

As the book explains, English translations are provided in a fairly recent edition of the KJV since this was the only English Bible available in Braille to the blind editor. However, the use of the KJV is no real limitation since the translated phrases are brief and the Authorized version offers the kind of fairly literal translation that one would want in a concordance. Moreover, since the translations often involve construct chains or prepositional phrases, most modern, literal translations would agree with the rendering of the KJV.

Although *TCOT* places a great deal of translated Hebrew within the grasp of the user, it will serve as no substitute for a strong knowledge of Hebrew syntax. The rendering of Hebrew phrases into "Authorized" English will often require the usual discernment of the actual function of a phrase. Moreover, the fact that all lists are alphabetized according to the spelling of actually-occurring terms (not roots) demonstrates the need for at least a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet.

Baker intends the volume to be used as a companion to Abraham Even-Shoshan's *New Concordance of the Old Testament (NCOT, 1985, 1989)*. Perhaps one would do this by first consulting *TCOT* for selected Hebrew phrases which underlie one of the fifty-six topics (or sub-topics). One would then move to *NCOT* for a more detailed study of the precise phrases in the Bible. *TCOT* should be added to the shelves of all serious students of the Old Testament.

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Editor's note: Katz's work is also available in a 1992 Kiryat Sefer edition under the title, *A New Classified Concordance of the Bible*.

Klenicki, Leon, ed. *Toward a Theological Encounter: Jewish Understandings of Christianity*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1991. 162 pp. \$8.95.

For the first time since *Nostra Aetate* a group of Jewish scholars presents their reflections on Christianity in a collection of eight studies, edited by Rabbi Leon Klenicki, Director of the Department of Jewish-Catholic Relations of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In the introduction, Klenicki calls for reconciliation between the two communities and proposes ways "toward a process of healing" based upon common roots as well as complementarity. The thesis of the book is carried out through engaging contributions from Norman Solomon, Elliot N. Dorff, Walter Jacob, David Novak, Michael Wyschogrod, S. Daniel Breslauer, and David G. Dalin.

Beyond a common appeal for respect and openness, the various authors courageously address what may constitute the true core of the

debate, namely, three main theological stumblingblocks to understanding: law, covenant, and Christology, for along these questions the historical separation took place and persists to this day.

For the Christians, it is perceived, Jesus seems the alternative to the law; for the Jews, the observance of the law roots their identity. Moreover, Christology, i.e., the concept of Jesus' messianic divinity and of his central role in salvation history, is altogether incompatible with the Jewish theology of monotheism and foreign to the Jewish idea of salvation through Israel. The two positions seem, indeed, so mutually exclusive that some have suspected symptoms of polarization (113), which would mean that only a theological rapprochement may, paradoxically, help to bring both communities back to their original identity.

In fact, several of the authors boldly orient their reflection in that direction. The presence of many positive statements about the law in the New Testament, and the fact that the Old Testament clearly attests what can be identified as the Gospel of Grace, indicate that the Old Testament law does not necessarily exclude the New Testament grace. A certain reading of the Old and New Testaments may support this bold analysis. The question remains, however, whether Christians and Jews are ready to engage in this direction. This debate is significant, for it clearly shows that any genuine movement towards Jewish-Christian reconciliation cannot elude this problem and will have, sooner or later, to address the delicate issue of the connection between law and gospel.

The solution of the Noachic covenant looks convenient at the outset, for it seems to allow both views of law. Yet, this perspective is not without difficulty. The Bible is virtually silent about the laws contained in the Noachic covenant. Are these laws different from those stipulated in the Sinai covenant? If so, we have no criterion whatsoever to determine which should apply to the Gentiles and which are restricted to the Jews. Some scholars recognize the reality of this problem and struggle with it (20-21, 55, 99). Although the Bible knows a multiplicity of covenants (Sinaitic, Davidic, etc.), it never implies a different set of laws in each case. In fact, in the only passage where the concept of a "new covenant" is explicitly referred to, the same law is implied (Jer 31:33). Also, it is to be noted that the Noachic covenant, as delineated in Gen 9, is not exclusively aimed at the Gentiles, but is universal and includes the Jewish descendants as well. Put in perspective, this covenant actually precedes and is not parallel to the Sinaitic covenant. The biblical ideal is that all nations will come to Israel, worship the same God, and ultimately become Israel (Mic 4:1-5). The covenant with Noah is thus understood only as a transitory stage.

The issue of Jesus is even more complex. The fact that some Jews are willing to recognize the role of Jesus in the divine plan of redemption marks, indeed, a significant step towards Christianity. Jesus is no more considered as an usurper, but instead, as a necessary instrument to bring the Gentiles to the God of Israel. This interpretation, however, will not be accepted by Christians who see in Jesus the incarnation of God for the

salvation of all mankind, Jews included. Jews consider the idea of incarnation as blasphemous, for no man can claim the status of divinity. An invitation to Jews to be more sensitive to the physical dimension of God (114) will not settle the matter. The solution may well have to be pursued on a semantic level. If the humanness of God is for the Jews a more acceptable idea than the divinity of man, the idea of God's being Messiah could be more acceptable than the idea of the Messiah's being God. Perhaps worded in those terms the dialogue between Jews and Christians will break new grounds on the sensitive question of Christology.

After twenty centuries of disputations shadowed by the holocaust, Jews and Christians attempt, at last, to look at each other with respect; yet the abuses of the past have affected the present dialogue. So far, the exchanges have been essentially confined to a humanist concern; theological issues have been cautiously avoided. The present work dares to go further and marks a new step in the Jewish-Christian debate. The new ideal is neither to forcefully convince the other nor to inform oneself from a distance, but to humbly seek theological truth in a climate of dialogue. This enterprise is not easy; it is an open adventure. Encounter still lies in the future; the title of the book happily reflects this difficult dynamic: *Toward a Theological Encounter*.

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Knight, George R. *My Gripe with God: A Study in Divine Justice and the Problem of the Cross*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1990. 160 pp. Hardcover, \$14.95.

Knight, George R. *The Pharisee's Guide to Perfect Holiness: A Study of Sin and Salvation*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1992. 256 pp. Hardcover, \$14.95.

In spite of the fact that different publishers were involved, these two books were intended as a matched pair. *My Gripe with God* wrestles with the basic issues of the atonement and the cross, while *The Pharisee's Guide* is concerned with the role of behavior and character development in salvation.

Since Knight's reputation as a popular writer is secure with Seventh-day Adventist audiences, these books do not pander to those who care only for stories and action. Although written in reasonably simple style, they plunge freely into the depths of many of the theological issues being discussed. Although Knight generally does not attempt to break new scholarly ground, these books have the kind of literary vigor that stimulates the reader to much personal discovery and insight. Both books contain an interesting blend of biblical study with philosophical and theological questioning.