

summary designation and the synthetic direction of the incompatibility-rule that backs it up, . . .)" (p. 59).

If one can work through many pages of this kind of writing, he will profit from Heimbeck's really cogent discussion. It is just too bad that such fine theorizing is freighted with such poor writing.

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Kaiser, Otto. *Isaiah 13-39: A Commentary*. Trans. by R. A. Wilson. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974. 412 pp. \$12.50.

This commentary constitutes Kaiser's most recent exegetical work on the book of Isaiah; his commentary on Is 1-12 was published in English in 1972. The present volume covers a much more perplexing part of Isaiah and resembles its predecessor in the scope and character of its exegetical treatment.

The author holds with liberal scholarship that the formation of Is 13-19 continued for about five centuries from the time of Isaiah in the eighth century down to the first third of the second century B.C. The various redactors were not concerned to preserve Isaiah's words faithfully and without any alteration but reflect the faith and theology of circles of late pre-exilic to post-exilic times. Chaps. 13-23 have a highly checkered redactional history with only 25 verses (17:10-11; 20:1, 3-6; 22:1-14, 15-18) assigned to Isaiah of Jerusalem. The so-called "Apocalypse of Isaiah" (chaps 24-27) is believed to be composed in the period between the second half of the fourth century and the first third of the second century B.C. Chaps. 28-32 should not be treated as a separate "Assyrian Cycle" containing much material from Isaiah of Jerusalem, as is usually done. Basic Isaianic material is preserved in 28:7-12, 14-18; 29:9-10, 13-14, 15-16; 30:1-5, 6-7, 8, 9-17; and 31:1-3, but not without the touch of later redactors who put the text in its present form. Chap. 33 is a kind of compendium of eschatological conceptions associated with the fate of Jerusalem. Chaps. 34-35 are considered as a "Short Apocalypse" from the late exilic period and composed by the author of Is 40-55 as suggested by M. Pope in 1952. Finally, chaps. 36-39 form an appendix taken from the late post-exilic period.

This redaction-critical approach clearly has important consequences for the exposition of Is 13-39. There is much innovative and highly original argument which prompts renewed critical reflection concerning the composition of the book of Isaiah. Aside from 35 verses which have an Isaianic kernel in chaps. 28-31, there are only 25 verses of the 189 in chaps. 13-23 which are assigned to Isaiah himself. By comparison, other scholars assign much more to Isaiah of Jerusalem in the same section; e.g., J. Mauchline (1962) 101 verses, G. E. Wright (1964) 99 verses, G. Fohrer (1966) 39 verses, and F. L. Moriarty (1968) 100 verses. What one scholar regards as early (and genuine), another scholar considers as late (and secondary). Scholars opting for the gradual growth of the book of Isaiah differ so strongly in their conclusions that no scholarly consensus can be found. In this situation where no two scholars working independently can come to the same conclusion, the

validity of the criteria for considering a passage late or early and the objectivity of the methods must be seriously questioned (cf. H. Ringgren, "Literarkritik, Formgeschichte, Überlieferungsgeschichte," *TLZ* 91 [1961]: 641). Ideological, historical, and linguistic criteria are too often subjectively applied according to the a priori views of the scholars concerned (S. Erlands-son, *The Burden of Babylon* [Lund, 1970], pp. 54-63). Kaiser's expositions stimulate critical reflections on the purposes of current methods of biblical exegesis, create greater awareness of the limitations of the various criteria employed, and engender a continuing quest for objectivity. And for this all will be thankful to him.

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Ladd, George Eldon. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974. 661 pp. \$12.50.

This book is the first comprehensive textbook of NT Theology by an American scholar since the publication of George Barker Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*, in 1906. Ladd has been Professor of NT Exegesis and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary since 1950. He states that he wrote this book to meet the challenge of Carl F. H. Henry, one of the leading spokesmen of Evangelicalism: "If evangelical Protestants do not overcome their preoccupation with negative criticism of contemporary theological deviations at the expense of the construction of preferable alternatives to these, they will not be much of a doctrinal force in the decade ahead" (p. 25, quoting from *Jesus of Nazareth: Saviour and Lord*, ed. C. F. H. Henry [Grand Rapids, Mich., 1966], p. 9). Although Ladd has written from the viewpoint of Evangelicalism, he has availed himself of the contributions of modern scholars of various schools of thought.

In his "Introduction," after giving a brief sketch of the history of the discipline, Ladd sets forth his basic approach. "Biblical theology," he asserts, "must be done from a starting point that is biblical-historical in orientation." "Biblical theology has the task of expounding the theology found in the Bible in its own historical setting, and its own terms, categories, and thought forms" (p. 25).

Ladd agrees with those who make the central unifying principle of the NT, as of the entire Bible, God's redemptive activity in history. Biblical theology "is basically the description and interpretation of the divine activity within the scene of human history that seeks man's redemption. The bond that unites the Old and the New Testaments is this sense of the divine activity in history" (p. 26). Both Testaments consist primarily of a recital of God's activities, through which He has revealed Himself. Therefore as Ladd asserts, "Biblical theology must be done from a starting-point that is biblical-historical in orientation. Only this approach can deal adequately with the reality of God and his inbreaking into history" (p. 33). Ladd holds that biblical theology is primarily a descriptive discipline. Its normative relevance is the task of systematic theology. (Compare the Stendahl-Dulles debate on