

Book Reviews

The Jewish Study Bible. Edited by Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, xxiii, 2208 pp. + 9 maps, \$29.99 paper.

Christians are pretty familiar by now with study Bibles. The last two decades have produced a significant number of them, all dedicated to one or another aspect of the Christian faith (e.g., Believer's, Disciples', Life Application, Women's, etc.) Ostensibly, it is the particular focus of the study Bible that gives it appeal to the average reader.

The focus of this study Bible makes it very unique! As far as I know it is the first modern Jewish study Bible ever published in English. That's right! This is a *Jewish* study Bible. It has the look and feel of a Christian study Bible, but it does not cover the New Testament at all. The focus of this study Bible is only on the thirty-nine books of the Tanakh, otherwise known to Christians as the Old Testament.

Just like Christian study Bibles each book is prefaced with a fairly concise introduction treating typical scholarly concerns such as date, authorship, historical context, and literary background. Sometimes, an outline is included. (Deuteronomy, 362-63; Jeremiah, 920). In addition, explanatory side bars are given for selected portions of the text of each book. Special words in the text, place names, and people are discussed here, as well as interpretive issues and cultural and background concerns. Special maps and charts are also interspersed throughout the text (cf. "The Temple and palace of Solomon," 684).

A number of general essays on a wide range of Bible topics are collected at the end of the volume (cf. "The Bible in The Dead Sea Scrolls", 1920; "Languages of the Bible", 2062; etc.) Charts on weights and measures, a biblical timeline, and a chronology of rulers are placed after the essays. A chart on the Jewish calendar and a table of weekly Sabbath readings are also included. An excellent glossary of biblical and Jewish terms and an index of the subjects found in the side bar notes and the essays follow the charts. Finally, nine New Oxford Bible Maps are appended to the end of the edition.

Why should a *Christian* periodical review this book, and why should *Christians* be encouraged to purchase it or read it at all? What value would a Jewish study Bible prove to be for non-Jewish students? These are good questions, and there are many answers, a few of which are found below.

The editors themselves hope that "*The Jewish Study Bible* will serve as a compelling introduction for students of the Bible from other backgrounds and traditions, who are curious about contemporary academic Jewish biblical interpretation" (ix). Two stated goals clarify the direction of this hope. For the editors, the first goal "is to convey the best of modern academic scholarship on the Bible, that is, scholarship that reflects the way the Bible is approached in the university" (ix). Berlin and Brettler do not believe that this secular approach undermines Judaism. Instead, it "can add significant depth to Jewish belief and values" (x).

The second goal, on the other hand, is "to reflect, in as broad a fashion as possible, the range of Jewish engagement with the Bible over the past two and a

half millennia” (x). While this “engagement” includes “a wide range of modern approaches,” it also means sensitivity “to Jewish readings of the Bible, to classical Jewish interpretation, and to the place of the Bible in Jewish life” (x). Berlin and Brettler point out there is no single authoritative Jewish biblical interpretation. However, in addition to the sensitivity mentioned above, all of the contributors share as common beliefs that the Tanakh is complete in itself and not a prelude to the New Testament, that the term “Hebrew Bible” is redundant in the Jewish view, and that the traditional Hebrew (Masoretic) text of the Bible is to be taken seriously (x). Consequently, Christians who wish to educate themselves concerning the way modern Jewish scholarship has engaged both current academic scholarship and their own Jewish tradition (Jewish readings of the Bible, classical Jewish interpretation, etc.) need to purchase this book and read through the notes and appendices.

Jewish biblical interpretation can provide insights not readily known to evangelicals. For example, *The Jewish Study Bible* points out that the phrase “dwell together” in Psalm 133:1 is legal terminology meaning to live in joint tenancy. “The psalm is not about harmonious family life (a common reading based on a misunderstanding of the verb and adverb), but is about brothers holding land together” (2102). As such, this is “a metaphor for the (re)unification of Israel and Judah.”

From the inception of the first Jewish study Bible—that is, the Rabbinic Bible, the *Miqra’ot Gedolot* (published by the Christian printer Daniel Bomberg in 1516)—the focus has always been on the text of the Tanakh, the Jewish Holy Scriptures. This concern is no less the case with *The Jewish Study Bible*. The Jewish Publication Society’s revised and corrected second edition translation of the Tanakh of 1999 forms the basis of this study Bible. The translation was to rely on the traditional Hebrew text and avoid emendations. It would translate the Hebrew idiomatically (like the NIV, for example) and reflect contemporary scholarship (xiv). Made up of Jewish scholars and Rabbis, the translation team “lived and breathed” Hebrew in such a way that I believe any *goy* would be hard to match. Christian students who wish to connect with this Jewish perspective need to purchase this book and read through the translation of the text of the Tanakh.

Finally, it should be noted that Paul declared that the Jews “were entrusted with the oracles of God” (Rom 3:2). How the Jews have understood “the oracles of God” and how they have employed them in their faith is the focus of two (“Jewish Interpretation of the Bible” and “The Bible in Jewish Life and Thought”) of the three major sections of the essays found at the end of this volume. Because I went to a Jewish graduate school (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion) many students have asked me what Jews today believe on a wide range of biblical subjects and texts. I often tell them that the situation is a lot similar to the Baptist world—there are about as many interpretations as there are Baptists! Now I can say: “Anyone who desires to acquire a feel for the many varieties of Jewish biblical interpretation needs to purchase this book and carefully read all of it!”

