

its God-assigned task of witness to others, but also continues to allow the gospel to do its work within the body of Christ. Part II, "Challenges: The Church's Need for Conversion," deals with the challenges of translating the gospel from one culture to another and the historical pattern of the gospel's reduction as each new group desires to control the gospel and calls its version orthodox or normative. In addressing the problem of reductionism, Guder uses some of his strongest words for the American church's tendency to reduce the gospel to personal benefit, seeing salvation in largely personal terms and separated from God's call on the lives of his followers to be his witnesses. This is the greatest reduction and must be rejected. Being called must always be connected with fulfilling the purpose of that call: witness and the evangelization of the world. Salvation as personal benefit trivializes God and is just another indication of the human tendency to try shaping and molding God into human likeness.

In Part III, "Implications: The Conversion of the Church," Guder stresses that evangelism, witness, and mission must all be accomplished in and through the local congregation, not by smaller groups acting as "evangelism committees." All the believers in the local body of Christ must participate in incarnational witness within the community. Guder's is a workable model as long as such witness is targeted toward people in the same culture. However, as the North American church evangelizes an increasingly multicultural society, Guder's model of the whole church involved in witness and evangelization is lacking in concrete, positive case studies. Local congregations have rarely been effective in crossing cultural or linguistic barriers. In reaching out to other ethnic groups in the local community, evangelizing teams may be the answer.

Guder's warning that culture is always at work to capture the church and its mission, that the gospel stands in danger of reductionistic satisfaction with less than God wants or intends, is extremely valid. Only as the church is willing to subject itself to a continuing conversion process will it be able to be truly incarnational.

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Hastings, Adrian, ed. *A World History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. x + 608 pp. Hardcover, \$35.00.

Most church history texts are primarily Eurocentric and North American in their focus. This is natural, for the history of Europe and Christianity is so intimately intertwined that Christianity has come to be seen mainly as a Western religion. It is no wonder that when Western imperialists set out to subjugate the world, Christianity was perceived as a tool of colonialism and imperialism by many non-Europeans. Many people wrongly assume that there is hardly any noteworthy history of Christianity outside of the West. *A History of World Christianity* sets out to dispel this notion. It is obviously a monumental task.

This book is a welcome change from the traditional church history texts. It is a multiauthored book edited by Adrian Hastings, who himself contributed the chapters on Latin America and the history of Christianity in the Roman world from 150-550 A.D. It is a plural history that looks at the story of Christianity from the viewpoint of different ages and continents, with little effort to impose a

dominant theme. Thirteen chapters, each of which is structured differently, seek to reflect the various spiritual, intellectual, political, and social trends. An attempt is made to include the diversity of the world culture as it is expressed in Asia, Africa, North America, Australasia, and the Pacific.

In his Introduction, Hastings suggests that the nature and history of Christianity is hard to understand because of the variety of its manifestations (1). Misunderstanding arises when people impose upon the whole of Christianity, past and present, their limited experience of it or their observation or opposition. Christianity shows incredible contrasts. For example, among the Quakers it is a rather unritualistic religion. In Eastern Orthodox and monastic traditions, it is ceaselessly ritualistic. In some areas and certain periods of the world, it was and is an apolitical and minority religion; in other places and times it has been an imperial and persecuting religion. In some forms, it is activist, evangelistic, and missionary, while in others it is purely contemplative. It has lauded celibacy, but has also glorified marriage. It has pursued poverty as an ideal, but has been linked to the growth and triumph of capitalism.

As Christianity was carried to areas of traditional and animistic traditions, it tended to convince people not because they became converted, but because of the superior technology of missionaries who sought not only to convert but also to civilize. This is evident in many parts of Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific. In places such as China, Japan, and India, countries with long traditions of advanced civilization and entrenched religious tradition that was sometimes part of state bureaucracy, Christianity made little headway and progress was only possible with the permission of the ruling class.

The strength of this book lies more in its intention rather than its outcome. The authors have sought to present Christianity as a global religion and have succeeded in giving voice to areas of the Christian world that have been severely neglected. However, it has still devoted 220 of its 533 pages to North America and Europe, showing its Western bias. The book seeks to keep a balanced perspective regarding the role of Catholic and Protestant streams within Christianity without tilting toward either of these traditions. The annotated bibliography of church history texts from the various regions of the world is valuable. The chapters on India and China provide information on the history of Christianity in that part of the world that is seldom known by students in the West. Inclusion of places such as Australia and the Pacific, which are rarely considered in any text concerning the history of Christianity, is helpful.

One weakness of this work is the omission of the sixteenth-century radical Reformers and their subsequent impact upon modern Protestantism. Another is that the Caribbean region is not mentioned, even though it was the first place in the New World to be Christianized, and many of the mistakes and tragedies that would be repeated all over the Americas had their genesis there.

This volume is worth reading because it has expanded the horizon of Christianity beyond the narrow confines of Europe and America. It has brought into focus the repeated mistakes of Western missionaries in their misguided attempt not only to convert, but also to civilize non-Christians. The book fills a tremendous void in the literature of Christian history and I hope it will spur

others to research and write on the history of Christianity with a broader global prospective.

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Milgrom, Jacob. *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, vol. 3A. New York: Doubleday, 2000. xviii + 625 pp. Hardcover, \$50.00.

Milgrom, Jacob. *Leviticus 23-27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, vol. 3B. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xxi + 819 pp. Hardcover, \$50.00.

There are a few moments in scholarship when one should stop, step back, and just look on in wonderment. The completion of Milgrom's monumental Leviticus commentary in the Anchor Bible series is one of those moments. While I will comment predominantly upon the final two volumes of the set (3A and 3B), the larger picture needs to be kept in mind. Milgrom, Professor Emeritus of Old Testament Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, has worked for nearly two decades on the publication of this commentary. Ten years passed between the publication of the first volume (1991) and that of the third volume (2001). Leviticus, as the third book in the canonical sequence, was originally designated as volume 3. Now it has become three books, with volume numbers 3, 3A, and 3B. The total commentary includes 2,714 pages. In breadth, scope, and erudition, there is nothing comparable in Leviticus studies.

Obviously the division into three books, whose later sections had not yet been written when volume 3 was published in 1991, has some drawbacks. First, opinions or positions change. Second, large quantities of new, important studies are being published and need to be taken into consideration, which either strengthen or challenge the position adopted earlier. Third, indices and a final bibliography are not available until the last volume. This is especially trying in the case of volume 3A, which does not contain either a bibliography or an index. In order to get a workable index and complete bibliography, one has to buy the entire set, coming to \$160.00.

On the other hand, there are some definite advantages to publishing as one advances. Long-term publication has allowed Milgrom to interact with his reviewers and correct misprinted, misformulated, or simply incorrect information. Milgrom does this in numerous appendices in volume 3B (2437-2468), where he responds to criticism and issues raised by Henry Sun, Baruch Levine, Israel Knohl, Adrian Schenker, Victor Hurowitz, Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, and Hyam Maccoby.

Milgrom follows the standard layout of the Anchor Bible commentaries, including his translation of the entire text of Leviticus MT. In volume 3A (Lev 17-22), after the translation of Leviticus as a whole there follows a section concerning the structure, vocabulary, extent, and date of Holiness ("H") material (1319-1367) and discussion of H's theology (1368-1443). This serves as an introduction to the second part of Leviticus (17-27). Milgram argues for a pre-exilic date of "H as well as Pentateuch" ("P"), which was "supplemented and redacted by H" (1362; cf. I.