

to five resources that assist readers of the Septuagint, the church fathers, and other Hellenistic literature, and to two resources that may support those who face the challenges of reading classical literature.

This book definitely deserves its place among the tools that enable students to fluently read the Greek New Testament. By exclusively addressing the difficult and irregular verbs, the authors fill an important gap. Their constant effort to go beyond the limits of the New Testament is praiseworthy and much appreciated. There is not much to be criticized on *The Handy Guide to Difficult and Irregular Greek Verbs*. However, I do question the value of using a numerical code for the six principal parts instead of providing the complete parsing information for each entry. Since it is not something everybody is familiar with, the user of this book basically has the option of either learning them by heart and remembering them, or constantly looking up their definitions (21) before he or she is able to make use of the entire entry. Apart from this, the handy guide will benefit not only the ambitious student who envisions fluently reading the Greek New Testament, but also course instructors. Max Lee, for example, states, “I plan on using the *Handy Guide* for writing my quizzes so I don’t test students on a form of the irregular verb which seldom appears in the New Testament” (2). Thus, this book is a welcome contribution among the tools regarding the Greek New Testament. It is exciting to guess where Kregel will head next with this series.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

DOMINIC BORNAND

Metaxas, Eric. *Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World*. New York: Viking, 2017. xiii + 480 pp. Hardcover. USD 30.00.

Eric Metaxas’s biography of Martin Luther during this period of reflection on the five hundredth anniversary of Protestant Reformation is a masterpiece of historic writing and is reminiscent of his epic biography on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In many ways, this work reflects some of the qualities of the subject—Martin Luther. It is bold, breathtaking, audacious, magisterial, uncompromising, myth-shattering, and dramatic. It is a welcome addition to many other biographies on the great Protestant reformer.

This remarkable biography tells the story of a courageous man who spoke truth to power, shaking the very foundations of Western Christianity and shattering the monopoly of Roman Catholicism, thus creating the brave new world of Protestantism and changing the course of history forever. His faith and courage would give rise to the ideas of individual freedom, personal responsibility, equality, and liberty which constitute many of the great values that underline our culture today.

As Metaxas points out, the story was inevitable,

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Luther’s story was not a man born—or later inclined—to tilt at papal windmills. In fact until 1520 he was as vigorous a champion of the church as anyone who had ever lived. He desired desperately to help Rome elude the fate it ended up experiencing. In fact, in a case of extreme irony—so much so that one might think of Oedipus—he

became the very man who brought about everything he had hoped to avoid. As his story illustrates, it was a sublime and ridiculous decoction of forces that created the perfect storm that burst over the European continent creating what we now call the Reformation and the future (2).

Metaxas follows the life of Luther chronologically across twenty chapters, covering familiar grounds that are well known to Luther scholars. But reading these familiar events from the creative pen of Metaxas makes them new and exciting. Perhaps, it is because Metaxas has a dramatic flair for writing epic biographies and this one fits the bill. He places Luther firmly in his time, yet at the same time casts him as a truly revolutionary figure who transcended his time and set in motion forces that are still in operation today.

Metaxas presents Luther as a deeply passionate man who rediscovered the gospel – the catalyst that gave him a sense of passion and divine purpose. Luther felt that this discovery placed him under a divine mandate that he could not shake. His discovery alarmed the church hierarchy and caused them to try to silence him. But every attempt made to silence Luther only emboldened him, which finally culminated in that epic moment in history when he uttered the memorable words at the Diet of Worms that would inspire generations for the next five hundred years.

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by clear reason—for I do not trust in Pope nor councils alone, since it is well known that they often contradicted themselves—I am bound to the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not retract anything since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand. God help me. Amen (216).

The author writes the Luther story, not like any other human history, but discerning elements in the drama that suggest perhaps a divine hand, orchestrating the course of the events that were out of Luther's control. Luther, himself, eventually recognized that he was part of something greater. Metaxas noted that Luther felt that the attacks against him were not just coming from humans, but also demons. He was subjected to various health problems, some of which he felt were directed by demons. One of the major issues was the feeling of *Anfechtung*—the sense of depression and despair that would engulf him from time to time. For Luther, this was not normal and, while after his discovery of the gospel he experienced less of it, it never completely left him. He saw himself as a special target of those dark forces because of the special assignment God had placed on him.

Metaxas writes, not simply as a historian, but a master storyteller, weaving important details into many well-known incidents in Luther's life that added color and drama to the events. One example of this is Metaxas's use of Fredrick's dream which he had the day before Luther nailed his ninety-five theses on the door of the Wittenberg castle church. The dream described this mysterious monk who would change the world. Excerpts from the dream are quoted below.

I again fell asleep, and then dreamed that Almighty God sent me a monk, who was a true son of the Apostle Paul. All the saints accompanied him

by order of God, in order to bear testimony before me, and to declare that he did not come to contrive any plot, but that all that he did was according to the will of God. They asked me to have the goodness graciously to permit him to write something on the door of the church of the Castle of Wittenberg. This I granted through my chancellor (450).

