

This revised edition (1981) is further enriched by the incorporation of seven short chorics from Urie A. Bender's *To Walk in The Way* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1979). Bender's book is a dramatic interpretation of Mark's Gospel. Each choric, relating to themes touched upon in Swartley's exposition, together with the prayer that closes each exposition, makes the study of Mark a devotional experience as well as an academic exercise.

I highly recommend *Mark: The Way for All Nations* for church study groups, religion classes, or anyone who wishes an introduction to the Gospel of Mark and the themes this Gospel presents.

Andrews University

GEORGE E. RICE

White, James F. *Introduction to Christian Worship*. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1980. 288 pp. Paperback, \$7.95.

"There is no better way to discover the heart of Christianity than by becoming more aware of what Christians do when they gather to worship" (p. 10). In these words, the author expresses a basic theme of his book—the idea that the history of Christian worship is, in a sense, the history of Christianity.

White is professor of Christian worship at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. He indicates in his preface that Christian worship has been a top priority of his for "a score of years." It is from this background of concern and experience that the volume under review was written.

It is customary for writers on Christian worship—and they are legion—to try their hand at definition. This author is no exception. After quoting and discussing definitions proposed by various Protestant and Catholic authorities on the subject, White suggests the following: "Christian worship is speaking and touching in God's name" (p. 22). He explains as follows: "The meaning of this definition is that in worship we speak to God for the people and to people for God. At the same time, our worship involves touching people in God's name, especially (but not entirely) in the sacraments" (*ibid.*).

The author also defines the term "liturgy." He sees it as more than "smells and bells." He calls liturgy "the essential outward form through which a community of faith expresses its public worship" (p. 24).

The emphasis of the book is strongly historical. The "seven Protestant liturgical traditions" are listed as Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Free Church, Quaker, Methodist, and Pentecostal.

This work presents a unique approach to the worship experience, indicated in the chapter headings: First, the reader is reminded of "The

Language of Time" (pp. 44-75). The time factor is revealed in the weekly day of worship, and in recurring yearly festivals such as Christmas and Easter. The "seasons" of the commonly accepted "Christian Calendar" cover the entire year. Based on this calendar is the "lectionary," which lists Scripture lessons appropriate to each "season." White defends this highly structured planning of worship services as a remedy for the tendency toward building the weekly services around various promotions "much like the yearly cycle of a department store" (p. 61).

Second, the author emphasizes "The Language of Space." This refers to the place of worship—to what we ordinarily describe as "Church Architecture." Two considerations are stressed, based on the author's definition of worship: (1) the church should be adapted to effective "speaking in God's name," and (2) it should be arranged for "touching in God's name." In other words, the church must be a place where we can hear the word of God and where we can experience fellowship with other worshippers. "We need both a synagogue and an upper room" (p. 80). Those who build and remodel churches today are urged to consider *utility, simplicity, flexibility, and intimacy*.

Third, the emphasis shifts to "The Spoken Word." Perhaps the most important ancestor of the ministry of the word was the Jewish synagogue with its Scripture, psalmody, preaching, and prayers. During the Christian centuries, a great variety of rites, ceremonies, prayers, and music was introduced into the Christian worship service. The author suggests some criteria for sorting out an appropriate order of worship. His first is *the centrality of Scripture*; his second, *a sense of progression*; and his third, *clarity of function*. In this reviewer's judgment, White errs in devoting only one page to preaching. He says very wisely that "the preacher speaks for God, from the scriptures, by the authority of the church, to the people" (p. 138). But he advises preaching from a lectionary. Should not the preacher have a greater degree of freedom, and should not the sermon deserve a more prominent place in the service? These are questions that the church must face in seeking to plan a balanced worship service.

Fourth, the author discusses the sacraments. He calls them "sign-acts," and he reviews their history. White firmly believes that "God acts" in the sacraments, that they are more than reminders of the body and blood of Christ.

The next chapter (chap. 6) is entitled "Initiation and Reconciliation," with particular emphasis on baptism. Conversion, "new birth," reception of the Holy Spirit, and forgiveness of sins are discussed in their relation to the beginning of the Christian life.

The discussion of the Eucharist in chap. 7 is of historical and ecclesiastical significance, but does not help much in planning a service in a contemporary free-church setting.

The final chapter, entitled "Passages," is one of the most meaningful in the book, in this reviewer's estimation. The term "passages" refers to marriage, ordination, serious sickness, death. "These and other crisis points of life are marked by times when the community of faith gathers around individuals to express its love as they pass through various stages" (p. 237). The author proceeds to discuss the wedding, the ordination service, ministry to the sick, Christian burial. These are all services that illustrate the second part of the author's definition of worship—"touching in God's name."

Colton, California 92324

NORVAL F. PEASE

Wilson, Robert R. *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980. xiii + 322 pp. \$15.95.

The study of the OT with the methods of the social sciences continues to bear fruit. Wilson has now directed these methods to a study of the prophets, clarifying not only the tradition in which the prophets stand, but also the groups that supported or opposed the various views.

The first three chapters are concerned with a review of studies leading up to the present work, an in-depth study of prophecy in modern societies, and prophecy in the ancient Near East. Chaps. 2 and 3 establish the sociological characteristics of prophecy, provide controls for the study, and give us a sociological and comparative window for looking in at prophecy in Israel and in Judah, the subjects of chaps. 4 and 5. The study of the relationship between prophecy and society in Israel has implications for the history of prophecy in Israel, which is the subject matter of chap. 6.

Wilson's goal is to see, on the basis of the anthropological material, how Israelite society was involved in every aspect of prophetic activity. Thus, when we study Israelite prophecy we must look for evidence of various relationships between the prophet and society. Social groups were involved in both creating the prophet and shaping his behavior. Prophetic speech in turn reflects the expectations of the social group which supported the prophet's activity. Together the group and the prophet were located either on the periphery of society or within the central structure of the society, and closely related to their place in society is the question of the location of their prophetic activity. A final point to consider is how peripheral prophecy sought to reform the social order and improve the status of the peripheral group while trying to see, at the same time, how central intermediaries concern themselves with maintaining the social order and regulating the pace of change.

The materials dealing with prophecy in the Torah and the deuteronomic histories are not always clear on all of these questions; nevertheless, we may see these elements in a broad survey of the literature. We are