

BOOK REVIEWS

The Biblical World, A Dictionary of Biblical Archeology, edited by C. F. Pfeiffer. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964. 612 pages. \$8.95.

This book is a worthwhile survey of the work of biblical archaeologists since the field was opened during the campaigns of Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It should prove a helpful volume for those seeking a popular survey of the subject. Although more than forty contributors have participated in the writing of this book, at least half of it is the work of Dr. Pfeiffer himself. Most of the significant articles have a limited but consistently good bibliography appended. The hundreds of photographs contribute significantly to the value of the book. One of its most valuable features is the table (17 pages) listing the archaeologists, the sites they excavated, and their principal activities and discoveries.

In a volume of this nature a reviewer might well point out lacunae (significant manuscript discoveries not included) and articles that are inordinately long (e.g., "The Shipwrecked Sailor"), but each editor writes from a more or less personal perspective. One feature, however, might well have been included—a series of biographical articles of those men commonly recognized as the "giants" in the field of archaeology. We are grateful, even so, to the editors for making this material so conveniently available.

Robert W. Lyon

The Taste of New Wine, by Keith Miller. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1965. 116 pages. \$2.95.

This volume, with a foreword by Elton Trueblood, is a "testimony" of the author's spiritual pilgrimage. Making free use of the pronoun "I," Keith Miller tells simply of his search for spiritual reality—a search which included two disappointing years of study at an eastern seminary. Not until he discovered "a new kind of honesty" did he find "a new kind of beginning."

One is struck by the transparent genuineness of the author. "It has never ceased to amaze me," he writes, "that we Christians have developed a kind of selective vision which allows us to be deeply

and sincerely involved in worship and church activities and yet almost totally pagan in the day in, day out guts of our business lives . . . and never realize it" (p. 79). He is convinced that "saying words" is not what is meant by communicating the reality of Jesus Christ. His comments regarding the relationship of Christian experience to daily life are superior.

For the author, Christianity is not a status at which one arrives, it is a *life* in which one matures. This is the underlying message of the book. In the final chapter "What About the Old Wineskins," Miller speaks with discernment to the problem of relationship of lay renewal to the established church.

This is a fresh and exciting book. It is full of mature Christian concepts and alive with the pulse of spiritual vitality. This is the kind of book that will be equally helpful to laymen and ministers. *Recommended!*

Kenneth Cain Kinghorn

John Wesley and the Christian Ministry, by A. B. Lawson. New York: Seabury Press, 1964. 210 pages. \$6.00.

John Wesley fulfilled his determination to live and die a faithful member of the Church of England, but his attitude toward the ministry alienated him from his mother church. The progress of his thought and the steps that eventuated in complete separation are carefully traced and documented in this volume by a British minister of the Methodist Church.

Until the time of his evangelical conversion (1738), Wesley held faithfully to the tradition of the Church, although he was in a hereditary line of Dissenters. His own ordination was regular and he jealously safeguarded his ministry against sacramental irregularities while in Georgia. Even after his heart-warming experience in May, 1738, he was summoned before the Bishop of London and rebuked for insisting upon the re-baptism of Dissenters. This extreme insistence upon ritual was considered somewhat too rigid.

His own ministry, however, soon violated the laws of the Church, as well as the civil law, both of which required official authorization for all preaching. Wesley saw these laws as requiring him to obey man rather than God, and cited as authority for field preaching his ordination by the bishop, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God." He met the accusation that he was preaching in other men's parishes by his well-known declaration, "I look upon all the world

as my parish." Most of the persecution suffered by the early Methodists was based technically upon their breaking of a law that required Dissenters to have their places of assembly licensed under the Act of Toleration. Wesley contended that Methodists were not Dissenters but loyal members of the established Church.

A second schismatic element was the use of lay preachers, a practice defended by Wesley on the ground that lay persons had functioned in the primitive Church and also had served as "readers" in the established Church. It is true, however, that his preachers did not receive episcopal sanction. These two grounds were the basic cause of the ultimate cleavage between Methodism and the Anglican Church.

Lawson clearly establishes the fact that Wesley's change of belief regarding the ministry was influenced, if not decided, by the writings of two of his contemporaries. King held that bishops and presbyters are of the same order. Stillingfleet denied that ordination by a bishop and episcopal church government are required by Scripture, claiming that ordinations by presbyters should be considered valid. Both of these authors had written as young men and had recanted their views by the time Wesley was born. Nevertheless, Wesley came eventually to the position that uninterrupted succession is a fable. He declared that he himself was "as real a Christian bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury."