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Libraries in the Ancient World. By Lionel Casson. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001, xii + 177 pp., \$12.95 paper.

Lionel Casson's monograph suffers from the same myopic and chauvinistic misconception that many students of the Western World possess: all ideas, concepts, institutions, and individuals of note—or at least worthy of study—had their origins or reached their apogee in Greek or Roman civilization. Not surprisingly, eight of the nine chapters in this work focus on the development of the library in the Greco-Roman world. Consequently, this book is mis-titled. It should be called *Libraries in the Greco-Roman World*.

Only the first chapter—sixteen pages—examines the beginnings of archives and libraries in the ancient Near East. But these few pages turn out to be a quick sweep through more than 2500 years of archival and library development. It would appear that Casson included this chapter in order to set aside the true origin and development of the library concept with a quick wave of the hand:

“In sum, Near Eastern collections were of a specific nature that answered to the needs of the civilization of which they were part. They ceased to exist when that civilization came to an end: they were not the seed which engendered the libraries with their far wider horizons that were to arise in the world of Greece and Rome” (15).

But no information about the many archives and libraries that existed in the ancient Near East after the time of Ashurbanipal is given or discussed in the book. Casson has simply ignored this later important evidence.

In like manner, Casson is also able to dismiss the libraries of Egypt. Since we have little evidence for these, they do not matter—they add nothing “to the history of libraries” (16). This is a pretty strong statement to make; especially in light of the fact that documental material of choice for the Egyptians was the easily perishable papyrus. The lack of evidence is not evidence of lack in this case.

Casson seems to possess a preconceived modern definition about the nature and function of personal and public collections of ancient writings. Anything that does not fit this definition is ignored. According to Casson, the real library—“the library as we know it, with shelves full of books on all subjects and doors open to readers with interests in all subjects (17)—had to await the coming of the Greeks. Only the Greeks could do this:

“For they were a people endowed with what was needed to bring it into existence—a high level of literacy and an abiding interest in intellectual endeavor” (17).

It is unfortunate that Casson ignores much of the evidence for the development of the library in the ancient Near East. The idea of a library as a collection of materials available to be studied and perused developed out of the various types of archives in the ancient Orient. Royal, economic, and administrative archives from the ancient Near East were indeed the seed which

engendered the development of the libraries in the Greco-Roman period as well as our own.

Libraries in our sense did exist in the ancient Near East (cf. Ernst Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World* [Cambridge: Harvard, 1972], 28, 36, 61). Many of these were temple libraries attached to temple schools. Special techniques were developed for the control of library material that were different from those applied to archival holdings (cf. Mogens Weitemeyer, "Archive and Library Technique in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Libri* 6 [1956]: 225-232).

Despite this unfortunate misunderstanding, Casson's study does provide valuable information and insight into the libraries of the Greco-Roman world. For example, chapter 8, "From Roll to Codex," examines the origin and development of the codex. The earliest reference to a codex is found in a poem by Martial in A.D. 85/86. Martial gives "the distinct impression that such editions were something recently introduced" (124). The codex was the descendent of the older wooden writing tablets that had been strung together with cords. The Romans were credited with substituting parchment for the wooden boards, and thus developing what was the ancestor of the modern book (125).

The superiority of the codex over against the roll was not immediately recognized. Casson compares data on Greek literary, scientific, and other writings from the first to fifth centuries. In the first and second centuries a mere 1.5 percent of all 1,330 documents dating to that period are written on codices. In the third century this figure climbs to 17 percent; by the fourth century it reaches 50 percent. The fourth and fifth centuries see a marked preference for the codex with 80 and 90 percent respectively (127).

Casson notes that one exception to this progress is striking. From the very beginning Christians favored the codex for their copies of Scripture and other religious writings (129). This is in stark contrast to pagan writings of the same sort in which only 3 percent at the time were on codices (130). I would add that this Christian penchant for the codex would also probably be in contrast to normal Jewish practice. Although the Dead Sea Scrolls date a few centuries earlier all of them are on scrolls. The earliest codex of any portion of the Hebrew Bible known to me dates from the ninth century (Codex Cairensis, A.D. 895).

This last point is important for the study of the Old Testament canon. Since the invention of the codex was a late affair and not so quickly accepted by Judaism, it would appear unwise to make any conclusion about the date of a book or its point of acceptance into the canon based on the order or place of the book in a late codex. This would appear to me to mean that the concept of canonicity (i.e., the date of the acceptance of an OT book as Scripture) must not in any case be confused with the process of codification (i.e., the date of the inclusion of a book into a collection or "codex").

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Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins: Diversity, Continuity, and Transformation. By George W. E. Nickelsburg. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003, pp. vii + 264, \$23.00 paper.

The stated goal of Nickelsburg's *Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins* is to answer two questions: "How have the Dead Sea Scrolls and revolutions in the methodology of biblical scholarship in the past two generations changed our perceptions of Judaism in the Greco-Roman period, and how do—or should—these developments lead us to rethink the origins of Christianity?" (xv). Nickelsburg argues that NT scholars ignore or neglect the rich harvest of early Jewish studies, much to their and their students' detriment. His thesis is that, within a history-of-religions perspective, the insights from the study of early Judaism necessitate a reevaluation of our understanding of earliest Christianity. While it is the case that many groundbreaking discoveries and advances of the last fifty years challenge our understanding of ancient Judaism, the degree of the need for a new reassessment of early Christianity, and Christian theology in particular, is still an open question.

