Feinberg is able to share the insights of Rabbinic writings. The last paragraph in each chapter is usually a distillation of some spiritual note which can be applied to our own lives, whether a specific message in the words of the prophet or an object lesson drawn from the chapter. These paragraphs are always terse, more suggestive than explicit. But they show insight and they contain the germ of more than one sermon, poem, or religious novel. In the exposition of his last two major divisions, Feinberg deals with prophetic predictions concerning events he feels to be yet future. Here again he insists on taking the prophecies literally, always alert to indications of future consummation.

Understandably and interestingly written, a rich treatment of a difficult theme, Feinberg's *The Prophecy of Ezekiel* will prove rewarding reading to students of the Word. It will be especially welcome to those of us without the linguistic equipment for using more sophisticated tools.

Anthony Casurella, Jr.

Old Testament Times, by R. J. Harrison, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970. 357 pages. \$6.95.

As the book jacket indicates, this volume, by the professor of Old Testament at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, "deals in an untechnical manner with a broad social and cultural context in which the

events recorded in Scripture took place.” Less detailed and technical than Harrison’s *Introduction to the Old Testament*, this volume, designed more for the general reader, successfully correlates the history of the Old Testament with that of its environment. There are several helpful indices, plus a bibliography, designed to lead the inquirer into further background material. Over one hundred well chosen illustrations really add to the interest and usefulness of the volume.

After a survey of the records of the ancient past, the author gives considerable attention to Mesopotamia, outlining in a readable and concise manner the prehistoric Stone Age and the rise of kingdoms of this valley up to the Patriarchial Age of the Bible. Ancient Egypt is covered in a cursory manner and the reader’s attention is then directed to the Hebrew people, their migration from Egypt and conquest of Canaan. The history of the chosen people is traced through the Exile and the Intertestament Period up to New Testament times closing with a consideration of the Herodian Period.

The author appears most competent and knowledgeable in the ancient period, his treatment of the later centuries being dealt with in less detail. Throughout, primary sources are seldom referred to, the author being dependent for the most part on secondary sources. In other words it is a helpful working manual which assembles in a readable fashion a vast amount of material bringing it into a manageable compass. Occasionally it would have been helpful to have indicated the sources in greater detail.

While the perspective of Harrison on the whole is conservative, he seeks honestly to consider all the relevant evidence and draw the conclusion to which the evidence points so that both his methodology and his objectivity are quite satisfying to this reviewer. Occasionally one encounters some rather surprising data such as the comment that the second largest pyramid, that of Khafre, had its surface pillaged and height reduced similar to that which the Great Pyramid experienced, failing to note that Khafre’s pyramid has its tip intact. Another error noted concerns the identification of a panoramic view of Jerusalem on page 353, which looks toward the southern ridge of the Mount of Olives surmounted by its Russian tower. But the caption describes it as the site of the new Hebrew University, where a collection of the Dead Sea Scrolls is now housed. As every visitor to Jerusalem knows, to the north of this photo, on Mount Scopus, is the *old* Hebrew University campus and that the *new* campus, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are deposited, is in west Jerusalem. The book deserves a wide reading because it lends itself admirably to the non-specialist in Old Testament studies who needs a ready manual for background. It should prove at least as successful as its companion volume, Tenney’s *New Testament Times*.