Wesley believed he had scriptural right to ordain, but feared that the exercise of this right would lead to separation from the Church of England, a situation he was determined to prevent. However, most Anglican bishops refused to ordain Methodists. The Methodist preachers in America were free to preach, but Wesley was firm in denying them the privilege of administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

In 1784, at the age of 81, Wesley ordained Dr. Coke, appointing him and Francis Asbury to be "Joint Superintendents" in America. In his official letter introducing them, Wesley made it clear that this was also a renunciation of control by the Anglican Church. However, Lawson declares the ordination went far beyond Wesley's intent, which was, according to the ordination certificate, to adhere to "the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England." In America, Dr. Coke promptly ordained Asbury a "co-bishop." Wesley wrote after Coke and Asbury had been formally recognized as bishops in America, "How dare you suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought!" The evidence strongly indicates that Wesley intended to authorize only administrative superintendence in America.

Wesley's first ordination was, in Lawson's opinion, the decisive act of schism. Even though he wanted to be both Anglican priest and

scriptural, spiritual *episcopos*, Wesley's purely practical ordination was ambitiously equated by his preachers with that of an Anglican bishop. After Wesley's death, there was conflict between opposite factions over the rite of ordination. The distinction between ordained and unordained was dropped and ministerial duties were assumed by all, which amounted to a process of "leveling up rather than leveling down." When ordination returned in 1836, the only surviving ordinand of John Wesley was not asked to share in the ceremony. Thus the Methodist Church moved on without benefit of either apostolic or Wesleyan succession. This difficult problem of the Christian ministry still remains to be resolved in any overtures looking toward ultimate reunion of Methodism and Anglicanism.

C. S. Walters, M.D.

Encountering the Unseen, by Paul Lambourne Higgins. Minneapolis: Denison and Co., 1966. 152 pages. \$3.75.

I have read with unusual interest Dr. Paul Lambourne Higgins' latest volume, *Encountering the Unseen*. This is an attractively written book and its content is so stimulating that I read it at one sitting.

The author is a man of deep spiritual convictions. The basic conviction of the book is that the invisible world should be as real and meaningful for persons today as it was for the prophets and saints of former times. This thesis is biblically oriented and psychically documented. The author pleads for the church to recover this lost dimension of firsthand contact with the invisible world. He asserts that the church will never achieve its potential of spiritual power until such firsthand religious experience becomes the norm. His conviction of the reality of the unseen world and of its strategic spiritual value to us leads him to affirm his belief in the possibility of communication with the spirits of the departed, and in the validity of prayers both *to* the departed saints and *for* the departed saints. He is explicit in his declaration of the manifestations of the power of the unseen world through prayer, dreams, and healing.

This volume is the work of a historically-minded mystic (or should I say a mystically-minded historian). It not only shows concern for historical accuracy but it reveals an enviable acquaintance with the saints of the Bible, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism. The author is a specialist in the world of the occult and in psychical research.

The reading of this treatise provokes for the thoughtful Christian two pertinent questions: (1) Are personal communications with the unseen world included in the norm for spiritual experience? (2) If so, is this firsthand religious experience imperative to the Church's realization of genuine spiritual renewal?

The book speaks to this reviewer at the point of some personal spiritual interests: the reality of the unseen world, the Christian concept of sanctity, the Church's ministry of healing, and renewal in the Church. The whole should prove worthwhile reading to one who is open to unusual spiritual concepts, to new avenues of creative thought, and to fresh frontiers of Christian endeavor.

The author concludes his book with these challenging words:

The miraculous world of which the authors of the Bible seemed so vividly aware is a world which we, too, can enter. Psychological research shows that verifiable manifestations do reach us from beyond the grave. The consciousness of man does not depend upon physical agencies. The body is only an instrument; the spirit is the real self.

Ministers and laymen who know God will give an important place to prayer and healing. They will not be afraid to enter into communion with the saints, nor will they close their minds to the possibilities of an ever-widening consciousness. They will do more about their belief in spirits and angels, and will look again at what the Bible and the Church in the past have said about these entities. They will begin to live in an attitude of awareness of the presence of God and a great unseen company.

When this life here and now is seen as a brief testing period, a sort of preparatory stage to an everlasting life, the frontiers open up endlessly. How can we say that we have more than scratched the surface? There is so much more ahead.

Frank Bateman Stanger

The Anguish of Preaching, by Joseph Sittler. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. 70 pages. \$1.95.

