

not make any conclusion definitive (cf. 77-80), but is ambiguous.

Despite this quibbling, Hasel has written a well-crafted book that will have an impact on a wider sphere of research than Egyptian military history. The book should be read by every scholar interested in the geopolitical issues of the ancient Levant. Hasel sets a standard of quality of research and grasp of issues that will influence Egyptian and biblical studies for several generations.

Andrews University

DAVID MERLING

Johnson, Phillip E. *Objections Sustained: Subversive Essays on Evolution, Law, and Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998. 188 pp. Hardcover, \$15.99.

Lawyer Phillip E. Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley, has become a well-known writer in the creation-vs.-evolution debate since his first edition of *Darwin on Trial* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991), an excellent exposition of the case against Darwinism. He has contributed numerous articles to *Christianity Today* and other journals in addition to two more books, *Reason in the Balance: The Case against Naturalism in Science, Law and Education* (InterVarsity, 1995) and *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds* (InterVarsity, 1997), on identifying faulty logic in discussions of origins. The title of the present volume again reflects his legal perspective; the subtitle highlights his undisguised goal of overthrowing Darwinism as a key belief in our culture. His writings challenge both atheistic and theistic evolutionists.

The book jacket shows a smiling Johnson holding balances representing justice in his right hand and a Neanderthal skull presumably representing evolution in his left, portraying an opposition between justice and evolutionism in our culture. His main point is that objections to evolutionism have not been overruled, yet Darwinism not only still dominates the realms of science and education, but also reaches increasingly into law and culture, threatening to limit our very freedom of thought. Nevertheless, because "naturalism" (i.e., excluding all supernatural influences), of which materialistic evolutionism is but a logical deduction, is a worldview which conflicts with reality because things beyond the material really do exist, Johnson believes that Darwinism will soon be generally rejected. He predicts the exposure of scientific materialism as an absurdity, and expects a revolution of our culture's worldview within the coming decade.

A majority of the twenty-two essays which comprise this volume are reviews of recent books, often comparing two notable works—for example, Michael Behe's *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* and Richard Dawkins' *Climbing Mount Improbable*, or comparing *Science Wars*, a special edition of the postmodernist social text, with John Horgan's *The End of Science: Facing the Limits of Knowledge in the Twilight of the Scientific Age*. Johnson's penetrating analysis of each author's perceptions brings the reader abreast of much current popular—and unpopular—thinking in the scientific arena.

His essays, insightful and bold, are mostly short, lucidly worded and well arranged. He has divided the book into two parts, the first focusing on the way Darwinists defend Darwinism, the second on the growing influence of evolutionary naturalism in law and culture. In part 1 he begins with historical

roots of the schism between evolutionary gradualists and saltationists (Darwin vs. T. H. Huxley) which has recently erupted again in vitriolic debates (e.g., Dawkins vs. S. J. Gould). Subsequent essays discuss noteworthy perceptions, such as paleontologist Raup's observation that extinction seen in the geological record is characteristically catastrophic rather than gradual, Lewontin's frank recognition of evolutionists' *a priori* commitment to naturalism regardless of the evidence found in nature, and Gould's quandary of affirming Darwinism while recognizing the unreality of some of its key implications. Johnson dares to point out that scientists fear political consequences of disowning Darwinism, specifically the loss of research grants provided for evolutionary science, which is the officially sanctioned creation story among those who dominate public policy and education.

Part 2 covers a much wider range of topics, including scientists' expectations of replacing literary intellectuals in controlling our culture, the revolution brewing over constitutional blocks to resolving the "no-aid" vs. "equal-treatment" contention in schools, perplexing reversals perceived today by 1960s leftists, how political and financial pressures affect scientific objectivity in some settings such as AIDS research, and the "genius and plod" (characteristic of Churchill) seen in successful people. He concludes with the thought that the moral law is written on our hearts, and a final observation: Naturalism provides no solid basis for civil law, because it does not hold persons responsible for their actions.

