

use of *samekh* for final *mem* on pp. 291-299 was a bit comic. Also, some papers rely on rather old references when more recent studies on an issue are available and easily accessible. Such problems are common among Festschriften, however.

More important is the due honor paid to a most prolific and creative scholar, Dr. William Shea. This Festschrift only begins to attest to his legacy of training Christian scholars.

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Mounce, Robert H. *The Book of Revelation*, rev. ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xxxvi + 439 pp. \$44.00.

Since the first edition of this commentary has already been critiqued in the past, this review will mainly concentrate on a comparison between the two editions. The new edition not only contains more pages as compared to the former edition, it is also larger in physical size. Additionally, the foreword, the preface, the list of abbreviations, and the bibliography are counted with Roman numbers instead of Arabic numbers. Both the former and the present edition have indices. Unfortunately, however, the revised edition has omitted the index of extrabiblical literature.

The author uses many more footnotes than he did previously. The footnotes are more extensive, but rarely cover half a page (190, 262, 367). The increase in the number of footnotes is due to the fact that in the revised edition the scholarly discussion is carried on in the footnotes. Oftentimes, names and references have been eliminated from the text and moved to the footnotes (168). Furthermore, including new literature published on the Apocalypse automatically expands footnotes.

The "Select Bibliography" contains 90 new entries. While the first edition listed books and articles up to 1976, the revised edition covers material up to 1995. Unfortunately, Lohse's *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* has been entered twice (xxiii, xxxiv).

The Bible translation used in this edition is the NIV instead of the ASV (1901). One of the advantages of this change is that hymns, for example, are indented in the NIV and are therefore easily discernable. G. D. Kilpatrick's critical apparatus has been replaced with that of the twenty-seventh edition of Nestle-Aland, and abbreviations now correspond with the 1994 JBL guidelines.

Within the "Introduction" a brief chapter on the language of Revelation has been added. When discussing apocalyptic literature, the book of Daniel is referred to only in passing. Mounce has slightly changed the outline of Rev 17:1-19:5. A thorough investigation of Daniel, however, could lead to a different perception of apocalyptic literature and its origins in the scholarly world.

The section "Text, Exposition, and Notes" differs from the former edition which—except for the headers and the subheadings—were numbered to correspond with the chapters of Revelation. The revised edition consistently follows his basic outline and the major sections the author suggests for the Apocalypse (e.g. 170-171). Therefore, the chapters dealing with text, exposition, and notes have been cut down from twenty-two to eleven.

Taking a look at the exposition itself, one finds that paragraphs have often been

added at the beginning of a new subsection in order to introduce the reader to the next part of the book of Revelation (e.g., 128-129, 200-201, 345). Some that previously existed have been expanded (243-244, 291, 306-307, 398). These passages often provide information on the structure of the respective pericopes (324). Again, at the end of each unit, one or more new paragraphs may be found, which form a transition to the next part (127, 329-330, 401). These conclusions sometimes contain a pastoral touch with an indirect challenge to make a wise decision (e.g., 411). In other words, there is some application of the text, which is in line with the overall goal of the newer volumes of the New International Commentary on the New Testament. This application is supposed to take into account recent rhetorical and sociological studies and be concerned with the theology of the book, as well as the application of the text. Perhaps in order to help the reader not to be overwhelmed with horror when studying the Apocalypse, here and there some sentences are added—oftentimes in the conclusion of a passage—that comfort the student of Revelation and help him or her to keep in perspective and in balance the overall message of the book of Revelation (187, 269, 345). These minor applications even enhance the value of Mounce's thorough exegesis of the text of Revelation.