Each chapter of the work is divided into two main sections. The first outlines the findings of contemporary research in early Judaism while the second considers some of the implications of these findings for the origins of Christianity. In chapter one ("Scripture and Tradition") he takes up the complex field of biblical interpretation and formation. Nickelsburg provides a clear introduction to the issues impacting the stability and range of scriptural texts and how the different manuscript traditions preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) collection affect our understanding of the collecting and interpreting of OT texts. Though the evidence is complex, which should encourage great scholarly humility, Nickelsburg is quick to conclude that there was no fixed, authoritative Scripture for first-century Jews "in all places" (20). Scholarship is divided on this point, with many asserting that a large portion of Jews accepted a core group of texts which were normative for practice and belief. But Nickelsburg is correct in pointing out the evidence provided by the DSS discoveries is indispensable to our understanding of the formation and interpretation of Israel's Scriptures.

In chapter two ("Torah and the Righteous Life") Nickelsburg takes up the contentious issue of the relationship between the law and righteousness in first-century Judaism. Here the "stereotyped" view of post biblical Judaism as a faith that "perverted biblical religion by advocating perfectionist observance of the Torah" comes under sustained critique (58). Nickelsburg maintains that evidence from a wide variety of Jewish texts demonstrates that the zeal for maintaining Torah observance was not separated from faith and trust in the God of Israel's covenant. And thus the caricature of first-century Judaism as founded upon "works righteousness" is inadequate.

This complex of issues bleeds over into Nickelsburg's discussion of "God's Activity in Behalf of Humanity" and "Agents of God's Activity" (chapters three and four respectively). He insists that developments in our understanding of early Judaism points up the fact that God's activity among humanity incorporates more than salvation from sin. In other words, God's activity with humanity as illustrated in second temple Jewish thought included deliverance

from one's enemies, revelation of divine wisdom, healing from physical illness, and so on. Thus the traditional focus on God's salvific activity epitomized in Jesus' sacrificial death for others is set within the context of the various other activities of God with humanity and challenges the notion that humanity's primary problem is sin and the need for forgiveness. Yet, placed upon this first-century Jewish background, Nickelsburg recognizes that "the principal factor that differentiates Christianity from its Jewish matrix is the centrality and indispensability of Jesus Christ" (88). Nickelsburg also takes up the issue of first-century Judaism understood or expected of God's agents. He concludes that "It is reductionistic to identify God's agent in the world as 'the messiah.'" Rather he asserts that "God operates through a variety of human and transcendent agents . . ." (189). This complex of issues more than any other has become the pressing interest of many scholars attempting to piece together a new reconstruction of earliest Christianity's view of justification and the law (cf. the varying perspectives of N. T. Wright, J. D. G. Dunn, E. P. Sanders, K. Stendahl and the responses by S. Kim, D. A. Carson, *et al.*).

The heightened eschatological expectation in all its varieties within postbiblical Judaism forms the content of chapter five ("Eschatology"). Chapter six ("Contexts and Settings") considers the social, ideological, and political situation within which the documents of postbiblical Judaism were written. Both chapters describe a time of trouble and difficulty including religious persecution, martyrdom, social oppression, occupation of the Holy Land, and the destruction of Jerusalem. Understandably, an eschatological outlook permeates Jewish reflection at this time as a horizon in which the present evil finds final retribution and justice. Through it all Nickelsburg stresses the variety of Jewish reaction to these troubles and attempts to place early Christianity within this matrix.

Finally, chapter seven ("Conclusions and Implications") draws these insights together to argue that there are many more similarities between Judaism and Christianity than more polemic paradigms allow. As the fruits of the last fifty years of research in ancient Judaism ripen, students of the New Testament must harvest and digest these insights if we are to understand Christianity in its first century context. Nickelsburg concludes with "three axioms for exegetical and historical study"—scholarly humility and tentativeness, awareness of the social construction of knowledge, and recognition of the diversity in early Judaism and early Christianity (198). Though the framework and starting presuppositions underlying these axiomatic conclusions may be contested, this survey of research points us toward a serious study of both the Jewish and Christian primary sources and toward an openness to understanding how they are related.

This is a very important work produced by an eminently respected scholar (see the new two volume Festschrift: *George W. E. Nickelsburg in Perspective: An Ongoing Dialogue of Learning* [Leiden: Brill, 2003]). And though working from a history-of-religions perspective, it should be read by all serious students of the NT in order to correct an outdated understanding of first-century Judaism and its relationship to early Christianity. The work will benefit upper level university students and postgraduates along with scholars in other fields as an introduction to this complex set of issues. The two major shortcomings of the

work are the lack of an extended bibliography for further research and the lack of a subject index.

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Christianity and the Roman Empire: Background Texts. By Ralph Martin Novak. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001, 340 pp., \$28.00 paper.

The author traces the origin of this book to a course he taught in 1996, entitled “The Roman Empire’s Perspective on Christianity.” This was no college or seminary course, but a lay adult education course at a church in Texas. Consequently, the book embodies that primary purpose—to present the history of early Christianity primarily to students rather than to scholars.

However, this has not resulted in a superficial presentation, but in a very detailed, well-organized, and helpfully critical historical narrative. Believing that for all that has been written on early church history, the sources of that history are, “widely scattered, difficult to find, and generally unknown to a layperson,” Novak declares on page one, that the purpose of his work is to “assemble these ancient texts into a single continuous account of the political and social relationship among Christians, the Roman government, and the peoples of the Roman Empire.”

