

of NT study.

No serious student of NT theology can afford to neglect Goppelt's work. His approach will not find support from all readers, but no one can lay these two volumes aside without having been stimulated to reflect anew on the nature, function, scope, and purpose of NT theology. The bibliographies provided for each section are in themselves worth the money invested. Goppelt's *Theology of the NT* is an outstanding landmark of a moderately critical approach to NT study.

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GERHARD F. HASSEL

Hall, Douglas John. *Lighten Our Darkness: Toward an Indigenous Theology of the Cross*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976. 253 pp. \$10.95.

This is a tremendously insightful book whose message, while particularly directed towards North Americans, applies equally to people everywhere. The image of man as master arose after the Middle Ages but found its fullest development in North America with its pioneer spirit, and in modern times in its mastery of technology. But this image of man as master is being shattered as technology enslaves man with its automation, terrifies him with the threat of nuclear incineration, and frightens him with the prospect of depletion of resources. The myth of progress, the philosophical basis for the image of man as master, and the officially optimistic society is no longer believable. Unfortunately, Christianity has been the priest of this society. It has given this society its blessings and its encouragement, though the Bible itself does not support this view.

What the author calls for in place of this triumphalistic theology is a theology of the cross, a theology that sees God present in the midst of peril, uncertainty, suffering, failure, darkness, and hopelessness. The problem with North American Christianity is that it has allowed the gap between experience and expectancy to grow too large. It refuses to look realistically at what experience teaches—that its condition is one of failure since its concept of man as master is not in harmony with reality. It has failed to assimilate fully the biblical doctrine of man as sinner. Therefore its expectancy is an illusion not based on experience, and from this standpoint it is in the same situation as Marxism. On the other hand, existentialism is blind to expectancy while concentrating only on experience. The tension between experience and expectancy must be maintained, but it must be between experience that is realistic and expectancy that is built on a true assessment of experience. The understanding of the human experience will lead to the "recognition of the crisis of our period as a crisis of failure: the failure of an image of man" (p. 170).

A new image of man is needed in this time when the old image no longer works. The image Hall proposes is the image of man as receiver. Man as receiver is no longer lord of nature but its protector, one who receives what is necessary for life, and recognizes his dependence on other men. Hall recognizes that this *might* lead to mere passivity, but he objects to the idea that such *must* be the result.

Thus, what is necessary is that we recognize the failure of the image of

man as master, the concept of inevitable progress, the success mentality without any limits, and that we learn to live with failure, to walk in the darkness and to die with Jesus on the cross. "A faith that knows failure, and even begins in failure, can touch the lives of many today who otherwise do not have the courage to have failed" (p. 229).

While this book is pregnant with insights and presents a theology that is appropriate to the times and the place, nevertheless it seems a bit too one-sided. To make its point it has overemphasized the cross without giving appropriate reference to the resurrection. Künneth's *Theology of the Resurrection* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1965) gives a better balanced view without the triumphalistic overtones that Hall decries. The resurrection is victory but it is a hidden victory. It remains hidden until the coming of Christ. Without this other aspect, it is difficult to see where hope comes from and how the Christian can be much of a helpful presence in a world full of despair, hopelessness, and meaninglessness.

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SAKAE KUBO

Jaroš, Karl; Leimlehner, Marianne; and Swedik, Grete. *Aegypten und Vorderasien: Eine kleine Chronographie bis zum Auftreten Alexander des Grossen*. Linz: Veritas Verlag, 1976. 206 pp. 24 maps. 26 illustrations.

This little book, according to a description on the back cover, was produced as a guide to students of religion and interested lay people who want to be introduced to the history of Egypt and the ancient Orient. The author, Karl Jaroš, a college professor, has taught OT in Graz and Linz in Austria and produced this book to meet a widely felt need for such a guide. Two of his students helped him in this work.

There can be no question but that there has always been a dearth of books dealing with ancient history written with the general public in mind. Every high-school or college instructor who teaches history will agree with this statement. James H. Breasted, the first famous American Egyptologist and founder of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, over sixty years ago tried to fill this void with his *Ancient Times: a History of the Early World* (Boston, 1916; rev. 1935). This was a superbly written general ancient history; but it contains 742 pages, and therefore is still a rather formidable tome, although it has been successfully used as a textbook in many college courses dealing with ancient Near Eastern history.

When I received Jaroš's little book I wondered how he could cover several thousand years of Near Eastern history on 127 small-sized pages, because the remaining 79 pages of his book are used up by the title page, table of contents, list of abbreviations, etc. (10 pages); by chronological lists of kings and dynasties (23 pages); and by maps, plans, and drawings of archaeological objects (46 pages). The result is a condensation of material that cannot nearly do justice to the political events from prehistorical times down to Alexander the Great, not to mention the cultural accomplishments and religions involved during these millennia. Jaroš devotes 33 pages to ancient Egypt, 39 pages to the ancient Orient, and 55 pages to Syria-Palestine (mainly the history of Israel). But even within these areas there are great