

early centers of pilgrimage, monastic architecture such as living quarters for the monks, refectories, guest houses, infirmaries, towers, and walls, as well as tombs and related buildings. The chapter also includes early Christian fortifications and houses.

*Christliche Architektur in Ägypten* is addressed to historians, archaeologists, experts in Coptic, and theologians. It contains a wealth of material. Not only is Christian architecture extensively and thoroughly discussed; the book also contains interesting historical sections (e.g., 63-67, 79-80, 87, 94-95), some pointing to important theological issues (e.g., baptism on pp. 137-140 and the state of the dead on 315-321). In addition, the descriptions of church buildings in Egypt also point to an understanding of Christian ecclesiology, clergy, laity, and asceticism (56, 62, 73), which lend themselves to further discussion by biblical scholars and theologians. The material presented is impressive and opens new vistas into the Coptic and Chalcedonian Egyptian Churches. The author knows his field and the current literature well. He is careful to make tentative statements and present his own opinion in the form of hypotheses, where final conclusions cannot yet be made (e.g., 55, 75, 333, 371). He acknowledges that his book is not the final word, it does not solve all problems, nor is it complete (xv-xvi); yet he is creative enough to make interesting suggestions, which in some cases may solve apparent contradictions (376-377).

The book contains some repetition (e.g., 158-159 and 193-195; 210-216, 229-231, and 404-409; 306, 365, 367). This may partially be due to the character of the approach. Some foreign terms are explained, others are not, or not sufficiently, or only later—namely, some time after the respective word has been introduced (e.g., *ambo* on p. 191; *parapetto* on 157-158; *stibadia* on 318, 331; and the *hypogē* on 323), which makes it difficult for the uninformed reader. A glossary would be helpful. On page xxxi, a map of Egypt is produced pointing to the most important sites of Christian architecture. However, the print is so fine that it cannot be read without the use of a magnifying glass. A few typos occur (e.g., 140, 180, 280, and back cover), but they are insignificant. With regard to the circular benches, it is claimed that they precede straight benches, although we do not have the respective archaeological evidence (287). Reasons for sitting in circles are introduced only later (290-291). The book ends abruptly without any conclusion or summary. Short summaries at the end of the individual chapters are also lacking. Such summaries would help the readers to follow the author more easily.

In spite of these minor deficiencies, I would warmly recommend this volume. It is an indispensable tool for all those who seriously want to study Christianity and Christian architecture in Egypt.

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Hauerwas, Stanley. *With the Grain of the Universe: The Church's Witness and Natural Theology: Being the Gifford Lectures Delivered at the University of St. Andrews in 2001*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001. 249 pp. Hardcover, \$22.99.

For those unfamiliar with the work of Stanley Hauerwas, his most recent book, *With the Grain of the Universe*, is not a good place to start. Similarly, for readers unfamiliar with natural theology and the Gifford Lectures this book will not be attractive. But this is no fault of the author. Hauerwas, in his usual manner, lets the reader know from whence his analysis flows; he is a theological ethicist. He is quick to note, however, that he is no "proper" theologian. Thus, he prefers to refer to himself as a Christian ethicist. This distinction is important to Hauerwas since he believes all theology, all ethics, must emerge from a place

of conviction, identity, and witness. Furthermore, Hauerwas introduces the reader to the lectures held in honor of Adam Lord Gifford, who died in 1887. The Gifford Lectures are held at various universities in Scotland and are devoted to the topic of natural theology. Hauerwas stands alongside the single most controversial lecturer in the history of this distinguished series, namely, Karl Barth. In 1936-1937, Barth titled his lecture "Nein!" NO! to the assertion of natural theology. In Barth's estimation, there were no grounds for establishing a knowledge of God apart from a special revelation of God. But rather than simply repeat Barth's famous exclamation these many years later, Hauerwas sets out to tell the theological story of the twentieth century. Hauerwas is keen on telling stories, and in this text he tells the story of natural theology through the lives and lectures of William James, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Karl Barth.

Natural theology, of the sort envisioned by Gifford focusing on providing "philosophically compelling arguments for the existence of God" (231), is in the context of a modern world, where it is "assumed that Christianity must be tested by standards generally accepted by the intellectual elite of the day" (87). It is not that Hauerwas (and Barth) completely reject natural theology. Hauerwas wants his lectures to remind us of Barth's notion that "natural theology is the attempt to witness to the nongodforsakenness of the world even under the conditions of sin" (20). Given the differing perspectives on what constitutes natural theology, it is no surprise that Hauerwas is critical of James's and Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures. Hauerwas's analysis of James's Gifford Lectures, later published as *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, is, I trust, accurate when he proclaims it to be "an expression of pietistic humanism" (44). This text is James's most influential work, and in it he tries to establish that the religious experience of humankind is not in the least dependent upon whether or not God actually exists. Thus the reader shouldn't be surprised that Hauerwas finds James's Gifford Lecture wholly unsatisfactory. What vexes Hauerwas, however, is that "James' world has so thoroughly become 'our' world" (85).

