

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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GERHARD F. HASEL

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

"Method in Biblical Theology" in *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, ed. J. Philip Hyatt [Abingdon, 1965], pp. 196-216.)

While there is unity in the documents of the NT, there is also considerable diversity. Theologies written from the topical or synthetical approach tend to ignore this diversity and the historical development within the NT. Ladd therefore has chosen to use a historical and analytical approach, or what he calls a "monochromatic treatment of the several redemptive themes." He has divided his work into six parts dealing with (1) the Synoptic Gospels, (2) the Fourth Gospel, (3) the Primitive Church, (4) Paul, (5) the General Epistles, and (6) the Apocalypse.

We agree that the variety in the NT needs to be recognized, but it is difficult to encompass all of this even in a volume of more than 650 pages. Unfortunately, our author was unable to develop the Christology of the Apocalypse. In fact, he confesses that he was not able to deal with all the theology of the Apocalypse (p. 624). His failure to deal with the Christology of that book is noteworthy.

Along with the redemptive theme, Ladd stresses throughout the eschatological orientation of the various documents or what Cullmann calls "the substructure of redemptive history." In nearly all of the NT books Ladd sees a tension between "the already and not yet"—between "realized and futuristic eschatology."

This scholarly work by an American Evangelical is most welcome and will no doubt be widely used in seminaries and by ministers who want to keep abreast of what is going on in biblical theology.

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WALTER F. SPECHT

Levi, Peter, S.J. *The English Bible: 1534-1859*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974. 222 pp. \$6.95.

After a lengthy historical introduction, the author provides excerpts from the major English versions beginning with Tyndale through the Authorized Version of 1611. To these he adds lesser known versions such as those of John Fisher (1545), Hugh Broughton (1662), John Carryl (1700), Edward Harwood (1768), Benjamin Franklin (1779), and William Barnes (1859).

The author is primarily interested in the development of written English; and he believes that the period of these translations, especially up to the Authorized Version, was the most formative for this. He does not concern himself with accuracy or with the text underlying the translation. His is a literary study. He has not included any modern versions because he finds that "none of them [is] convincing on the level of language" and regards "the new versions as ill-judged, and their imposition as an act of folly" (p. 12). In fact, any new version, he feels, must go back to these earlier versions, and that is one of the reasons for this anthology.

Unfortunately the author has not provided any analysis of the excerpts to indicate excellence or development. He introduces each version with a short paragraph which in no way assists the reader to appreciate what follows.

While the reviewer is not competent to deal with literary merits of the