

Mounce, Robert H. *Romans*. New American Commentary, vol. 27. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996. 301 pp. Hardcover, \$27.99.

This volume, like the others in the series, presents itself according to the standards of the New American Commentary as an exegetical and theological exposition of Scripture based on the NIV text. It is intended "to build up the church, encourage obedience, and bring renewal to God's people" (9). Written primarily for students and pastors, it combines evangelical scholarship and piety, and is oriented toward the practical work of preaching and teaching.

Since the series is based on the NIV, it does not deal directly with the Greek text. The NIV text is printed in the body of the commentary, and it is followed by a global, personal, and concise interpretation on selected points of the text. Mounce states: "I wrote what the text was saying to me" (11).

Mounce, who currently serves as president emeritus of Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington, is wellknown for his commentaries on Revelation and Matthew, as well as for numerous other books and articles in the field of NT evangelical studies. He is fully conversant with contemporary literature and is particularly indebted to Cranfield, Morris, Dunn, Fitzmyer, and Moo in this work (the footnotes are often even more enriching than the text).

The commentary is organized according to an outline consisting of seven points: (1) introduction (1:1-17); (2) the unrighteousness of all humankind (1:18-3:20); (3) the righteousness only God can provide (3:21-5:21); (4) the righteousness in which we are to grow (6:1-8:39); (5) God's righteousness vindicated (9:1-11:36); (6) how righteousness manifests itself (12:1-15:13); (7) conclusion (15:14-16:27).

Although the size of this volume limits a lengthy topical examination, Mounce reviews current discussion on certain important issues. On the phrase "the righteousness of God," he agrees with Cranfield. In regard to the phrase "the righteousness status that results from God's justifying activity," Mounce disagrees with Fitzmyer ("an attribute of God") and Käsemann ("God's activity, whereby he declares to be righteous those who trust him in faith") (72-73).

With insight, Mounce argues that the "but now" in 3:21, that introduces God's answer to the human dilemma, "is perhaps less temporal than sequential" (114). He contradicts most contemporary writers, who take *nuni de* as temporal rather than logical, and who emphasize the idea of a new stage in salvation history.

At times the author's fidelity to the NIV seems to limit his own freedom with the text. Thus he translates *hilastēriōn* in 3:25-26 as "atoning sacrifice," although he acknowledges that N.S.L. Fryer has proved that this term is a substantive rather than an adjective, and its best translation probably is "mercy seat" or "propitiatory covering" (116-118) (cf. "The Meaning and Translation of *Hilastēriōn* in Rom 3:25" *EvQ* [1987]: 99-116).

The author provides an excellent exposition on the much-debated clause introduced by *eph ho* ("upon whom"), a pronoun referring to Adam, in 5:12-14 (139-143). This is in opposition to the concept of corporate personality (which would mean that death came to all because all sinned *in Adam*) defended by Bruce. Further, Mounce rejects the reading of the clause as a conjunction ("because everyone, in fact, had sinned"), meaning that we are not responsible for what Adam did, but for what we have done (Best, Achtemeier). Mounce accepts a

consecutive-conjunction definition of "with the result that," implying that Adam's sin resulted in the history of sinning on the part of the human race.

In connection with this, Mounce argues that 7:14-25 does not describe the totality of Paul's spiritual experience, but instead provides a preparatory introduction to the description of the triumph which follows in chapter 8 (166-168). On the basis of etymology and context in 8:29-30, Mounce explains predestination as God's *purpose* for us to become like Christ (cf. 2 Cor 3:18), rather than as something concerned with *election* to salvation (188-190).

I find Mounce to be hasty in his conclusions on certain points such as: the purpose of the law in 10:4 (207); the salvation of Israel in 11:25-36 (223-225); submission to authorities in 13:1-114 (243-244); the role of Phoebe as "deacon" in 16:1-2 (272). I find this to be somewhat unsatisfactory.

All in all, I would like to commend the evangelical vitality of this able, concise, and readable exposition. The work is accompanied by a short subject index, a useful person index, and a selected-Scripture index.

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Numbers, Ronald L., ed. *The Creation-Evolution Debates*. Creationism in Twentieth-Century America, vol. 2. New York: Garland, 1995. 505 pp. Hardcover, \$98.00.

In *The Creation-Evolution Debates*, Ronald Numbers notes that there is a worldwide renaissance of creationism. This is evident in that 47% of Americans are creationists and that state courts and the Supreme Court have examined creationism. However, Numbers rejects (as restrictive earth history) the creation-science proposal that earth may be no more than 10,000 years old.

Numbers seems to depreciate contemporary creationism as a recent unjustified innovation. While recognizing the ancient roots of creationism, he argues that creationists did not use "the creation science" approach before the influence of books like Whitcomb and Morris's *The Genesis Flood* (1961), and the influence of organizations like Creation Research Society (1963) and Institute for Creation Research (1972) (vii-viii).

Numbers calls attention to an often overlooked aspect of the history of creation science, namely, the early role of Seventh-day Adventists in creationist thought. He documents SDA participation in two debates that took place in 1925: George McCready Price versus Joseph McCabe on the topic "Is Evolution True?" and Maynard Shipley versus Francis Nichol and Alonzo Baker in "The San Francisco Debates on Evolution" (x-xi).

Numbers also mentions SDAs in his comments on the 1928 debate between William Riley and Harry Rimmer on the days of creation. Early twentieth-century fundamentalists were divided among those who regarded the creative days as (1) geological ages, (2) twenty-four-hour days while allowing for pre-Adamite fossils, and (3) twenty-four-hour days while rejecting pre-Adamite fossils. The latter (SDA) view became popular later in the twentieth century (xi-xii).

Numbers seems to indicate his assessment of SDA creationist thought in