

of the beloved disciple is that he is a person who heard and followed Jesus, although he was not one of the Twelve. That there clearly were such persons is obvious from the rest of the NT (Acts 1:21-26)" (370). In the final analysis, Morris has the better of this argument.

Morris spent more than ten years working on this commentary. While maintaining the same positions taken in his original work, Morris in this new revised edition considered the most important secondary sources and recent studies that have been published over the last two decades. The commentary is now using the New International Version. The space devoted to extensive quotation from the works of other commentators and scholars is counterbalanced in some measure by the elaborate use of abbreviations.

If such points of disagreement are brought sharply into focus by Morris's project of tracing the various issues in the Gospel of John, that is precisely a measure of the importance of the undertaking. Morris's work is a model of clarity and insight. A major strength of the commentary lies in its textual footnotes: they are the bridge in each section between an original translation and a discursive interpretation. They provide access to the translation decisions Morris has made, even for those who do not know Greek. This book is a fine example of a thorough scholarly commitment not to allow the weight of one's conclusions to exceed what the evidence bears. Morris's commentary deserves a careful reading. It will be useful not only for pastors and teachers, but also for students and laypersons.

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O'Leary, Stephen D. *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*. New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994. ix + 314 pp. \$39.95.

In *Arguing the Apocalypse*, Stephen D. O'Leary has attempted to provide an understanding of apocalyptic eschatology from the perspective of "rhetoric," broadly defined as embracing both "the texts of persuasive discourse" and "the method of investigating such texts" (4). After introducing the volume in chapter 1, "Toward a Rhetorical Theory of Apocalypse" (3-19), the author sets forth the basic rhetorical (and philosophical?) foundations for his study in chapters 2, "Time, Evil, Authority" (20-60), and 3, "From Eschatology to Apocalypse: Dramatic and Argumentative Form in the Discourse of Prophetic Interpretation" (61-92).

There are three basic *topoi* involved in eschatological-apocalyptic discourse, O'Leary contends: namely, the three items mentioned in the title of chapter 2. And one can certainly agree with him that central to apocalyptic discourse is a *time* frame emphasizing the end of earth's history as the solution to the problem of an earth presently filled with *evil* that will be overcome only by divine intervention, and that the rhetor, in order to get a hearing, must have *authority* for making the particular apocalyptic proclamation and forecast. In the Christian tradition, the Bible is used as authority; or rather, it is the *rhetor's interpretation* of Scripture that stands forth as authority, often enhanced by his/her charisma or other persuasive characteristics (sometimes the charisma takes the primary role in the rhetor's persuasiveness). In dealing with the three *topoi* O'Leary has drawn on insights from Aristotle, Max Weber, and more recently Kenneth Burke, David

Carr, Walter Fisher, Peter Marston, et al. Even though O'Leary's own discussion is quite even-handed, one can wonder just how relevant (or irrelevant) are some of the background concepts upon which he has drawn.

The third chapter discusses apocalyptic from the standpoint of Aristotelian poetry and drama as being either "tragic" or "comic" (in the Aristotelian sense, not as commonly defined today), and apparently as filtered through Burke's concept of the "tragic" and "comic." The fact that the basic NT apocalypse (the book of Revelation) has ultimate doom for the wicked but eternal blessings and joy for the righteous puts it into a "tragic-comic" frame. From a purely dramatic standpoint O'Leary's assessment is more true, of course, than the negative one which too frequently pervades the thinking of the commentators and exegetes; but is there not an even greater positive emphasis in Revelation when the book's epistolary form and hortatory nature are taken into account?

The next three chapters deal with two test cases, Millerism in the first half of the nineteenth century and Hal Lindsey in the last several decades of the present century. For Millerism, O'Leary discusses in separate chapters (4 and 5) "Millerism as a Rhetorical Movement" (93-110) and "Millerite Argumentation" (111-133). Chapter 6 then treats "Hal Lindsey and the Apocalypse of the Twentieth Century" (134-171), dealing in large part with Lindsey's best-seller *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Chapter 7, "Apocalyptic Politics in the New Christian Right" (172-193), broadens the recent religious horizon to include Pat Robertson and even Ronald Reagan, but also has a section devoted to Hal Lindsey's publication *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (174-179). Finally, chapter 8, "The Apocalypse of Apocalypses" (194-224), summarizes the discussions O'Leary has set forth in chaps. 2 through 7, draws some conclusions as to similarities between Millerism and Lindsey's rhetorical approach, and suggests implications of the author's study.