The book is full of outstanding insights. Johnson commendably identifies and analyzes differing assumptions underlying vastly different viewpoints. For example, in his essay on the recent National Association of Biology Teachers' debacle, he explains why deleting the terms "unsupervised" and "impersonal" from their definition of evolution made no substantial difference to them but caused a tremendous stir in the media. In the same essay, countering the claim that creationism opposes empirical science, he states that "if the presence or absence of intelligent causes in biology is testable, then intelligent design is a legitimate scientific hypothesis" (90).

There is considerable humor in the book, both subtle and bold: He titled the essay contrasting Dawkins and Behe, "The Storyteller and the Scientist"; another title calls Steven J. Gould "the Gorbachev of Darwinism." He is not afraid to add an ominous note: In his review entitled "Daniel Dennett's Dangerous Idea," he includes the possibility of governmental coercion demanding conformity to evolutionism in the interest of instituting an established state religion of scientific materialism, even requiring that young children be "forcibly removed from the homes of recalcitrant parents" (64).

While clearly opposing naturalism and favoring supernaturalism (a term he does not use), Johnson neglects to mention the spiritual warfare which attends this controversy by making a distinction between positive and negative in the supernatural realm or by the clear definition of the term "theistic." Does he follow the bland assumptions that "theistic" always means godly and that "the spirit" is always holy? If conceptions of the supernatural origin of our world are not entirely according to God's account, then whose are they?

One needs solid biblical assumptions for a true biblical earth history, but this does not seem to be Johnson's main concern. He rarely mentions Scripture and

distances himself from "literalists" who accept six consecutive twenty-four-hour creation days, the creation of all major life forms during that one week, and Noah's Flood as responsible for the geological layers. He prefers creationism "in a broader sense": simply believing that God created life for a purpose, adding that biblical chronology is not the issue. He admits that this "may create problems for Biblical interpretation," (22) but considers such problems relatively unimportant, noting that creationism in the broad sense is very widely accepted, as though popularity brought it closer to truth. Juxtapose this with his penetrating essay describing the common trend of originally Christian universities drifting into Christianity "in a broad sense" (115) and soon merging with secular philosophy.

Johnson does not plainly reveal his own view of earth history. Indeed a "progressive creation" scenario, which he seems to favor, is as difficult to defend as "theistic evolution," which he rejects as a contradiction in terms. Like many Christians daunted by apparent radiometric verdicts, he seems to offer a compromise view, neither evolution over long ages nor straight biblical creation and flood, but long ages of creations and catastrophes.

Johnson describes how rival factions of evolutionists continue to coexist because of their strong agreement on points which they hold in common, namely, faith in naturalism and hatred of creationism. He believes that schisms among Darwinists will soon reach such a crisis as to cause the demise of Darwinism. But the current trend in the world is toward "unity," as he notes in his chapter on orthodoxy. A more credible prediction concerning popular views of earth history may be neither the overthrow of Darwinism nor wide acceptance of biblical creation, but a continuing shift toward a worldview more "theistic" than at present, as he hopes, but also retaining some form of Darwinism (perhaps as "God-directed evolution") in amalgamation with progressive creation events (perhaps in six steps to seem biblical) in the coming world religion. The controversy is indeed marching toward its climax. Christians are attempting to unify and thereby increase their cultural influence, while intelligent design has become a defining issue.

Johnson has given us insightful essays that are "subversive" in our evolution-dominated culture. It remains for another author to offer a radically biblical view of earth history. I recommend this book for the reader who wishes to understand in more detail some of the complexity of the current debate over Darwinism.

Leoni Meadows Retreat
Grizzly Flats, California

KAREN G. JENSON

Kee, Howard Clark. *To Every Nation Under Heaven: The Acts of the Apostles. The New Testament in Context.* Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1997. vi + 361 pp. Paperback, \$24.00.

The importance of the book of Acts to the canon generally and the understanding of the NT particularly cannot be overestimated. It is indeed the main source from which we gain canonical knowledge of the origin, growth, and development of the neophyte Christian church. In this commentary on Acts, Kee lists several excellent reasons why it is unique among the NT documents (1). Noteworthy is his proposal that Acts is distinctive in the degree to which it