Although most of the text of the previous edition has been preserved, Mounce has added paragraphs and sentences, has altered wording (136, 157), and has occasionally rearranged his text by transposing sections to serve different functions than in the previous edition (232, 331). He has moved a comment applying to one verse in the former edition to refer to the next two verses in the new edition (137). Sometimes he joins verses while commenting on them (405) that he had formerly treated separately. He also omitted material (382). In the first edition (303) one finds an interesting statement that attributes to John the "faithful transmission of what he actually saw in authentic vision (1:1)." Although this statement has been excluded in the revised edition, this does not necessarily mean that the author now holds a different position. In the revised edition (410) he confirms that in the case of Revelation "apocalyptic imagery is pressed into the service of prophecy." Mounce has excluded sexist language by replacing such phrases as "rejected by man" (200, 1st ed.) to "rejected by the unbeliever" (193, 2d ed.) and "man" (209, 1st ed.) to "human race" (204, 2d ed.).

In some cases, Mounce has now stated his opinion in a less qualified way (317, 370) than he had done previously. In other cases, he did vice versa (190). At times, he has added more emphasis on his position (e.g. the rejection of the view that the scrolls of Rev 5 and 10 are identical, 202-203). At other times, he has modified previously held positions (e.g., commenting on the harvest in Rev 14 [279]).

A dramatic and noteworthy change has taken place with regard to the question of recapitulation. Mounce's position remains premillennial (xv), yet he now allows for a moderate use of recapitulation: "Although I still reject the idea of strict recapitulation, I can see that the numbered visions do in fact cover the same period of time in what is best described as a spiral of intensity" (xv). He, correctly, does not allow for individual plagues in one septet to correspond exactly with those in another septet, while he maintains an overall principle of recapitulation (168-169, 292). This is definite progress over the first edition.

There will always be points of disagreement between an author and a reviewer.

Mounce, for instance, discusses preterism, historicism, futurism, and idealism, and rightly perceives strengths and weaknesses in each approach. His position is "that the predictions of John find their final and complete fulfilment in the last days of history" (30). He seems to maintain a fulfilment in the first century and another one toward the end of human history. I could not follow his line of reasoning in this respect. Another example may suffice. The author makes a distinction between form and content with regard to the millennium which, when accepted, allows for more or less radical reinterpretation of the biblical text (370).

Nevertheless, Mounce must be praised for treating the biblical text thoroughly. He avoids the pitfalls of explaining too little versus commenting on the biblical text too extensively, which may cause the reader to shy away from the commentary. In some cases, the exposition opens a window for applying the text to the present situation (115). As compared to the first edition, there are greater clarity, better transitions and summaries, and a better flow in the explanation of the unfolding images of the book of Revelation. The references to the OT and NT as well as the extracanonical literature are commendable. The volume has a helpful, updated, and quite extensive bibliography. The first edition was already a standard within the nondispensationalist, evangelical tradition. The second edition even surpasses it and has all the ingredients to remain this standard.

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EKKEHARDT MÜLLER

Nash, Robert, Jr., and Loren Mead. *An 8-Track Church in a CD World: The Modern Church in a Postmodern World*. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 1997. 132 pp. \$16.95.

Robert N. Nash, Jr., is assistant professor of religion at Shorter College in Rome, Georgia, and holds a Ph.D. degree in American Christianity from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a coauthor of *The Bible in English Translation: An Essential Guide* and is a contributor to an edited volume on cross-cultural ministry entitled *Mary Nations Under God: Ministering to Cultural Groups in America*.

Nash cogently argues that American Christian churches must embrace reform if they are to remain relevant in a postmodern culture and meet the spiritual challenges of American life in the twenty-first century. In order to make the challenges facing the American church clear, he discusses the three periods of human history and shows how the church has been influenced by the ideas about God that emerged in each of these three successive periods. These periods are the premodern, the modern, and the postmodern. Nash identifies the three primary functions of the church as (1) offering God's grace and love to its culture, (2) enhancing the spiritual lives of its members, and (3) providing a place of community that mirrors God's kingdom. These three primary functions of the Church remain irrespective of the period of human history one is considering.

Nash cites the fact that Christianity is no longer the main religion in America, but has in fact become just one of several religions contending for the loyalty of Americans. Therefore he challenges the church to become knowledgeable about other religions instead of participating in internal fighting. He also challenges both