

"fully solves the difficult crux" (293), O'Brien favors the understanding that "God's action in taking and receiving the Levites as a gift, then giving them back to his people in order to minister to the congregation [Ps 68:18] parallels the ascended Christ's leading captives and giving gifts in Ephesians 4" (293).

One must look hard to find much fault with this work. Professors will find it to be an excellent textbook for graduate students in Ephesians. The strong application of Greek grammar and syntax makes it ideal for students desiring to grow in their understanding of Greek exegesis. Pastors will find the book helpful for their personal study of Ephesians and for sermon preparation. The clarity of presentation and strength of scholarship will make O'Brien's commentary one of the premier works of its kind on Ephesians for years to come.

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Schreiner, Thomas R. *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. xxi + 919 pp. Hardcover, \$39.99.

Thomas R. Schreiner is currently a professor of NT interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. This commentary is the third book authored by him in the area of Pauline studies. It is also the third installment in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series, joining the previous commentaries on Luke (2 vols.) and Philippians (1 vol.).

The commentary is a technical work of reasonable competence that my students have found uplifting, coherent, and easy to read. This strength is somewhat diminished, however, by the format of the commentary. Schreiner abandons "the verse-by-verse approach in favor of an exposition that focuses on the paragraph as the main unit of thought" (ix). The drawback of this format is that it becomes time-consuming to locate comments on a particular verse. One is forced to work through the references in the index or to skim through the pages to locate where the appropriate comments are. With respect to the latter procedure, even after finding the right pages, it is not always easy to know where one is in the text. For example, in commenting on 1:5 there does not seem to be a compelling reason why the comments on *en pasin tois ethnaisin* precede those on *eis hupakoēn pisteōs* when the passage reads *eis hupakoēn pisteōs en pasin tois ethnaisin*. Nor is it clear why 6:19 should be discussed before vv. 17 and 18.

Schreiner's commentary is exegetical, as the series title declares, but it is precisely as an exegetical commentary that it fails. For example, Schreiner presents a number of misleading or incorrect translations. The rendering of *ex anastaseōs nekrōn* in 1:4 as a temporal phrase, "at the resurrection from the dead" (31), cannot be substantiated on grammatical or syntactical grounds. He fails to give justification for this reading on p. 44. A more natural, causal rendering, "by virtue of," would not undermine his essential argument. It is equally difficult to understand why he translates *episteusen de Abraam tō theō* as "Abraham believed God" in 4:3 and *pisteuonti de epi ton dikaiounta ton asebē* as "believes on him" in 4:5 (213). The context seems to demand that we regard the two passages as being parallel to each other (see C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959], 69, for problems

associated with *pisteuô* and *pistis*). Nor is the linguistic ground for translating the passive *dikaiôthê* as "was righteous" in 4:2 clear (212).

Perhaps Schreiner's translation of 7:17 (372) speaks for all the translations in the commentary: "Now I am no longer doing evil, but sin that dwells in me [is doing it]." This is an example of how Schreiner reads into the text words that are not there. It is clumsy to insert "evil" into the passage when the use of the actual term is delayed until v. 19. This is intentional on the part of Paul. In v. 17 Paul wants to use *auto* to refer back to the neuter clause "what I do not want." In essence the passage is saying, "It is no longer I who doing what I do not want." Then by introducing the term "evil" in v. 19, Paul wants the reader to know unequivocally that evil is that which he does not want to do. The construction of the passage makes it unmistakable that for Paul there is no hidden inward pleasure for or temptation toward evil. This becomes blurred in Schreiner's translation. Also, the translation of v. 21 as "I find with reference to the law, in me the one wanting to do good, that evil is present in me" is awkward English, as well as a poor rendering of the Greek.

A related matter is that of the translation Schreiner offers at the beginning of each section. At times it is virtually unrelated to the discussion in the main body of the commentary. For example, he uses the term "slave" to translate *donlos* in 1:1. Yet in his comments he repeatedly uses the term "servant" to explain the verse (32).

