

dealing with sacred objects (lamp, bread) and then the sacred name of God, which is misused by the blasphemer.

These details by no means negate my hearty recommendation for Gorman's stimulating and refreshing commentary.

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Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. 984 pp. Hardcover, \$50.00.

With the recent publication of several exhaustive commentaries on Luke, one might be tempted not to make another investment of time and money for yet another lengthy commentary on the same book. Such a decision, in this case, would be a mistake, for unlike most Lukan commentaries, Green's commentary approaches Luke from a literary perspective while "showing very little concern for traditional form-critical and redaction-critical issues" (viii). It is this literary perspective that provides many fresh insights into Luke, thus making Green's commentary well worth the investment for his primary audience of "the working pastor and teacher" (viii). This commentary replaces Norval Geldenhuys's commentary in the original NICNT series.

After an impressive sixty-seven-page bibliography, Green (currently professor of NT Interpretation at Asbury Theological Seminary) identifies, explains and defends his methodology of narrative criticism in the introduction. The specific genre of Luke is identified as ancient historiography as opposed to "Greco-Roman biography" (5). On this basis, the reader should expect "a narrative in which recent history is given prominence, issues of both causation and teleology are accorded privilege, and determined research is placed in the service of persuasive and engaging instruction" (6). Green's literary perspective leads him to see a narrative unity in Luke-Acts with the single purpose of bringing "salvation in all of its fullness to all people" (9). As one might expect, this same literary perspective leads Green to give little consideration to authorship issues, and no consideration to either Lukan sources or the date of composition. The relatively brief nature of the basic introductory issues seems to demonstrate that Green's concern is clearly to deal with the text as we have it today, and not to get sidetracked in theological speculation which is deemed irrelevant.

The commentary divides Luke into eight major sections. Each begins with an extensive discussion of the linking elements between the previous section and the one under discussion. Spread throughout the commentary are a total of twelve interpretive asides (xi) that deal more specifically and extensively with topics such as: "The Literary Structure of the Birth Narrative"; "The Structure and Role of Mary's Song"; "The Structure and Role of Zechariah's Song"; and "The Birth of Jesus in Literary and Social Perspective," to mention a few. Desiring to use a text "that is readily available and widely used in churches" (x), Green's commentary follows the translation of the NRSV.

The real strength of Green's commentary lies in his ability to constantly relate the individual parts of specific events in Luke to the larger overall literary picture of the entire Gospel. He does this with impressive skill throughout his discussion of the ministry of Jesus.

Even in discussing the crucifixion, Green points out the numerous motifs that connect it with events going all the way back to the birth narrative. Also helpful are Green's lucid explanations of various cultural customs and issues (Græco-Roman marriage customs, family relationships, and first-century table etiquette) which open up further insights into the meaning of the text. Combining these strengths with a very readable explanation of the text (discussions of all Greek words and concepts are found only in the footnotes) and thirty-eight pages of scriptural index (including every reference in Luke), along with a comprehensive subject index, make the material both readable and accessible for pastor or teacher.

If there is any shortfall to Green's commentary, it is only those deficiencies which are inherent in the nature of literary criticism itself. Historical difficulties, such as those surrounding the census in Luke 2:1-7, are seen as insignificant to the literary meaning of the text and are therefore not dealt with. Along this same line, problematic issues between Luke and the other Synoptic Gospels are also not mentioned.

Green's commentary would make an important addition to the library of any pastor or teacher who is interested in preaching or teaching from Luke's Gospel. His work is well written, thorough, and coherent. However, due to some of the weaknesses associated with literary criticism, one should also supplement Green's commentary with a more detailed work such as Bock's two-volume work (BECNT, 1994, 1996) which deals with both the historical and synoptic issues not covered by Green.

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Gulley, Norman. *Christ Is Coming! A Christ-centered Approach to Last-Day Events*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1998. 585 pp. Paperback, \$30.00.

Norman Gulley is a much-loved professor of systematic theology at Southern Adventist University. This book is a polished version of class handouts for his popular "Last-Day Events" class, honed over several decades, and this constitutes both the strength and the weakness of the book. Those who know Gulley will hear his quiet English voice in every line, and his vibrant love of Christ buoys the book. Indeed, as the book's subtitle proclaims, the revelation of Jesus Christ is, for Gulley, the heart of eschatology, not the coming tribulation or the fate of Israel or the correct interpretation of seals, trumpets, and bowl plagues.

*Christ Is Coming!* is meant primarily for use as a college or seminary textbook, but other intelligent readers will also find the book interesting, and even theologians will find useful ideas. One strength of the book is that the chapters are self-contained. One may assign whatever seems appropriate in any order. Another strength is that the book provides discussion-provoking readings for many lectures a teacher might give (or might not have time to give), and the documentation points students to useful primary sources. Gulley is well-grounded in the major theologians and cites them regularly, and his citations are up to date. Because the chapters have been tested on students for years, they answer questions students are likely to raise. I, for one, enjoy the engaged, intimate, personal voice Gulley uses in his writing, and the book is fragrant with hope, faith, and confidence in Christ's imminent return.

Many teachers would not want to use this book as a text because while strongly biblical, it is also strongly Adventist and historicist (though Gulley's interpretations are sometimes his own). Dispensationalism is disproved, and belief