

searches, as does a computerized concordance, but it is the next best thing. It does permit comparisons of either the different grammatical forms a word may take, the different words that may have similar grammatical forms, or the different grammatical contexts in which certain words or grammatical forms may appear. While syntactical considerations have, for the most part, been avoided, the grammatical concordance does assist with some syntactical studies.

Naturally, any grammatical concordance, whether in book form or computerized, is no better than the grammatical analysis on which it is based. One needs to keep this in mind as research is done, with an openness to alternative possibilities not reflected in the concordance. The grammatical analysis is to a large degree based on purely morphological considerations. Where context must guide the final decision, there may be room for alternatives; but often the context itself provides a fairly safe guide. The editors seem to have been fair in providing for alternative possibilities. Considering the options in grammatical concordances available on the market, one should be very glad to discover a resource such as this.

Adventist International
Institute of Advanced Studies
Sulang, Cavite, Philippines

EDWIN E. REYNOLDS

Davies, William D., and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*. ICC. Edinburgh: T & T Clark. Vol. 1, 1988: 780 pp. \$49.95. Vol. 2, 1991: 800 pp. \$49.95.

When one is holding two volumes of a projected three-volume commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, and these two volumes alone total over 1,580 pages, the preface statement that, "We could have wished for more expansive treatments of many aspects of the text but have had to prefer leanness to fullness both in the introductory sections and in the body of the commentary" (1:x), might at first sight seem an extraordinary irony. But in fact, the preface does, indeed, state the truth of the matter. This commentary, written to supersede the 1907 ICC commentary on Matthew by Willoughby C. Allan, is a concise survey of scholarship on Matthew, supplemented by clear statements of the position taken by the commentators. After the general introduction, the commentary on each pericope is arranged in five sections: questions of structure, source criticism, exegesis, summary and comment, and bibliography. These are supplemented by not infrequent excursions on such topics as miracles, the

form of parables, the title the Son of Man, whether Jesus had a Messianic self-consciousness, the role of Peter in Matthew, and the like.

Many of W. D. Davies' views on Matthew are well known from his earlier, widely cited work, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: University Press, 1964). Thus, it is no surprise to find that a work of which he is coauthor considers that "Jewish sources . . . put in the interpreter's hands the most important tool with which to fathom the First Gospel" (1:6). Jewish sources, though not dominating the work, are cited freely and frequently. And expectedly, Davies and Allison date Matthew between A.D. 80 and 95 and interpret it as a Christian response to the nascent Rabbinic Judaism emanating from Jamnia. Syrian Antioch is considered as the most probable provenance for the Gospel, and the author is thought of as a Jewish Christian (1:7-58, esp. 32, 53). Indeed, within the Gospel rabbinic forms of argument are used, the Sabbath is valued and observed (2:327), and the OT purity laws are retained (2:517). The commentary assumes that Matthew used Mark and Q as sources, although it does show awareness of the arguments used by proponents of alternate hypothetical source reconstructions, particularly those advocating the Griesbach hypothesis (1:97-127).

As might be expected from a commentary in the ICC series, the methodology adopted by the commentary is principally the historical-critical approach (1:3), although at several places one can detect the influence of other methodologies. For example, significant attention is given to structure. The occasional chiasm is detected (e.g., 2:162, in the missionary discourse; 2:385, in the parable of the sower); there is a tendency to notice triads; and some consideration is given to plot development (e.g., 2:294, where Matt 11:1-19 is identified as a crucial turning point of the plot). There is also a tendency to interpret the extant text, with less attention being given to the possible sources than has been common in earlier historical-critical work. But most of the commentary does fit well the historical-critical paradigm. Philological and grammatical notes, word statistics, synoptic parallels, extra-canonical parallels, and history-of-religion parallels all find their place. The question of historicity is continuously addressed, as is the question of what the text would have been in its original historical context.

The commentary, however, has a slightly more conservative tone than might be expected of one avowedly adopting the historical-critical method. The historicity of Jesus' contact with lepers (2:12), the authenticity of the Son-of-Man sayings (2:49), the early nature of pericopae with miraculous elements (2:64-65), the historicity of the Sabbath controversies (2:304), and Jesus' Messianic self-consciousness (2:594-601) are all defended. This, on the other hand, does not mean the commentary will appeal to all conservatives, as it often takes a position of agnosticism regarding the historical fact of such things as the virgin birth and miracles. Indeed, the

commentary on the account of the virgin birth concludes with a statement to the effect that many competent scholars do, in fact, believe in the virgin birth (1:221), which is identified as a response to C. E. B. Cranfield, the NT editor of the ICC series, who must have raised this specific issue.

The commentary has several notable strengths. Every verse receives comment; thus one is highly likely to find answers to questions of detail. Not only this, but most of the competing views are succinctly summarized, and their strengths and weakness analyzed. This, together with the extended bibliographies, provides an invaluable resource. The introduction has much valuable information, not least the summary charts showing the different positions taken by the large range of commentators surveyed over a number of crucial issues in the interpretation of the Gospel. The commentary is also rich in Rabbinic background material.

Some of these strengths have corresponding deficiencies. While all viewpoints are summarized, there is not sufficient space to comment adequately on the advantages and disadvantages of every position, or to fully develop the position taken by the commentary in some instances. The overall themes of the commentary can also be lost in the wealth of detail offered. But these restrictions are inevitable. What we have here is an excellent example of how useful this kind of work can be. It, as a matter of course, needs to be supplemented by other works on the Gospel which take individual themes and develop them at some length, and use other methodologies to enrich the meaning which can be found in the Gospel.

In sum, this commentary is a very welcome addition to the literature on the Gospel of Matthew, and it can be said with some certainty that it will become one of the works with which everyone working on the Gospel of Matthew will have to reckon.

Avondale College
Cooranbong, NSW 22265
Australia

ROBERT K. McIVER

Dayton, Donald W., and Robert K. Johnston, eds. *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press and Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991. 285 pp. Hardcover, \$19.95.

Featuring a distinguished set of editors and contributors (such as Timothy Weber, George Marsden, and Mark Noll—to name but a few), *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, edited by Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston, is one of the most important contributions to evangelical historiography and comparative evangelical theology to come out in recent years.