

Sloyan's final chapter focuses on treatments of Johannine themes such as the Spirit, the law, christology, soteriology, and the meaning of "Son of Man." He reviews selected articles from periodical literature and some books he considers especially helpful for students, teachers, and preachers. He closes with a brief summary of current trends in Fourth-Gospel scholarship, most notable of which is the move away from a historical approach toward a literary (narrative) approach to John's Gospel.

The bibliography would have been more helpful had it covered a broader selection of Johannine studies and been briefly annotated. As it is, it consists essentially of a list of works cited in notes, whether or not they have much to do with Fourth Gospel research.

Given the comprehensive scope of the survey attempted, Sloyan has done a remarkable job of reducing the data to a very readable and comprehensible 98 pages. Clearly, he has been unable to encompass all aspects of Fourth Gospel research and has had to be selective in the works reviewed, but this is understandable in any field in which the writing is as prolific as it has been in Johannine studies. He has, however, provided the student with a single volume which gives an overview of some of the best in recent research in this field, and which attempts to represent the various authors fairly rather than critiquing their positions. Given the low price of this volume, it is a best buy for those who wish to survey the field without reading hundreds of books and articles.

It is to Sloyan's credit that he has made a serious attempt to faithfully represent the intentions of each author rather than his own views on the various issues. Whether or not he has been successful will ultimately be decided best by the authors themselves.

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Van Engen, Charles Edward. *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991. 224 pp. Paperback, \$14.95.

In *God's Missionary People*, Charles Van Engen makes an impressive contribution to the writings on ecclesiology/missiology. Arthur F. Glasser, who wrote the foreword, comments that this study "will precipitate much discussion within the churches about themselves and their mission to the world." Van Engen brings theory and praxis together in good balance. This author expands my vision, and like G. K. Chesterton's "agreeable man"—the one who agrees with me, supports my thesis of many years that the local church is "where it's at." One remembers longtime Chicago mayor

Richard Daley's dictum, "all politics is local." In ecclesiology all roads lead to the local church.

Van Engen divides his book into three parts, not necessarily equal: *Local Churches: God's Missionary People*; *Local Churches: A New Vision of God's Missionary People*; and *Local Churches: Becoming God's Missionary People*. Sixteen figures scattered through the book illumine the discourse.

The author has a good grasp of the literature, contemporary and past, and a good overview of the church's history. His bibliographies and lists of suggestions for further study are a rich resource.

Van Engen's first burden is that congregations come to see themselves as "God's missionary people in a local context." He approvingly quotes John R. W. Stott: "The Church cannot be understood rightly except in a perspective which is at once missionary and eschatological" (29).

In his historical overview, Van Engen describes a medieval church placed on a sacramental and mystical pedestal—sacerdotal, becoming more self-justifying than self-examining. The Reformers revived the discussion in their day describing the church in terms of its unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity, restoring the New Testament concept of the priesthood of the believers. But again the Reformed Churches lost sight of the true nature and missionary purpose of the church and the four attributes lost their potency. In the twentieth century there is great interest in ecclesiology with emphasis on the missionary character of the church. The four attributes need recasting. A new paradigm is called for; the new situation must be described in "lucid verbal photographs."

God's call to Israel and to the church always has the world in mind. The church, as the new Israel, is the interpreter of the gospel. So we may think of this community in terms of its: (1) being for the world, (2) identification with the oppressed, (3) mission, (4) proclamation witness, and (5) yearning for numerical growth.

A solid theological/biblical undergirding is absolutely necessary to a correct understanding of what the church is all about. But the movement from theology to *praxis* is most difficult. Leadership is needed to assist the people in thinking through and understanding their responsibility for ministry, creating ways to translate what the church *is* into what the church *does*.

Van Engen's word on *laos* is to the point: "with distinctions in gift, function, and ministration—but not in holiness, prestige, power, commitment, or activity. . . . The rise of a clergy-laity distinction from the 3rd century on continues in the Protestant denominations since the Reformation as one of the main sources of decline, secularization, and sinfulness of the church" (151). In this view of the church the word layman conjures up images of one who "dabbles, muddles, tries hard,—little elves in Santa's

toy shop, busy doing and making goodies that Santa (the minister) will give out" (153).

I could take issue with Engen in a few instances, but I agree with the main thrust of the argument (which I will put in my own words), "the local church is not everything; it's the only thing!"

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Weinfeld, Moshe. *Deuteronomy 1-11: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible vol. 5. New York: Doubleday, 1991. xiv + 458 pp. \$34.00.

Professor Moshe Weinfeld of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem deserves commendation for having prepared a fine commentary on Deut 1-11. As a principal expositor of Deuteronomy, Weinfeld is highly competent to assess the present state of research on this important book of the Pentateuch. The bibliography in this volume (85-122) includes no fewer than fifty-six different entries of the author's scholarly publications.

In the preface to the book, Weinfeld explains the rationale behind the division of his work into two volumes (chaps. 1-11 and 12-26). Three reasons justify the division: (1) the chapters covered in this first volume are of historical and homiletic character while the rest of Deuteronomy is legal; (2) the presence of the Decalogue deserves an in-depth treatment; (3) the introductory articles are included in this volume.

There is an innovative feature in the organization of this volume. The usual way of presenting the material in the Anchor Bible series is Text-Notes-Comment, but the author of this volume divided the Notes into "Textual Notes" and "Notes." I hope that this new feature will find place in subsequent volumes.

Regarding the origin of Deuteronomy, Weinfeld differentiates between two layers of tradition in the present form of the book. Chapters 4-30 are said to come from the Deuteronomic historiographer, while 1-3 and 31:1-8 belong to the Deuteronomistic framework. The overall genre of the book is Moses' "farewell speech," coupled with covenantal and testamentary implications. Even though, according to the author, the present editorial shape of the book dates to the seventh century B.C.E., Deuteronomy is dependent upon previous tradition which was revised after "the principles of Hezekianic-Josianic reforms" (1). It was customary in the ancient world to ascribe speeches to national leaders and heroes; this point Weinfeld reinforces by examples from extrabiblical texts. There is no doubt in the author's mind that the book discovered during Josiah's reform in Judah is that of Deuteronomy (65), so the *Sitz im Leben* of the book is firmly set in the seventh century B.C.E.