Hauerwas is equally critical of Reinhold Niebuhr's notions of natural theology printed under the title *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. Like James, Niebuhr assumed that the claims of Christianity must be tested by some type of rationalism. Niebuhr assumed he could bring Christian ethics into a political world (the Jamesian world) now devoid of explicit language of God and Christian community. Hauerwas shows in his analysis of Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures how much William James influenced Niebuhr's Christian "pragmatism." Niebuhr thought the Jamesian world would be accepting of the ethics of a Christian theology. If the world's evaluation of rationalist arguments for God is negative, then Niebuhr would show how an ethic derived from Christian religious experience was successful. But Hauerwas insists that the world in which Niebuhr advanced his Jamesian ethics no longer exists.

Hauerwas does not believe that our society has any more need of the "Christian veneer" that James and Niebuhr provided. This is bad news for those who still think that the "future of Christianity depends on a concordat with liberal social and political arrangements" (139). That Hauerwas now turns to Karl Barth and his Gifford Lectures is, again, no surprise. In contrast to Niebuhr's inability to offer authentic and explicit Christian theology and ethics, Barth's theology is an "unfaltering display" of thoughtful Christian speech. For Hauerwas, this unapologetic witness allows for an offering of natural theology that is true to God and meaningful for those who would maintain that what we believe actually has some bearing on who we are as persons.

I find Hauerwas's presentation of Barth's natural theology particularly interesting for Seventh-day Adventists. I have long thought that Adventist reflection on general and

special revelation lends itself to a doctrine of natural theology; yet it is highly unlikely that Adventists would be inclined toward notions of natural theology of the sort forwarded by the majority of Gifford lecturers. On the other hand, if natural theology can be seen—as Hauerwas would like us to see it—as a form of witness to the God of creation, Adventists should enter the theological door which Barth and Hauerwas have opened in these Gifford Lectures.

How is natural theology a witness of this sort? I see two interconnected ways we might perceive (we should perceive) natural theology as an epistemological claim. The first point is to agree with Paul in Romans that the human who has not the benefit of the special revelation found in Scripture is capable, nonetheless, of coming to a knowledge (saving knowledge?) of God. Secondly, in order to argue a natural theology of this sort, one must hold a thoroughgoing theistic ontology that insists that God is the Creator and that Scripture is a revelation of him. I stand with Hauerwas, when he says “that natural theology makes Christian sense only as a part of the whole doctrine of God” (159). Or, as Barth would put it, all that is—including any conclusions about God by humans using human reason—is so by God’s grace.

There are additional reasons why Adventists should find Hauerwas’s work worth reading, and this is true of almost all of his publications: Adventists would do well to learn the art of storytelling in the deliberate manner in which Hauerwas proceeds in all his theological works. Our story is profound; it deserves to be told well, and when it is, it will serve as a witness to the God of creation. A question within the telling of our story that I would argue is yet to be resolved is whether or not our witness is found in the stream of Constantinian Christianity or its radical nonviolent counterpart.

And finally, like Hauerwas I take it that “the truthfulness of our theological convictions is inseparable from the questions of how we are to live” (22). When all is said and done, we do theology as if it matters! To engage in talk about God of the sort that natural theology insists upon “requires a transformation not only of speech itself but of the speaker” (176).

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Hengel, Martin, with Roland Deines. *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon*, Old Testament Series, intro. Robert Hanhart, trans. Mark E. Biddle. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2002. xvi + 153 pp. Hardcover, \$49.95.

When addressing matters of the OT that arise when studying the NT, it is customary to reference the OT directly. However, a period of some four centuries passed between the end of Malachi and the events of the NT. Outside of scholarly circles it is not commonly known that Scripture for the NT period was not directly the Hebrew Bible (HB), but the LXX, the Greek translation made in Alexandria in Egypt between about 250 B.C.E. and 150 B.C.E. that also includes some books written originally in Greek. In this volume, Hengel studies the implications of this translation becoming the resource used by Christians to access the world of Hebrew thought, our OT.

Had the NT never referenced the LXX, the latter would be studied only for its own sake as a translation at a particular time and place, and for the witness it bears to the Hebrew *Vorlage*. As it is, the NT makes frequent reference to the OT Scriptures via the medium of the Greek Bible. However, the quotations are not uniformly from one standard text. Rather, it is the equivalent of an English author variously—and at times, almost randomly—quoting Scripture from different modern translations.

The first of the book’s five chapters is titled simply “A Difficult Subject” and