As has already been noted, Novak has clearly met that aim, in what will surely become a standard in the field. For this is no mere fragmentary collection with brief introductions, but to achieve his purpose of serving a more general readership, Novak begins with a brief but very helpful introduction to the historical method itself. He then, chapter by chapter, examines each of the first four centuries of the early church. Those chapters are concluded by one in which the author gives a much more concentrated focus on what he calls, “The Scouring of Alexandria, ca. 361-416 CE.” This is followed by a total of five appendices: “Rome’s Accommodation with Judaism,” “Accusations of Christian Immorality,” “The Worship of the Roman Emperor,” “The Formulation of the Nicene Creed,” and “Determining the Dates of the Life of Jesus.” Novak completes his work with a detailed list of sources and translations, together with two indices of texts and subjects respectively.

Novak tells us on page viii that a primary goal of his work “has been to direct the reader along the path of the majority historical consensus without being so intrusive as to obscure the majesty and power of the texts themselves.” And the manner in which he has judiciously selected his texts, his extended citations, his detailed commentaries, and his most interesting excursions into areas including the introduction to historical method, the detailed examination of charges made of Christian immorality, and the issues involved in determining the dates of Jesus’ life, all work together to make his work a most valuable resource for those who are studying the history of early Christianity.

We are not told a great deal about the author, which seems something of a lack. What we are told is that he has taught several classes in two Texas

churches, and that he holds a Master's Degree in Roman History from the University of Chicago.

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Second-Century Christianity: A Collection of Fragments. Second edition. By Robert M. Grant. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003, 111 pp., \$19.95.

Robert M. Grant, an Emeritus Professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and a recognized authority on early Christian history, first published this collection of fragments in 1946. Grant declared that the impetus behind his work was a letter from an Anglican archbishop, urging him to publish "a little corpus of these odds and ends which link the New Testament period with the developed Catholicism of the end of the second century." And so was born Grant's original *Second-Century Christianity*, aiming to do just as Philip Carrington of Quebec had asked. Grant's work became a firm favorite and a standard by which to judge the many other collections of primary text fragments that would later appear.

In this expanded edition are included select Gnostic texts, making what was a valuable tool for both students and teachers of the history of early Christianity into an even more valuable one. Through his selections, organization, introductions and translations, Grant enables a firsthand encounter with the early church, especially as it grows, spreads, develops and wrestles in what was probably, the most formative period of its life. And that is the real strength of Grant's work, it focuses on one narrow period, and that for the particular aim as described above. Yes, there are other collections of primary texts, maybe somewhat of an abundance, but here we are given vivid insight into one very important period of the early church.

The book is divided into three main parts. First, there is a section entitled "Pagan Witnesses," which gives us valuable insights into how early Christianity was viewed by those Grant refers to as "outsiders." The next section consists of texts from Christians themselves, which appears under the title "Christian Churches." Grant approaches them geographically. This section includes extracts from the churches of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Asia Minor, Greece, Carthage, Gaul, and Rome. The last section is entitled "Identifying Heresy," and this includes texts from such figures as Justin, Basilides, Valentinus, and others.

The only real criticism to be made arises from the very quality of the work, and that is that one might wish for the commentary to be more developed.

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The Reformation in Britain and Ireland: An Introduction. By W. Ian P. Hazlett. London: T & T Clark, 2003, 241 pp., \$29.95 paper.

If Professor Hazlett's volume was only a modern introduction, survey, and summary of the Reformation period in Britain and Ireland, then the quality of his work alone, would be enough to make it a desirable volume. The writing style is engaging, the results of his research are well-written and well-documented, and the overall attention to detail is excellent. Moreover, the information is presented in an organized and highly accessible form.

But there is much more to this book. Hazlett, a Reader in Church History at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, who specializes in Reformation studies and who is of international standing in this area, justifies such a volume by arguing quite correctly, that previous introductions have invariably concentrated on England, with lesser attention given to Scotland and Wales, usually ignoring Ireland altogether. And so by deliberately departing from that traditional approach, he has produced a work which seeks and succeeds in giving a much fuller treatment to the fascinating and often very different but interrelated experiences in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. He does this by comparing and contrasting long-term developments and reactions in all four countries, and then offers assessments of the results of more recent research.

This volume had its origins in the Kerr Lectures Hazlett delivered at the University of Glasgow. The author declares that the intention of his reworked version is three-fold: to provide synoptic accounts of the events, processes and figures associated with the Reformation in the British Isles; to extend the declared purview into the *early* 17th century; and to familiarize readers with some of the ways and means, past and present, of writing about the Reformation in the respective lands. Hazlett is clearly aware of current, critical research and this is evidenced throughout his work as he provides very thorough analyses of the material he presents.

One thing noted about the book's length is that while the book does consist of 241 pages, there are actually only 172 pages of text, for notes take up 33 pages, there are 22 pages of a select and very helpful bibliography, and 13 pages of indices.

This work will be of great value to both students and teachers within associated fields, but for all its specialization, it should not be beyond the grasp of most who have a real interest in this turbulent but fascinating period of religious and intellectual history.

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Meet Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to America's Greatest Theologian/Philosopher. By W. Gary Crampton. Morgan PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2004, 147 pp., \$12.95.

