History serves as memory freshener. But when history focuses on evangelism, its flavor becomes rich and intense. Such is the case of The Story of Evangelism. Robert G. Tuttle, Jr., professor of Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary, uses a rather unusual format for presenting his case. He divides the historical timeline in thirteen segments, for each one following an identical sequence: a world survey focusing on other societies, religions, or social developments during that particular period of time; the introduction of a representative “evangelist” of the same period; an evaluation of the relevance of the findings for today; and a bibliography containing important resources for additional study. Tuttle should be commended for including both secular and religious non-western historical perspectives into the larger picture. His emphasis on women, minorities, and forgotten parts of the world is evident.

However, Tuttle’s criteria in selecting the representative figures (speakers) for each historical period are not always obvious when one thinks about other possible candidates. Why Abraham and not Noah? Why Hannah and not Elisha? Also, some information seems to belong to tradition and hagiography rather than documented historical facts beyond any doubt.

The Story of Evangelism tends to remain at a general/popular level, without going into the depth of the scholarly debates and arguments related to such an important aspect of Christian history. I recommend the book as a perspective opener, for beginner students of evangelism history.

Cristian Dumitrescu
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Forthcoming articles in the next issues of JAMS:

• Preaching to Jews and Gentiles
• Daniel and His Friends in Babylon
• The Practice of Al-Zar by Muslim Women in Upper Egypt
• A Call to Walk a Different Path: A Framework for Stepping into the World of Muslim Women