

treat successively Scripture and the certainty of faith; the inner witness of the Spirit to the believer's acceptance of the written Word; the rise and meaning of the idea of a normative *canon* of Scripture in the Christian Church; and the interpretation of Scripture in accordance with its divine intent. The remaining nine chapters cope with issues linked to the confession that Scripture is "God-breathed," among others the nature of inspiration, historical relatedness and infallibility, the inscripturation phenomenon, and the perspicuity, sufficiency and reliability of the Bible. "Holy Scripture and Preaching" precedes a final chapter where the Dutch theologian suggests guidelines to a scientific study of the Bible.

What we have here is a classic Reformed theology considered in a manner which is entirely up to date. For myself I found the discussion of the central place which the canonical aspect of Scriptures has been given in the Christian church, and of the manner in which the *human* instrument functioned in the God-breathed Scripture, to be of special interest. Others will no doubt find themselves looking to different chapters for explanation of some of the problems related to the issue of biblical authority.

One could wish, however, that more attention had been given to such developments in current Roman Catholic theology as the transition from a mechanical to a more "organic" understanding of the phenomenon of inspiration, and of its implications for Catholic exegesis. It would have been helpful, too, if Berkouwer had given more extensive treatment to the difficult issue as to whether the perspicuity-clarity element of Scripture is likely to slip essentially away from us as we find ourselves confronted with new questions and new problems. Has the author really answered the question by declaring that it depends essentially on one's definition of perspicuity (p. 297)?

In its eagerness to maintain Scripture's divinity, fundamentalism has usually not realized the significance of the Bible's human aspect. It is Berkouwer's merit to try to come to grips with the problem of whether attention to the human character of the Bible might not be of great importance for its correct understanding. His volume will doubtless stand for years as one of the most complete evangelical defenses of the full authority of the Bible, and help to carry the evangelical discussion on inspiration to a higher level.

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Brueggemann, Walter, and Wolff, Hans Walter. *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1975. 155 pp. Paperback, \$4.95.

This book is a collection of seven articles—three by Hans Walter Wolff and four by Walter Brueggemann. It is basically a theological analysis of the Pentateuchal traditions with reference to their present kerygmatic significance.

Brueggemann's introductory chapter reviews the history of Pentateuchal study with particular emphasis given to the work of four individuals: Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932), William Foxwell Albright (1891-1971), and Gerhard von Rad (1901-1971). The chief contribution

of each scholar is found in the type of question his particular approach inspired. With Wellhausen the concern was to determine the literary strand to which the text belonged. Gunkel was interested in the preliterary phase of the material, attempting to determine the life-setting from which the text came. Albright focused attention on historical questions. By means of archaeological excavations, and linguistic and philological studies, he sought to reclaim the historicity of the Pentateuchal narratives and to determine the uniqueness of Israelite faith. The questions raised by von Rad (and his followers) were theological in character and were developed from a form-critical perspective. He analyzed the ways in which the biblical traditions were reworked so as to express the normative faith of Israel in the face of new situations and challenges.

In chap. 2, Brueggemann explains the practical value that Wolff's kerygmatic approach has for OT study, suggesting a possible connection between the confessional stance of evangelical Christians in Germany during the Nazi rule and the protests of faithful Israel when it called into question the cultural values of its day. The four basic documents of the Pentateuch (JEDP) proposed by critical scholarship are understood as major attempts to proclaim Israel's faith in the face of crises (p. 32). Each of these "documents" is discussed separately in the next four chapters. The kerygma of the Yahwist, the Elohist and the Deuteronomistic Historical Work (DtrH.) are treated by Wolff in chaps. 3, 4, and 5 respectively. Brueggemann explores the kerygmatic forces of the priestly writers in chap. 6.

In the concluding chapter, Brueggemann makes a dispassionate plea—presumably to evangelicals—to distinguish between the question of literary authorship and that of theological legitimacy. In his opinion, the documentary hypothesis does not call into question the authority of the Bible, but simply expresses the process through which the literature came into being. A similar concern was advanced earlier by George Eldon Ladd in *The New Testament and Criticism* (1967). Aimed at conservative Protestants, Ladd's work proceeds from the thesis that "the Bible is the Word of God given in the words of men in history" (p. 12) and, consequently, cannot be adequately understood unless its historical origins are reconstructed by scientific means.

The reaction to criticism among evangelicals is a mixed one. Some opposition simply stems from an anti-intellectual bias deeply rooted in charismatic or Pentecostal traditions. Other negative responses arise from an anxiety over the loss of reverence for the Bible as the Word of God. Biblical criticism has acquired a monstrous image partly because of the negative results of scholarship in the past and partly due to the apathy among intellectuals towards pastoral concerns. When traditional views, once held in high esteem, are shattered, the church becomes disillusioned. Unless more positive results are forthcoming from critical studies, the disillusionment will lead to despair and ruin.

Critical exegesis must be linked with the homiletical task in order to bridge the chasm between the university and the church. The work of Brueggemann and Wolff represents such an effort. Their emphasis on a kerygmatic approach to the OT expresses a pastoral concern which is a step in the right direction. When ministers are adequately prepared to grasp the theological themes expressed in the Pentateuchal traditions, they will be able to proclaim God's

Word to the church in a fresh and vital way. While evangelicals will still be reluctant to embrace wholeheartedly the critical methodologies of Brueggemann and Wolff, they doubtless will follow with keen interest the direction that this approach will take.

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JOSEPH J. BATTISTONE

Carlston, Charles E. *The Parables of the Triple Tradition*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975. xviii + 249 pp. \$11.95.

This is a redaction-critical study of the parables common to the Synoptic tradition. Previous critical approaches to the parables, those of Dodd and Jeremias, applied the form-critical method to determine what materials in the parables go back to Jesus himself and what may be attributable to the development within the Christian community. Carlston expressly states, in opposition to these, that he studies these parables not in themselves as part of the message of Jesus Christ but only as a part of the total text. This somewhat enigmatic statement is partly explained by the reason he gives for this, i.e., the temptation to rescue as much of the tradition as possible and to depreciate the contributions of the evangelists. The previous statement, however, is filled with hidden assumptions, i.e., that the form-critical approach neglects the rest of the text and that the contribution of the evangelists is necessarily substantial.

Carlston's method magnifies any differences noted between the particular Gospel being studied and its source and labors to find some theological significance in the change.

Three sections make up this book. The first deals with the Markan Parables in Matthew, the second with the Markan Parables in Luke, and the last chapter all the Markan Parables, not only those found in Matthew and Luke. The author indicates that this book is only a part of a larger work, presumably one dealing with all the parables, those in a dual tradition as well as those found only in one. It is understandable that this work should be limited to the parables of the triple tradition inasmuch as the author is doing a redaction-critical study. However, since he is not studying the parables in themselves but only as part of the total text, he should have given some rationale for limiting himself to this particular part of the tradition. In other words, if it is not for the message itself of the parables, why does he focus on them? Does he expect to find them to be more fruitful than narrative sections or non-parabolic sayings sections for redaction-critical study? If so, why?

Carlston, following his presuppositions, does a very careful analysis of the changes he sees being made by the evangelist. His discussion of Lk 5:36-39 may be taken as an example. When one compares Luke's version of this with Mark's, he will notice how awkward it is. Then Luke adds a somewhat ambiguous statement at the end: "And no one after drinking old wine desires new; for he says, 'The old is good.'" Carlston fairly gives three possible interpretations of Luke's passage based on the differences noted