Last year saw the tercentennial of the birth of Jonathan Edwards. Consequently, there was the expected appearance of a number of commemorative volumes on

Edwards. However, the sheer amount of material that appeared was to such a degree that it confirmed Edwards' place in Christian history. That resurgence of interest has not abated, and the invitation of this introduction to Edwards and his thought and significance is a part of that ongoing resurgence.

Crampton has produced a very helpful introduction to both Edwards and his thought. There are seven brief but interesting chapters which survey Edwards the man, his views of knowledge, revelation, Scripture, God, Christ and Christian experience. Edwards has been proclaimed to be America's foremost philosopher and rightly so. But some books have been written on Edwards ignoring the fact that he was a Christian. Crampton's brief book is the beginning of an antidote to this sort of thinking. And clearly, this is one of the author's main aims, to introduce Edwards as not only a great intellect, but one who used that intellect to attempt to better understand who God was, what it was that God wanted, and to understand and apply the Bible. As Crampton says in quoting John Piper from his book, *God's Passion for His Glory* (Wheaton, IL, Crossway, 1998, 77), "Edwards's mind was in love with God" (vii).

This introduction stands in the tradition of John Gerstner's *A Mini Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1987), only this volume is a little more developed. There is a more detailed introduction to the man, together with a helpful survey of some of the most significant areas of his theology. To that end the author achieves a helpful balance. And that is part of the strength and attractiveness of this book, that the author has included a good degree of detail in such a relatively brief volume. He has also exhibited a knowledgeable grasp of primary material, especially of the sermon manuscripts of Edwards, together with showing clear evidence of a mature use of the available secondary sources.

One thing this volume reminds readers of in a timely yet somewhat indirect manner, and which by its nature may be of particular interest and relevance to Southern Baptists, is that notwithstanding the ascription that Edwards was America's greatest theologian and philosopher, he was not perfect. One example of this occurs on page 63, where Edwards' "Miscellany number 694" is quoted in which he amazingly argues that, "baptism by sprinkling" (or "pouring") is, "a more lively representation of the thing signified by baptism than dipping or plunging."

By way of criticism of the book, it is nowhere revealed who exactly the target audience is seen to be. The closest the author seems to come, is when he says, that we who live in the early years of the 21st century would do well to study Edwards' teachings because of the message he preached, a message he says, that remains relevant to every age because it has the life of Christ in it. To that I would wholeheartedly agree. I would also suggest that this is a much needed book which will be of real value to those who are seriously interested in learning more about Edwards' life and theology (the book has more than 12 pages of bibliography). One other minor point noticed is that the author's doctoral degree as given on the attractively presented front cover, does not match the doctoral degree given on the title page.

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Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons. Edited by David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003, 330 pp., \$59.95.

In the press release issued for this book by the University of South Carolina Press, the claim is made that this is a “major contribution” to studies on Edwards. The concern one might have, however, is that in the past three years, primarily due to the tercentennial celebration of Edwards’ birth in 2003, there has been a proliferation of books about this imposing figure, any of which it could and probably has been claimed, that they too are major contributions.

That being said, however, I do believe that the 15 scholars involved in this ground-breaking approach have created a collection of essays worthy of such a description. The contributors include George Marsden, who recently produced his own detailed biography of Edwards, and who writes here on the search for the historical Edwards. There is also an interesting essay by Catherine Brekus on Edwards’ ministry to children. But for me other significant contributions are also worth noting. David Bebbington provides much needed research concerning the international scope of Edwards’ legacy. Bruce Hindmarsh looks particularly at the reception of Edwards by early evangelicals in England, while Christopher Mitchell examines Edwards’ Scottish connection. Andrew Walls uses his own missionary expertise to examine the relationship between Edwards and David Brainerd, and Stuart Piggin assesses Edwards’ influence on missionary thinking in a broader context. Finally M. X. Lesser concludes with a very detailed and most helpful chapter on Edwards in print abroad.

The two editors, David W. Kling, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Miami, and Douglas A. Sweeney, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Church History and the History of Christian Thought at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, have divided the book into three clear sections examining Edwards’ ministry per se, the effect of his writings on later American culture, and his influence abroad, especially in Britain. This last section also includes Edwards’ effect on the rise of the modern missionary movement.

The chapters are actually the fruit of an Edwards conference that was held on March 9-11, 2000, in Miami, Florida, which not surprisingly, had as its focus, Edwards’ legacy at home and abroad. The chapters are revised versions of the papers that were presented at that conference.

I strongly suspect that this work will be the impetus to many others investigating similar issues and areas. While it is true that there has been a tremendous amount of material published analyzing Edwards the man, his ministry, his life, his thought, his preaching, his sermons, and so on, this is really the first to examine in any serious or sustained manner, Edwards’ historical legacy throughout the world. It really is true that Edwards had an exceptional influence in Britain, especially in Scotland, and as someone with a personal interest in that area, Kling and Sweeney are to be commended for this important pioneering work. Surely the hope must now be that this collection will succeed in moving the discussion about Edwards beyond the borders of America. New areas in Edwards studies have here been opened and the contributors have

mapped clear directions for further study and research; this can only be for the good.

My hope reflects the sentiment expressed in the recommendations by the Edwards scholars Smith and Conforti on the rear cover, *viz.* that the essays in this well-documented volume should finally put to rest the notion that Edwards was a brilliant but tragic figure, who squandered his considerable genius defending an outmoded Calvinism, thereby leaving no enduring religious legacy.

