

miracles would have to be distinguished from those of the Jewish and pagan world. Whether all of his explanations are as valid as his thesis is an open question. Especially that of the Temptation Narrative can be explained differently. While written almost half a century ago, this work still provides insights that are profitable for us today.

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Hanson, Richard S. *The Future of the Great Planet Earth: What Does Biblical Prophecy Mean for You?* Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1972. 123 pp. Paperback, \$2.95.

Because Hanson writes in reaction to the popular misuse of Bible prophecies, he is at pains to show that the prophets of old did more than predict the future. "What makes a person a prophet is not what he sees of the future, but what he sees of the truth" (p. 121). With regard to the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation, he explains that the purpose of the former was to assure the Jews living at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes that the end of suffering was certain, and the purpose of the latter was to show that God, not the emperor, is the one who controls the world and will be with his people all the way. This leads Hanson to reject the popular view that the book of Revelation is "history written in advance with all the details spelled out," as if "our age is *the* age that holds the key to understanding—as though the Bible were written for our time alone" (p. 90).

Although Hanson acknowledges that Revelation gives "the outcome in advance," he basically is caught in a false dilemma, preterism or futurism. He clearly chooses the first in order to avoid the last. He rightly exposes the fundamental weakness of futurism, which takes, for instance, the names of ancient nations out of Eze 38-39 and applies them to nations of today: "they are ignoring the history between then and now" (p. 90). This awareness of historical perspective prevents Hanson from being caught in the modern delusion of interpreting the founding of the new state of Israel in 1948 as a fulfillment of Bible prophecies. Although he admits that there are some signs that seem to suggest it, he finds that "there are also things that do not fit. The restoration of Israel pictured in many of those visions is a restoration that happens because the Messiah appears. But where is the Messiah in the modern State of Israel?" (pp. 48-49).

Unfortunately, Hanson ignores the opportunity to work out the deep, central focus of all Bible prophecies, the spiritual and Christo-centric nature of the true Israel of God in the setting of Biblical eschatology. This failure comes tragically to light in his incredible misunderstanding of Armageddon, the final battle between heaven and earth when the Antichrist launches his final attack upon the people of God. He states: "Armageddon is what happens when the kings of the world meet on the field of combat—when nations rise against nations and make war together" (p. 116). Here the great climax of the long-standing controversy between Christ and Satan (in Rev 16, 17 and 19) is superficially secularized into a war merely between nations. The basic defect of Hanson's book lies in the field of eschatology, of which he speaks only incidentally. There is no co-ordination and systematization of the Biblical data with regard to the final war between good and evil.

One more remarkable hiatus must be mentioned. When Hanson presents the Christ of the four Gospels in Chap. 5, he finds no room to speak of the real significance of the death of Jesus, the atoning sacrifice of Christ. The symbols of bread and wine at the Lord's Supper are said to be a suggestion that he is the source of our life (p. 170). This is true indeed, but is that all there is to say about the cross of Christ? Can the resurrection of Jesus become truly meaningful when the reason for his death is obscured?

On the other hand, Chap. 7, "The Way of Life," is excellent. Here the author shows convincingly that the way of life for the true Christian includes more than accepting a daily forgiveness of guilt. It is "living the way of Jesus," and this is spelled out well.

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HANS K. LARONDELLE

Ladd, George Eldon. *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974. xiv + 370 pp. Paperback, \$4.50.

It is refreshing to have this further volume on eschatology by George Eldon Ladd. It is not a new book, however, but is rather a revised and updated version of the author's *Jesus and the Kingdom* (New York, 1964). The changes from the earlier edition are actually few. As stated in the Preface, this "Second Edition features a new Preface; a revised and updated first chapter, 'The Debate over Eschatology'; and an updated Bibliography" (p. xiv).

Although the Preface has been rewritten to a fair extent, the changes in Chap. 1 are relatively few. On page 20, a paragraph has been added regarding C. H. Dodd's book *The Founder of Christianity* published in 1970. The thrust of this brief paragraph is to call attention to Dodd's reference to a consummation of God's Kingdom "beyond history" as apparently manifesting a somewhat new element in Dodd's view of the eschatology of Jesus: "Dodd seems to allow for a real futurity of the Kingdom" (p. 20). We wish that Ladd might have elaborated on this matter inasmuch as Dodd's use of the term "beyond history" was not really new in 1970, and the kind of "real futurity" intended by Ladd (or Dodd?) needs explication.

Further expansion in the present edition has taken place on pages 36-38, where one paragraph is devoted to Herman Ridderbos and several paragraphs to Norman Perrin.

The already extensive bibliography has been appropriately updated by the addition of a number of new titles, including several by Ladd himself. In view of the rather extended treatment he gives to Rudolf Bultmann in Chap. 1, it is unfortunate that in that chapter he fails to mention Bultmann's *History and Eschatology: The Presence of Eternity* (New York, 1957), and that he also fails to list this title in his bibliography.

Indeed, one may wonder about Ladd's classification of Bultmann as being among the Consistent Eschatologists (pp. 7-8; see also p. 312) and particularly about the remark that the "most important contemporary support of Consistent Eschatology is found in the interpretation of Rudolf Bultmann and