The pen which he used was so large that its end reached as far as Rome, where it pierced the ears of a lion that was crouching there, and caused the Triple Crown upon the head of the Pope to shake (ibid.).

Then I dreamed that all the princes of the Empire, and we among them, hastened to Rome, and strove, one after another, to break the pen; but the more we tried the stiffer it became, sounding as if it had been made of iron. We at length desisted. I then asked the monk (for I was sometimes at Rome, and sometimes at Wittenberg) where he got this pen, and why it was so strong. "The pen," replied he, "belonged to an old goose of Bohemia, a hundred years old." (ibid.).

No one reading this would doubt that Martin Luther was this monk.

One of the themes the author highlights was Luther's desire for martyrdom, which he considered an honor and privilege, but which he never experienced. Why was Luther not killed when so many others before him and some of his contemporaries met untimely deaths? The author offered no reasonable explanations. Luther was, of course, protected by Prince Fredrick. The Emperor was distracted by his wars with France and the Turks and did not want to alienate the German princes. Whatever the reasons were, Luther was spared for a special purpose, the divine hand was definitely at work in his preservation.

There are many lessons that I learn from Luther's life, but there are two of them Metaxas highlights that draw my attention: the first is that through the life of Luther there is something deeper and more important than merely winning. "If we must win by the sword—or by any kind of force—then my victory is Pyrrhic and worthless. I must not only win but win the right way. I must not only aver the truth but do so in a way that honors the truth" (442). Secondly, Luther did not merely open a door in which people were free to rebel against their leaders, but individuals were now obliged to take personal responsibility for themselves before God and help those around them to do the same. "Freedom with God with the possibility of growth and death was better than the safe fetters of childhood" (445–446).

While Metaxas's presentation of Luther was generally quite positive, he was not afraid to deal with the faults of this great man. Luther was a man of great contradictions. His great virtues were sometimes matched with equally great faults. He was dogmatic, uncompromising, irascible, super sensitive to criticism, and always eager to fire back at whatever darts were thrown at him. His language was at times crass, crude, and even cruel. His words inspired the peasants to revolt, although it was never his intent and when they did, he encouraged the nobles to slaughter them. In his early evangelic life, he praised Judaism and the Jews and hoped for their conversion to Christianity. When this did not happen, he turned against the Jews, advocating their removal from Saxony. Unfortunately, Luther's words would be used as justification

for the destruction of the Jewish people during World War II. He used vile language to describe the papacy and was as uncharitable to Erasmus, one of his early allies. Metaxas makes no attempts to whitewash Luther's faults or explain them away. Yet, even in the midst of Luther's contradictions we find comfort because we see ourselves, for even though many of us may strive for consistency we discover, to our chagrin, that we too are a bundle of contradictions. This biography is well worth your time and I hope it will stir your soul with similar courage and faith as that of the great reformer.

Andrews University

TREVOR O'REGGIO

Miller, Nicholas P. *500 Years of Protest and Liberty: From Martin Luther to Modern Civil Rights*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2017. 192 pp. Softcover. USD 24.99.

Nicholas P. Miller is Professor of Church History and director of the International Religious Liberty Institute at Andrews University (USA). *500 Years of Protest and Liberty* commemorates the quincentenarian anniversary of the Protestant Reformation by offering a compilation of articles exploring core Protestant values, which underlie modern civil rights, especially in the United States. As with his thoroughly researched book, *The Religious Roots of the First Amendment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), this volume also deals with the positive role that Protestant thought has played in developing the modern concept of religious liberty. In addition, it poses the highly relevant question as to whether America's newly proclaimed greatness (referring to Trump's "Make America Great Again") is a logical conclusion of Martin Luther's reformation.

*500 Years of Protest and Liberty* is a compilation of articles written predominantly for *Liberty* magazine. It contains twenty-six chapters that are preceded by a preface and an overview. The chapters are structured into four sections and followed by a conclusion. The first part consists of five chapters and delineates how the European backgrounds of the Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers helped shape the rise of religious liberty in the United States. Here, Miller outlines the reception of Luther's early views on religious freedom and exemplifies three Protestant church-state arrangements, while distinguishing the model that particularly shaped the U.S. constitution.

The second part of the book looks at the main factors contributing to the disestablishment of North American churches, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Its four chapters examine the disestablishment movement during, and between, the First and Second Great Awakening periods. Miller also discusses the historical role of the federal government in protecting civil rights in the states, as well as the current tendency of implementing and promoting local religious practices on the state level.

Following this, part three covers eight chapters that shift the focus to twentieth-century religious liberty challenges. Here, Miller explores the two current predominant views on the separation of church and state, while emphasizing that both views—the secularist and the religious right—are prone