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The Puritan Pulpit American Series: Jonathan Edwards. Edited by Don Kistler. Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2004, 285 pp., \$25.46.

The academic center at Yale Divinity School that facilitates scholarship on the many and diverse manuscripts of Jonathan Edwards has been working for fifty years to produce an accurate, critical edition of the bulk of his writings. However, funding issues have resulted in only three volumes of sermons being printed in the prestigious Yale series of Edwards' writings. This is only a tiny fraction of the sermonic material available, because most of what remains unpublished are the sermons. In fact, almost 1200 sermons are extant, although not all are unpublished. The announced aim of the Yale series is to produce an electronic edition of everything Edwards wrote, including every sermon. I say all this, because until that project is funded and completed, volumes like this present one will continue to appear, publishing for the first time small collections of Edwards' sermons.

This volume is by Soli Deo Gloria, a press whose mission is to provide "instruction in righteousness" to the church "through the reprinting of classical Christian literature." They are more usually known for their puritan reprints. However, this is the first volume in a new series by the press entitled, "The Puritan Pulpit." The series will be divided into "The English Puritans" and "The American Puritans." So this volume of mostly previously unpublished material is something of a different venture for them. Proposed figures in the American series include Edwards' grandfather Solomon Stoddard, Thomas Hooker, Increase Mather and John Cotton. Proposed English contenders include Thomas Watson, Jeremiah Burroughs, James Ussher, Joseph Alleine, and William Guthrie. This important series is projected to take 15 years to complete and is expected to finally number more than 30 volumes.

This introductory volume in the series consists of 16 sermons, 14 of which have never previously been published. Edwards' message was clear and uncompromising, he labored tirelessly and passionately to make the Gospel known to all who would hear, and to call the converted to continue to live for Christ and be weaned from the world. For this alone, any volume which would encourage believers of today to do the same must be valuable.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in Jonathan Edwards, and this collection of biblically-based sermons will surely only add to that. In fact, the

current interest in Edwards' writings is evidenced by the fact that only recently another volume consisting of unpublished sermons was nominated as a finalist for the Gold Medallion award of the Evangelical Christian Publishers' Association. Edwards here reminds us in a very relevant, timely, and forceful way, how God never changes his mind; that it is well for us that God is not as we are; that men's addiction to sin is no excuse but an aggravation; that a man may eternally undo himself in one thought of his heart; that God does what he pleases; that God is everywhere present; and that God really is a being of transcendent mercy.

All of the above being said, however, those who look for even a brief introduction to Edwards or his sermons will be as disappointed as I was. There is also no indication of where or when any of the sermons were originally preached. That unexplained omission did make the sermons a little distant, in that Edwards usually dated his sermons, especially after the mid-1730s. He would also usually add the place of preaching. Nevertheless, these sermons are full of the passion of Edwards' message and though there is no indication of target audience, I am convinced that this attractively presented volume will be a valuable addition to anyone's library.

Michael D. McMullen
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

D. L. Moody on Spiritual Leadership. By Steve Miller. Chicago: Moody Press, 2004, 196 pp., \$9.99 paper

Many and varied are the books written for the purpose of informing and assisting those who serve as leaders within the Christian community. Steve Miller's contribution to the aforementioned and ever increasing number of volumes is clearly significant and personally appreciated. Carefully researched, well documented, and logically presented, the book is informative, inspirational, and a must read for all who serve the body of Christ.

Miller's work is beneficial to everyone, not just the ordained among us. After investigating the disciplined and mystifying lives of Edwards, Whitefield, Baxter, Spurgeon, Bunyan, or other extraordinary individuals, one sometimes feels intimidated and reluctant to attempt replicating their habits. It is likely unwise and unhealthy for most mortals to even attempt such. However, this writer finds Miller's work refreshingly applicable to any and all who wish to improve the character, quality, and effectiveness of Christian ministry. This is a book for anyone eager to enhance their leadership skills in order to more effectively serve.

This suitability for universal application is due in part to the person whose life and ministry is being scrutinized. Anyone familiar with Moody's life and work will not speak of such as being average. However, Miller clearly identifies attributes of Mr. Moody's personality, limitations, and idiosyncrasies with which common people can identify. We lesser mortals will find encouragement on each page. The author informs us by way of a comfortable book that Moody was in most ways an ordinary man whom God used to accomplish extraordinary

things. Miller's purpose is to show us how this occurs in Moody's life and how we might experience similar results. In the writer's opinion, he is successful.

To set the stage for accomplishing his goal Miller writes, "There were many reasons Moody should never have become one of the most prominent evangelists and ministers of his day" (11). Clearly Moody lacked credentials, formal training, and did not take the "tried-and-true paths of leadership that other Christian leaders had taken" (11). Readers will immediately be drawn into the book seeking an answer to the question, "How then does one explain, understand and make use of Moody's secret to successful service?" Miller's answer is refreshing and noteworthy.

In a day when most Christian literature addressing leadership is permeated with pragmatic advice gleaned from secular social sciences (e.g., psychology and sociology) and carefully reframed in church vocabulary, Miller's definitive work is appreciated. His assessment of Mr. Moody's ministry is captured in this sentence ". . . our great God can do very extraordinary works through very ordinary people" (12). This thesis is supported by numerous quotations from Moody, his colleagues, and reputable historians.