The author, Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago, is widely acclaimed as one of the most provocative preachers to the current generation of college students. This brief treatise suggests the reason. Its burden is to show how it is possible for preaching to exist in organic relation to the vitality that today characterizes the

“tormented thought” of the church’s theologians and biblical scholars.

A chapter entitled “The Anguish of Christology” discusses in relation to his mission Christ’s words: “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and *now I am straitened till it be accomplished!*” (Luke 12:50). The word “straitened” forever haunts the true servant of the Word. His anguish too is real. One is never a *successful* preacher. He never quite comes to terms with the anguish “that runs forever deeply under his incomplete and faltering efforts” (p. 29). And should he think himself on the way to professional aplomb as a preacher, that Figure turns and looks upon him, as upon Peter in the courtyard. “And under that look is everything crumpled save the presence and the question and the anguish” (p. 30).

In the chapter, “The Basic Role of the Seminary in the Formation of the Preacher,” Dr. Sittler asserts that the essential reason for the low correlation between the academic disciplines of the seminary and the content of the parish sermon is that the preacher shares the common human disposition to perform according to men’s expectations and demands (p. 6). The modern congregational self-image is seen as analogous to that of other institutions—commercial, promotional, and manufacturing. What is needed is gospel-oriented sermons that probe popular understanding—exposing, correcting, and judging it—an undertaking that might prove disturbing to conventional modes of thinking in some local congregations. Elsewhere in the book, the author takes up the matter of New Testament interpretation in preaching, and the disparity between the vision of the church’s obedience and the popular piety of the congregations.

James D. Robertson

The Holy Land from the Persian to the Arab Conquest, A Historical Geography by Michael Avi-Yonah. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966. 231 pages. \$5.95.

This volume is a product of an evolutionary process beginning in 1931 when the author, as a member of the department of antiquities in the British mandate territory of Palestine, was asked to prepare a map of the Roman Empire. This project led to a separate map of Rome and Palestine, together with extensive notes. Later a Hebrew edition was prepared, including an historical introduction. A later English translation with chapters on the population and economics of the Holy Land was accepted as a doctoral dissertation by the University of London in 1957.

Although listed as a book on historical geography, this is more geography than history. The reader's general knowledge of Near East history is assumed on the part of the author. He is concerned rather with data prerequisite to establishing an authoritative map of the different periods of Near East history of Palestine from the sixth century B.C. to the seventh century A.D. The author's primary concern is with the boundaries and political divisions of this area at various times in its political history. To further his purpose, he gives great attention to the identification of sites and cities, as well as to the titles of the various political districts and administrative officers of each epoch.

The author draws upon primary sources and his work can be considered definitive. One can recognize here the work of a first rate scholar who has applied himself with great competence to finding data from all of the available primary sources and adding his own critical assessment of their merit. The result is invaluable to the careful student of the political history of the Holy Land. This volume, used with such sources as the Bible, the Apocrypha, Josephus, and other authors, gives the reader a fairly accurate picture of the political vicissitudes of this important area for a millennium. The volume does not suffice as a history of the area as such. Nor is it adequate for geography alone. But within the limits it has set for itself, it is probably unsurpassed.

The value of the book is enhanced by the addition of several chapters dealing with the cities of the area. Especially interesting is the description of the Roman road system that grew up during the first three centuries of our era. The economic geography of the area and the estimate of its population at various times add significantly to the permanent value of the volume. Scholars will find here invaluable references to primary source materials to round out the author's picture of the situation during the early centuries.

George A. Turner

The Untold Story of Qumran, by John C. Trever. Westwood, N. J.: Revell, 1965. 214 pages. \$8.95.

This detailed story of the complicated series of events which surrounded the discovery, identification, and publication of the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls to come to light, is from the man most intimately connected with those events. Dr. Trever tells in an exciting manner how he became involved with the Dead Sea Scrolls while he was at the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem during the fateful winter and spring of 1948. This tale is as thrilling

as a mystery novel, with one difference: it is true. One has to go to an appendix to find a corpus of notes that provides the meat of research and argumentation, which is the real value of the book.

The story is told chronologically, beginning with the occasion of the first phone call to the final sale of the manuscripts to the Israeli government. The variety of emotion which moved the heart and mind of Trever is perceptible throughout. There is the nagging tug of scepticism mixed with hungry curiosity: Are these manuscripts genuine or are they clever fakes? There are the frustrations inherent in business negotiations with an Arab salesman, in the inadequacy of equipment, in the tensions of Jerusalem as Jews and Arabs clash among themselves. There is the exhilaration of discovery, and the adventure of recording and deciphering the unknown. There is the emotional backdrop which accompanies the task of convincing hard-headed biblical scholars that the scrolls are really the products of a people who lived a century before Christ. There is the strain of extensive lecture tours, coupled with involved correspondence leading to the publication of the photographs of the scrolls. There are the tensions arising from trying to transact business with the owner of the scrolls. This is a book that will hold the interest of the reader to its last footnote.