Schreiner's weak exegesis affects even the macrolevel of discussion. For example, he insists that hope rather than reconciliation is central to 5:1-11. He mentions three reasons for this position. First, the highlight of the paragraph is hope rather than peace or reconciliation. Second, reconciliation serves to build hope in v. 10. And third, hope is the overarching theme of chapters 6-8. These reasons, however, are all questionable. Contrary to his first point, the word "hope" occurs only twice in 5:2, 4, but the terminologies of peace and reconciliation occur four times in vv. 1, 10, and 11. Schreiner's second point is somewhat strange: that upon which something is built is foundational. Finally, the overarching theme of chapters 6-8 is the death and resurrection of Christ. One might argue that since we look forward to reconciliation and renewal based on Christ's work, hope is a more basic experience. Such an inference needs to explain why the word "hope" appears only two times in chapters 6-8 (8:20, 24). By contrast, the terminologies of death and resurrection occur throughout the section. Schreiner should explain why the subjective human experience is more central to the discussion than the objective work of Christ.

Partly because of these problems with the exegesis and translation in Schreiner's commentary, it is difficult to place it among other commentaries on Romans. From an evangelical standpoint, Stott's practically oriented discussions are engaging and often personal, but Schreiner's commentary is neither engaging nor personal. If one compares Schreiner's commentary with the exegetical *tours de force* of Cranfield or Dunn, it is often superficial and sometimes sloppy. If one compares it with the profound works of Barth and Nigren, its insights are often shallow and predictable.

The strength of Schreiner's commentary is that it neatly summarizes the prevailing views on a given passage or issue. This is a great help to students, who come to the task of exegesis without knowledge of previous discussions. They can quickly become reasonably well informed on almost any issue on the exegesis of

Romans. Also helpful is the way Schreiner lists commentators in a chronological manner, with years of publication in parentheses.

Schreiner's commentary is a good textbook in that he helps set the agenda for the discussion of a passage. But it is easy to get bogged down in a passage, making it difficult to get through Romans in a quarter or semester. By limiting discussion more or less within the parameters of the present debate, Schreiner gives an exegesis course a much-needed focus. Thus the dearth of personal insight and creative exegesis is more than compensated by the way the commentary provides a road map for class discussion. At the same time, its value may be limited for laypeople who are trying to gain insights into particular passages. They could get lost in the maze of scholarly debate and the discursive manner in which the discussion proceeds. For a serious scholar, the commentary offers little more than a rehash of the same old material.

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Zurcher, J. R. *Touched With Our Feelings: A Historical Survey of Adventist Thought on the Human Nature of Christ*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1999. 308 pp. Paperback, \$15.99.

In Seventh-day Adventism few subjects can generate as much heat as a discussion on the human nature of Christ. For decades Adventists have been debating whether Christ's human nature was identical to that of Adam before the Fall (prelapsarianism), or that of Adam after the Fall (postlapsarianism), or even somewhere in between. Although many theological factors come into play in this debate, at stake is the question of whether Christ can truly be a moral example to humanity. The latest book in this debate is veteran theologian Jean R. Zurcher's work translated from French, *Touched With Our Feelings*. In his historical survey of Adventist thought on the human nature of Christ, Zurcher attempts to resolve the issues by demonstrating how Adventist thought has evolved over the last century and a half from a strictly postlapsarian position to the current views.

The sixteen chapters in this book are grouped into five parts. The first briefly surveys the theological discussion on the divine nature of Christ and rightly ascertains that many early Seventh-day Adventist theologians, with the exception of Ellen G. White, had a semi-Arian view of Christ's divinity. In part two, Zurcher examines the Christology of Adventist pioneers such as Ellen G. White, Ellet J. Waggoner, Alonzo T. Jones, and William W. Prescott. The third studies extracts from official church publications on the human nature of Christ from 1895 to 1952. The fourth is the longest and deals with the controversy brought about by the book *Questions on Doctrine* (1957), reactions to its publication, and current theological positions. The final section is Zurcher's plea for a return to an authentic postlapsarian Christology as taught before the 1950s.

Apart from some awkward translations of French expressions, Zurcher's book is a good piece of historical research and endeavors to present an accurate picture of the development of Adventist thought on the human nature of Christ. His survey of numerous publications presents an astonishing picture to the contemporary reader, who may not be familiar with earlier theological writings on the nature of Christ. His comparisons between different editions of official documents and books, such as *Bible*