If the reader is searching for inspiration and practical help advantageous to growth in character and skills essential in the endless pursuit of effective yet authentic Christian leadership, this book is for you. If, however, one is seeking a step-by-step plan attainable by anyone in any business environment achieved by natural means, thus void of the ministry of the Spirit of God and in no way dependent upon personal holiness and divine unction, this book is not for you. The author provides a model for leadership void of the seemingly endless pragmatic "silver bullets" promising to make all a glowing success and rising star in modern evangelical circles. Miller presents Moody as a humble, godly, loving, and faithful servant, effectively fulfilling his ministry by means of divine initiative and spiritual anointing. One discovers an untouched portrait of a common man whose example and contributions to the kingdom must be appreciated and meticulously followed.

Perhaps a brief summary of the book's content will prove helpful. Citing twenty-six different authors, numerous articles, letters, and carefully chosen quotes from Mr. Moody's sermons and writing Miller arranges the book to answer the question, "What exactly was it that made Moody so effective as a spiritual leader" (13)? A listing of the chapter titles is informative: *A Life Fully Surrendered*, *An Abounding Love for People*, *A Passion for Reaching Lost Souls*, *A Constant Readiness for Pray*, *Dependence Upon the Spirit's Power*, *A Dedication to God's Work*, *A Faith that Believes and Trusts God*, *A Fervent Commitment to Holiness*, and *A Heart Marked by Humility*. Even a casual reading informs us that the emphasis is on character, not methods. Herein lies the refreshing if not reviving consequence of reading the book. Miller's emphasis is on the work of God in Moody's life and ministry—not on how Moody worked for God.

One should not believe that Moody did not employ methods and systematic plans. Clearly he did. However, it is profoundly obvious, and at times personally convicting, that Mr. Moody was a man of faith and unction far beyond the experience of many, if not most, contemporary ministers who attempt spiritual work employing mostly pragmatic and, perhaps even, carnal methods. Miller

writes, “D. L. Moody’s example is powerful proof for us that it’s the right kind of person God uses—not the right program, right method, or right techniques” (13). How refreshing! How profound! How encouraging!

Each chapter is informative, wonderfully documented, and supported by numerous quotes. Miller skillfully interprets Moody by means of Moody’s own words and the comments of some who knew him and many who have researched his life. Readers will find the quotations of Moody’s biographers useful. Some may agree with this writer who finds the unedited words of Moody most informative. For example, “[Humility] consists not in thinking meanly of ourselves, but in not thinking of ourselves at all . . . If humility speaks of itself, it is gone” (163). This statement alone is worth the price of the book.

A seemingly endless flow of literature on leadership continues to issue forth from secular and Christian book publishers. Most are worth the price and time it takes to read them. A few are likely to become classics. Among them will be Steve Miller’s inspirational, practical, and wonderfully written volume *D. L. Moody on Spiritual Leadership*. This book is a must read.

Tony L. Preston
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Debating Calvinism: Five Points, Two Views. By Dave Hunt and James White. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2004, 427 pp., \$17.99 paper.

Reasoned discourse on subjects that evoke a great deal of passion is a very difficult thing to find. *Debating Calvinism* is an example of what happens when two Christians who have a good track record of opposing blatant heresy turn on each other with the same vigor concerning matters of disagreement among orthodox Christians. In this case, the subject for debate is soteriology. Taking the Calvinist position is James White. White is widely published and two of his best known books are *Letters to a Mormon Elder* and *The King James Only Controversy*. Taking the non-Calvinist position is Dave Hunt, perhaps best known for a work he wrote with Ed Decker, *The God-Makers* (a critique of LDS theology).

The editors at Multnomah should be commended for a well-organized volume. Divided into two parts, the first half of the book consists of seven chapters in which James White presents the pro-Calvinist position. Dave Hunt offers a brief response to each of the pro-Calvinist points followed by a further defense by James White. Each author is then allowed final remarks. This same pattern is followed in the second half of the volume. Again, there are seven chapters in which Dave Hunt begins by stating a non-Calvinist position followed by a response by James White, a defense by Hunt, and final remarks by both authors.

In this debate, James White offers a more internally consistent argument than Hunt. White also presents his position in a more positive way. For example, White begins his presentation with this premise: “God is all-sufficient, and all life, glory, goodness and blessedness are found in Him and in Him alone” (35). In contrast, Hunt begins his presentation with an *ad hominem* against Calvin and

says, “How can anyone call Calvin a great exegete, considering his faulty reasoning and false doctrines” (227)? The clear winner in this debate is James White.

Having declared a winner, there are flaws in both men’s argumentation. Perhaps the most frustrating aspect is that both are guilty at times of asserting as fact things that are simply not accurate. For example, White begins his concluding remarks in the chapter on “Particular Redemption” by saying, “In this section on the atonement I have tried, more than once, to invite Mr. Hunt to engage the real issues, but so far he has not done so” (195). It is perhaps more accurate to say that what Hunt has done is to express in a very passionate way a position with which White simply disagrees. In a similar way, Hunt states, “[White] offers inferences, but not one Scripture that clearly states that unregenerate man is unable to believe the Gospel” (75). Again, it is more accurate to say that White has forcefully presented a position with which Hunt disagrees, but the charge of not presenting “one Scripture” is certainly inaccurate.