O'Leary's volume is a challenging publication, containing a number of valuable insights. It sets forth an approach that merits attention. There are drawbacks, however, in the fact that it views eschatology and apocalyptic from the rather limited perspective of forensic rhetoric. Although the author has not totally ignored other perspectives, such as historical settings, one can wonder whether a more complete and accurate picture might emerge if greater attention were given to such matters as the broad history of apocalyptic thought and discourse, sociological and anthropological foundations and correlations, and especially theological underpinnings and rationales.

Several of the author's factual lapses, oversights, or omissions may be noted here: First of all, Millerism emerged within the context of a much broader interest in prophetic fulfillment and time-setting than O'Leary has taken into account. By Miller's time there was already a widespread movement which emphasized the year-day principle of prophetic interpretation (i.e., a prophetic day equals a literal year). This mushroomed on both sides of the Atlantic during the last decades of the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth centuries. Second, question may be raised regarding O'Leary's contention that Miller's *specific* time-setting discredited the Millerite approach all the way down to our day and that therefore Lindsey took pains to avoid giving a specific date for the rapture. Time-setting by no means ended in 1844. Moreover, one wonders how much Lindsey and other Dispensationalists of our day know about Miller and Millerism. It is much more

likely that the present caution in time-setting for Christ's return (and that caution is by no means universal) is related to Christ's statement that no one knows the day or hour (Matt. 24:36). And third, dispensationalism/pretribulationism did not emerge as a reaction against Millerism. It was already in the making in Ireland and England before Miller began his public preaching.

This volume, which in spite of its limited perspective and historical lapses is in many respects excellent (and certainly worth reading), concludes with a short "Epilogue" entitled "Waco and Beyond" (225-228), an extensive section of endnotes (229-282), a fairly comprehensive "Bibliography" (283-303), and a useful "Index" (305-314). In view of the amount of attention given in the volume to Millerism and to Hal Lindsey, the bibliography could well have included further titles dealing with pertinent historical backgrounds and settings. Surprising is the fact, for instance, that the basic works on the history of Dispensationalism by Clarence Bass and Norman Krause are omitted.

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Peterson, Eugene H. *Take and Read. Spiritual Reading: An Annotated List*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996. xiii + 122 pp. Paper, \$10.00.

Eugene H. Peterson is professor of spiritual theology at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia. He was founding pastor of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church in Bel Air, Maryland, where he ministered for twenty-nine years. He is a writer and a poet whose works portray a prayerful man. Among his many books are *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*; *Five Smooth Stones of Pastoral Work*; *Working the Angles*; and *The Contemplative Pastor*. In his volumes written specifically for pastors, Peterson calls pastors to a deepened spirituality that will strengthen their own ministry.

*Take and Read* is intended both to encourage the activity of spiritual reading, and to introduce some of the author's "friends." In this age when one can choose from many Christian book sources and find a plethora of "good" reading material, it is easy to become engaged in the never-ending search for something new. Peterson offers his list of old "friends" and invites his readers to read devotionally and develop their own lists of "friends" for their spiritual journey. He describes the books that he has returned to over and over again because of their depth and helpfulness in his own seeking God.

*Take and Read* is exactly as it is subtitled: *Spiritual Reading: An Annotated List*. "Lists like this have a way of expanding unconsciously," says the author, "so I have imposed a limit on myself: twenty categories of not less than ten, and not more than sixteen books in each. . . . What they all have in common is that they have been used by our Lord the Spirit to deepen and nourish my life in Christ, sometimes in ways they almost certainly did not intend" (xii-xiii). Peterson's categories include Basics, Classics, Worship/Liturgy, Spiritual Formation, Poets, and History. He includes a broad spectrum of authors—from Augustine and C. S. Lewis to William Faulkner and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Since for him reading "eventually turns into writing," his concluding category describes some of his own works. Each category is introduced with personal stories that portray the significance of the particular category in Peterson's spiritual growth. The volume