

testing or for diagnosing certain venereal infections, is allowed as well as its use "to obtain reasonable relief from excessive sexual tension or to preserve fidelity" (p. 227). The report is sympathetic to adolescent masturbation but urges support and direction in fostering growth and interrelationship with others.

Perhaps what is most significant in this report is the approach or the criterion on which it bases its evaluation of the different sexual activities. The official Catholic position begins with natural law and fixed rules and laws emphasizing the act, whereas this report begins with personal values and interpersonal relationships. This leads to a radical difference in results. The former's position is predictably negative in regard to such possibilities as in-vitro fertilization, but the latter is more open. This openness is such a dominant feature of the report that even when it disapproves it does not condemn.

Another difference of approach is the weight that this report gives to the findings of the empirical sciences which the official Catholic position neglects. These two factors, the criterion and the regard for findings of the empirical sciences, are the cause for the significant differences in the two positions.

The conservatives in the church will be disconcerted with the openness and the advanced positions taken in this book. While the report was not approved by the Society, the fact that it arranged for its publication would surely bring it into contention with the hierarchy. It is an important theological society, and while the committee is careful in stating that they see their "efforts as contributing not to dissent but rather development of Church teaching" (p. 240), their involvement with the report will surely be considered as dissent by the hierarchy.

Unfortunately, the report does not deal with other aspects of human sexuality, such as divorce, abortion, or genetic engineering.

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Keel, Othmar, *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst: Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4*. Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 84/85. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977. 410 pp. 257 figs. 5 pls. DM 134.—

The greatest value of this book does not lie in the number of new ideas advocated, but in the full presentation of all pertinent material which sheds light on the subjects under discussion. The author not only takes into account the views and findings of previous commentators on these subjects but has collected a tremendous amount of comparative material from the ancient Near East to support his views. The 257 line drawings, of which two thirds were made by the author's wife Hildi Leu, enhance the value of the book, since it allows the reader to check the author's reasonings, arguments, and claims without having to engage in a time-consuming search for publications where pictures of certain discussed objects or monuments may be found. Authors dealing with biblical subjects can learn on this point from Keel, who together with his publisher deserves our gratitude.

The book is concerned with four subject matters of which the first one,

dealt with in the first and shortest chapter of the book, is not mentioned in the book's title: The cherubim of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:23-28) and of Yahweh's throne (e.g., Ps 99:1). On the basis of numerous parallels in ancient Near Eastern art the author shows that the cherubim must have been winged quadrupeds. Thrones appear as representations on many ivories, seals, and sculptures, on which gods or kings sit on winged, sphinx-like creatures, but never on human-shaped beings. His views are in agreement with those of W. F. Albright, R. de Vaux, and others who have expressed themselves in recent years on this subject.

The second chapter is devoted to Isaiah's vision of Yahweh's glory, as recorded in Isa 6, but is especially interested in the nature of the seraphim. These six-winged, angelic beings, which were seen by the prophet as standing or hovering above Yahweh, have customarily been considered to be winged, human-shaped beings. Keel, however, agreeing with R. K. Joines's recent studies, sees in them winged, cobra-like creatures. He bases his argument on the fact that in every other biblical passage where the word *šeraph*, plural *šeraphim*, occurs, including two passages in Isaiah (14:29 and 30:6), it is rendered "serpent." The ancients in their imagery were familiar with winged serpents. This is attested by representations of such creatures on many monuments and numerous seals throughout the ancient Near East. The author also points out that the seraphim of Isaiah's vision are neither standing underneath Yahweh as the cherubim do, nor on the same level next to him, but rather above the enthroned Lord. Keel refers in this connection to the many Egyptian shrines or places where the lintels of the windows-of-appearance or the friezes above the thrones are decorated with rows of cobras which were there to protect the king or god. In some cases the protecting cobras are shown as winged creatures, although such serpents had either two or four wings, but never six wings as in Isaiah's vision.

The third chapter deals with Ezekiel's visions of God's glory in chaps. 1 and 10 and the angelic beings described there. While most commentators have recognized that the prophet uses the imagery of composite creatures with which the people of his time were familiar, exact parallels to the beings seen by the prophet have been difficult to find. Keel faces the same problem. Multi-headed, winged creatures are depicted at various places, but not beings in which every one of the four heads was different like those Ezekiel describes. Furthermore, there are no close parallels to such beings attached to wheels, although some Near-Eastern deities are shown in ancient works of art as being moved on wheeled carts.

The vision of Zech 4 is discussed in Keel's last chapter. In this vision the prophet saw a lampstand which served as the base of seven seven-spouted lamps standing between two olive trees. Such lampstands, usually about five feet (ca. 1.5 m.) high, are known from Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs, and one such stand, though much smaller, was found in excavations at Gezer. Also seven-spouted lamps are well known from the excavations of several ancient sites in Palestine. However, it seems that the author did not find close parallels to the whole picture of Zechariah's vision, since he directs the reader to certain pictorial representations of standards which carry the crescent of the moon at their top while they are flanked on both sides by trees or tree branches. The author believes that Zechariah was influenced

by this imagery, and substituted light-giving lamps on a lampstand for the light-giving lunar crescent on a standard. This reviewer finds Keel's interpretation unsatisfactory and difficult to accept.

The reader of this book in which a tremendous amount of comparative material is collected may occasionally disagree with the interpretations presented, but he cannot avoid being challenged and stimulated. Every student of the Bible will profit from reading it and will gain insights about the imagery of the ancient world which in turn will help him to understand the contemporary imagery of the Bible writers that sometimes seems strange and alien to us 20th-century people.

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Paxton, Geoffrey J. *The Shaking of Adventism*. Wilmington, Del.: Zenith, 1977. 172 pp. \$6.95.

While the author, an Anglican clergyman, regards the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a genuinely Christian body and rejects the charge that it is a mere sect, he raises questions concerning the claim that the Adventist movement is a perpetuation, extension, and final completion of the sixteenth-century Reformation. He argues that the heart of Reformation faith was the doctrine of justification which Luther, Calvin, and other Reformers defined as God's forensic act of pronouncing the believer righteous on the basis of Christ's merits. Any concept of justification as *making righteous* is relegated by Paxton to the category of medieval and Tridentine Roman Catholicism. Here is the basis of his major critique of Seventh-day Adventism. He feels that to a greater or lesser extent most Adventist authors, with the exception of a few contemporaries, have regressed to Roman Catholicism either by defining justification as the act by which God makes righteous, or by incorporating sanctification into the *sola fide* doctrine, regarding it as a vital aspect of God's saving work for man. "For the Reformers, Christ alone meant Jesus Christ the God-man, and not Christ's indwelling the believer by the Holy Spirit" (p. 42).

It should be pointed out that although Ellen G. White and other Adventist authors have depicted Adventism as an extension of the Reformation, they have consistently maintained the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*. Scripture, not Reformation theology, is stated to be the sole authoritative source of their faith. Insofar as the Reformers are regarded as Scripturally sound, their teachings are accepted; otherwise they are rejected. Paxton's critique would have been far more pertinent if it had stemmed from an exegetical study resulting in evaluation of Adventist biblical exegesis. Never once does he attempt to exegete any Bible passage, even though he invokes Paul's authority for his theology of justification.

Not only has Paxton failed to apprehend that the Scriptures, not the Reformers, are the ultimate authority for Adventists; he has also failed to grasp a true understanding of the Reformers' view of justification. In ignoring the inner work of the Holy Spirit as an integral part of God's justifying act, Paxton overlooks a major Reformation motif. Luther con-