The major weakness of this book is that the authors should have begun with a statement defining the issues on which they *do* agree. Specifically, both men certainly believe in the Trinity, the deity and humanity of Christ, and other crucial doctrines. Both men are Christian brothers! A general statement of overall unity would have moderated the overall “tense” nature of the debate. It would have been helpful if both men would admit that this is an “in-house” debate among orthodox Christians. Unfortunately, they charge into each other (fellow Christians) with the same tenacity they have both taken into debates with heretical sects. In this sense, the book fails as a model for healthy and lively debate among Christians. Finally, the book would have been marvelously improved if Hunt and White would have agreed to make an evangelistic in-home visit *together*! I believe the tenor of the debate would have been much different after they both joined in an effort to share their faith in Jesus Christ with a non-Christian prior to writing.

Alan Branch
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Safe & Sound: Protecting Personal and Ministry Relationships. By Steve Hayes. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002, 156 pp., \$14.99.

This morning, hours before classes were scheduled to begin, I picked up Tom Johnston, our evangelism professor, in order to attend to attend a church planting breakfast in the south of Kansas City. When we arrived, our host informed us that our keynote speaker—a church planter of renown—had confessed to a moral failure and was unable to attend. As we interceded in prayer for our fallen brother, I could not help but wondering, “Would this have happened if he had read this book?”

The title of this book is clear and concise. Two recent studies, one by the Barna group and the other by Hartford Seminary, indicate that the divorce rate for vocational ministers is only marginally lower than the general population.

Some reports, such as the one cited by *Newsweek* (July 28, 1997) suggest that the marriage failure rate for men in vocational ministry is actually higher than the national average. The breakdown of marriages among ministers can only result in what is best described as carnage. In a majority of ministerial divorces, infidelity is involved. The irony is that many of these men faithfully taught lessons and preached sermons on the topic of family and the biblical standard for marriage. The problem is that these same men often failed to safeguard their own marriages. The magnitude of this problem is grounds to add *Safe & Sound* to the vocational minister's library.

Tom Tyndall in his endorsement writes, "Title this book *A Course You Should Get in Seminary* . . ." Joe Beam writes, "Steve Hayes has written a must read for everyone in Christian leadership." Not long ago, I would have dismissed such a declaration as hyperbole. However, during the past ten years I have seen too many Christian leaders throw away their ministries and marriages due to moral failure. What makes *Safe & Sound* effective is the way Hayes communicates his message.

Safe & Sound tells the story of Sam and Karen. Like an Aesop Fable, the story contains a poignant moral. Sam is the senior pastor of a healthy but short of perfect church. He puts in long hours to keep the church moving forward, taking his wife and family for granted. At the same time, his relationship with God is on "cruise control." Most readers will relate to times in the ministry when, like Sam, such a description could just as easily applied to them.

It is during this time of spiritual and relational apathy that Sam is vulnerable to the subtle process that ultimately leads to moral failure. If the goal of this book is to get the attention of church leaders before they cross the line of moral failure, Hayes hits a home run. As the reader follows Sam's digression through the phases of temptation, Hayes provides a biblical commentary drawn from James 1:13-16. In each chapter, Hayes provides a response for those who are reading the book and find themselves in a particular phase of temptation. These response sections are appropriate for ministers who find themselves in the role of interventionist.

The "Human Condition" is the first phase in Sam's journey. Here the reader is confronted with the reality of man's nature and susceptibility to sin. A simple scale used to evaluate one's level of resistance to temptation is included at the end of this chapter. Enticement is the next phase covered. In this phase, one is tempted to satisfy a God-given need in an ungodly way. The key to overcoming temptation at this phase is "don't panic." In the third phase, sin is conceived and the choice is made to satisfy and justify crossing the line. In each of the first three phases of temptation, the opportunity to repent and overcome is available. From this point onward, the web of sin becomes increasingly entangled in each subsequent phase.

In phase four, sin matures and compromising behavior becomes a pattern. In this phase, Hayes introduces two key false assumptions. The first is that one can manage two relationships without violating either one. The second is that one can engage in an extramarital relationship and keep it from getting out of hand. In the fifth phase, sin manifests itself. The result is death. The author writes, "Death is the most accurate word one can use to describe the impact of adultery on a marriage and a ministry." The final phase is "Exposure—Discovery and

Consequences.” Here, like in many of God’s graces, the author shows help from an unexpected source. However, the sad consequences of Sam’s sin are not minimized.

Safe & Sound is not necessarily a book to give to those in need of healing and restoration—a tempting response if we find a ministry colleague in need. It is best used as a prophylactic. *Safe & Sound* is one of a couple of books I would recommend for those getting started in ministry. Others, such as *Beneath the Surface* by North American Mission Board president Bob Reccord, and *Loving Your Marriage Enough to Protect It* by Jerry Jenkins, share Hayes’ objective. Each of these books serves to help those in ministry recognize the magnitude of the morality crisis, as well as how to employ a biblical response to temptation. The strength of Hayes’ book over others of this genre is his engaging story line. *Safe & Sound* has its limitations and shortcomings. For one, the book does not address the etiology of the problem, nor does the author go into any degree of detail as to the process of restoration. Considering the size of the book, these limitations are understandable.

Hayes writes in his preface, “Any minister who is determined to complete his journey with his marriage and ministry intact must examine himself, the spiritual realities with which he will have to contend, and the known challenges of his course.” This book provides the tools needed to understand the complexities of our journey and the wiles of our common enemy, temptation.

Rodney Harrison
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