

problems in the book. In fact, he raises far more problems and questions than he tries to resolve, and he seems quite comfortable leaving the solutions to the student. This is evident, for example, in his chapter on the structure of Revelation. While he proposes a structure, he admits that it is only one among many proposals, and concludes that "the best outline is the one you have made for yourself" (71). The student who is looking for airtight answers to the problems of the Book of Revelation will not find them in this volume. Michael expects the reader to lay aside well-worn presuppositions and to use the tools and suggestions he has given to craft his or her own new solutions through an openness to the text, especially from the inside.

The book is quite readable, with one exception. The Greek of each cited word or phrase is given in both Greek font and transliterated form. This complicates the reading unnecessarily. The editor claims in the preface that the series is designed for the student or pastor who has had at least one year of Greek. For these, Greek should be sufficient and providing transliteration is redundant. Those who do not read Greek would find the transliteration meaningless as well.

I counted only ten editorial errors in the book. Most are of the kind that would not unduly distract the average reader. On p. 81, however, the reader needs to know that the cross-reference to "see p. 000" should probably read "see pp. 120-123." Michael appears to contradict himself on pp. 106 and 113 in regard to how far the interpreter is wise to go beyond what is made explicit in the text by the "reliable narrator" (cf. 100, 114, 123). On p. 111, Michael seems to imply that Brenton's edition of the LXX contains both Theodotion's and the LXX version of Daniel, but this is not so. While Rahlfs' edition does contain both texts, Brenton and *The NIV Triglot Old Testament* (Zondervan, 1981) contain only Theodotion's version of Daniel.

The author provides a "Select Bibliography." The selection could be debated, but on the whole is representative. Michael has limited himself to twenty works. I would have added a few others, like the commentaries by Collins (NT Message, Michael Glazier, 1979), Fiorenza (Proclamation, Fortress, 1991), and Sweet (Westminster Pelican/SCM, 1990). While I would take issue with Michael on several points of interpretation, his interpretation of 1:19 seems reasonable, particularly in light of the concept of the "reliable narrator." In this he makes a real contribution. Certainly he opens the mind of the reader to some nontraditional concepts in interpreting Revelation, and the student will be rewarded for the time spent with this helpful volume.

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Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to Matthew*. Pillar NT Commentary Series. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992; Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1992. xvii + 781 pp. \$39.99.

When examining a commentary one may rightly ask whether the work is essentially derivative or whether it breaks new ground. This one by Leon

Morris does not break new ground. Its value lies in its collation of the views of others. Previously Morris' home base has been the Pauline letters, with a major foray into the Gospel of John. For this recent effort Morris has not become a Matthean scholar. Instead, he wrote with a number of published works in his lap—largely by English-speaking scholars, generally of a conservative stripe: William Barclay, P. Bonnard, D. Carson, D. Hill, R. T. France, R. H. Gundry, R. H. Mounce, D. Patte. Older commentators who accompanied Morris on the trip through Matthew include Calvin, Lenski, McNeile, and Plummer. German language scholarship is limited to Zahn and Strack-Billerbeck. Bultmann and Billy Graham are each named once; G. Campbell Morgan, twelve times. An expository air pervades the work, yet the most frequent references are to the standard Greek sources. The uninformed reader is not warned of the difficulties in drawing on the Mishnah and other later Jewish sources.

Morris writes as a believer in the essential historicity of the NT gospels. He is far more sanguine about the possibilities of harmonizing the NT gospels than many of his contemporaries. Genuine difficulties for the modern reader are minimized. The commentary exudes an air of sensible courtesy. Scholars with whom Morris disagrees usually remain anonymous as "some."

At the onset the author declares his awareness of current scholarship but sees little value in pursuing the antecedents of the book of Matthew or even its audience. He deliberately sets out to "take this Gospel as a work in its own right and to see what it says to us as it is" (xi). He keeps his promise. The introductory matters, including distinctive Matthean characteristics, are handled in a mere 18 pages. For the next 750 pages Morris proceeds on a verse-by-verse basis, giving only brief overviews to the eight major sections into which he divides the book. Redaction criticism and the Synoptic question are essentially omitted from the body of the commentary. More surprisingly, Morris shows little interest in the structure and arrangement of the Gospel.

A strength of the book is its accessibility to the nonprofessional reader unfamiliar with technical linguistic terms. Morris has the gift of clarity. Even though he frequently draws attention to Greek grammar and syntax, esoteric terminology in the body of the commentary is kept to a minimum. The footnotes provide the more technical information and are frequently helpful. The author has tried his own hand at translating the Greek text.

Who should buy this commentary? Conservative church and college libraries as well as pastors who might need convincing that a knowledge of Greek language and syntax should still be part of the preacher's skills. For the serious scholar of Matthew the emerging two-volume commentary on Matthew by Donald Hagner in the Word Biblical Commentary promises more substance.