Part of the cost of the volume is due to the extensive use of the photographs, which are scattered through the text. Of particular value are the clusters of colored photographs intermittently spaced throughout. Here is a volume of primary source material for the reader who would gain insight into the worth of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

G. Herbert Livingston

Science, God, and You, by Enno Wolthuis. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963. 121 pages. \$2.50.

In this volume the author seeks to set forth the proper domain of both science and Christianity. The conflict between the two, when such arises, is from overstatement. Either Christians overstate their position or scientists try to speak with authority in non-scientific areas.

The book gives a brief but informative history of the development of modern science and its position of prestige today. The author praises the accomplishments of science and its contribution to our culture. He asserts the authority of science in its proper field, and warns against Christian enthusiasm entering the domain of science without adequate scientific knowledge. When science

assumes to answer questions outside its own realm, it is wedded to a philosophy of naturalism, for science is fundamentally a method and should not arrogate to itself the claim of a philosophy. It cannot deal with "right and wrong," with purpose, or with origins. Love cannot be analyzed in a test tube. Instead of claiming to be *the one method* of knowledge, science must confess its limitations. Moreover, the supposition that scientific knowledge is "hard facts" is without foundation. The scientist, as much as the Christian, rests his "facts" upon assumptions of faith. Order in the physical universe is a necessary assumption for scientific investigation, but it is an assumption based upon faith.

To find a solution to the questions which science cannot answer, we turn to God. Orthodox Christianity has always insisted that God has spoken in two ways, in nature and in his Word. Those who question the reliability of the second method may test it by personal trial. To refuse to validate God's spoken Word in personal experience is blind prejudice, not scientific objectivity.

The author admits difficulty in explaining the Genesis record of creation. But he admits to problems which in the eyes of this reviewer would not arise with a proper exegesis of the creation account. Nevertheless, here is a man truly Christian who writes from the perspective of the scientist.

Ivan C. Howard

Encounter with Spurgeon, by Helmut Thielicke; translated by J. W. Doberstein. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963. 283 pages. \$5.95.

It seems an odd paradox that in our day a renowned German university professor and theologian should develop his theory and practice of preaching in the context of the preaching of a self-educated Victorian Baptist minister. That he does so suggests that Charles Haddon Spurgeon has some things to say to the twentieth century pulpit. Remarkable that a man so widely separated in time and culture should rediscover these lectures on preaching! Thielicke, whose own reputation as a preacher is now world-wide, says: "I am almost tempted to shout out to those who are serving the eternal Word as preachers, Sell all that you have and buy Spurgeon (even if you have to grub through the second-hand bookstores)."

The volume comprises first a discussion of what resulted from its author's "encounter with Spurgeon," and secondly, a selection and abbreviation of eighteen of the "Lectures to My Students" plus two sermons by Spurgeon.

Spurgeon to Thielicke is the miracle of a bush that burned with fire and yet was not consumed—this man who lived in the theologically-discredited nineteenth century, who had at least six thousand people in his congregation every Sunday morning, whose sermons were cabled to New York weekly and reprinted in the leading newspapers, and who occupied the same pulpit for almost forty years. Success here is attributed essentially to the efficacy of the Word. Spurgeon worked “only through the power of the Word which created its own hearers and changed souls” (p.1). He was in no way like the managers of modern evangelistic campaigns, who manipulate souls with all the techniques of mass-suggestion. He was still unaware of the wiles of propaganda. Thielicke finds a perennial freshness in Spurgeon. Indeed, unlike the published sermons of the other great nineteenth century preachers, Spurgeon’s sermons “lose very little in print” (p.5). The author makes much of the fact that one does not learn the “how” of preaching by studying rules of rhetoric. Preaching is a kind of by-product of a man’s spiritual existence. Study the man!

The selections from the “Lectures” cover a wide variety of ministerial topics and are rich in practical insights. The reader will often reach for his pen to make note of some incisive comment. Here are discussions of topics such as: the Holy Spirit in our ministry, preaching for conversion, public prayer, open-air preaching, the matter of sermons, and ministerial progress. Contemporary preachers will find this “Encounter With Spurgeon” an exhilarating experience.

James D. Robertson