

passages; (5) presence of a gloss in the LXX text; (6) probable gloss in the MT and absence of this gloss in the LXX; (7) important passages for exegesis, whether the LXX presupposes a different Hebrew text, or whether the LXX witnesses to an enrichment of the primitive text. The author restrains himself from dogmatic assertions; in (5) he says that too many accidents could have happened in the transmission of the texts and their Greek translation to be able to make categorical pronouncements. In (6) he states that the MT does not manifest any gloss or reinterpretation that was not already known from the text found at Qumrân. The text of Isaiah already enjoyed incontestable authority by that time. In (7), a miscellaneous grouping of variants that do not fit into the preceding categories, he mentions a group of readings based on the MT; a group accounted for by the LXX's avoidance of anthropomorphisms; a tendency in another group to amplify certain ideas, thus showing a more advanced theological reflection; a group manifesting reinterpretations that depart from the Hebrew text; and other passages, which he examines individually, as their differences merit such treatment.

His final general conclusion mentions that his examination of Isa 28 to 33 has not produced any sensational results for exegesis. No verse of the MT was completely absent from the LXX, and vice versa. "It is therefore possible to recover in certain cases elements to retain in order to advance the exegesis. This perhaps offers the disadvantage of restricting the field of 'corrections' and modern conjectures made only on the Hebrew text of the Massoretic tradition, but certainly permits us to approach the tenor of the original text, and that according to a textual base that is much more assured. More important still, by a serious study of the LXX as well as the other ancient versions and the Qumrân text, we are provided with recovered items that permit a better appreciation of the original, on the plane of textual criticism itself, a factor which in our opinion is too much neglected . . . Even if the work presented here contains too much analysis, we believe we have sufficiently demonstrated, by the results already gained, that it puts into operation a method of work that, applied to the whole book of Isaiah, will bring us agreeable surprises" (p. 129).

The author has done a good, detailed study using excellent guiding principles and methodology.

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LEONA GLIDDEN RUNNING

Ladd, George Eldon. *The Last Things: An Eschatology for Laymen*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978. 119 pp. Paperback, \$2.95.

The Last Things is a brief popular treatment of central issues relating to eschatology that the author has for the most part dealt with in more detailed fashion elsewhere—especially in his books *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1952), *The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1956), *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1974), and *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1974). Once again he shows balance coupled with keen exegetical skill in treating the biblical texts. The subtitle indicates the intent of this work for "laymen," and the author has indeed kept his objective well in mind. The scope of the publication is revealed by its chapter titles: "How to Interpret the Prophetic Scriptures" (pp. 7-18); "What About Israel?" (pp. 19-28); "The Intermediate State" (pp. 29-39); "The Second Coming of Christ" (pp. 40-48); "The Language of the Second Advent" (pp. 49-57); "The Antichrist and the Great Tribulation" (pp. 58-72); "The Resurrection and the Rapture" (pp. 73-86); "Judgment" (pp. 87-102); and "The Kingdom of God" (pp. 103-119).

It becomes immediately obvious that a major thrust of this publication is the rebuttal of dispensationalist positions. Especially is this emphasis evident in the chapters "What About Israel?," "The Language of the Second Advent," and "The Antichrist and the Great Tribulation," and to some extent too in the chapter entitled "The Kingdom of God." Ladd reiterates certain of his basic arguments against dispensationalism, repeating, e.g., what he has discussed more fully in *The Blessed Hope* and *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* relative to the language of the Second Advent (NT use of the terms *parousia*, *epiphaneia*, and *apokalypsis*) and to the unwarranted dispensationalist distinction between the terminology "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" (see pp. 49-57 and 104-105).

The author's Christological hermeneutic, or reinterpretation of "the Old Testament prophecies in light of Jesus' person and mission" (p. 17) is a welcome departure from extreme views on either side, but one wonders whether or not Ladd's effort to counteract dispensationalist emphasis on literal fulfillment of OT prophecy has not led him to minimize the theological value of the OT in its own right. In any event, it would seem that a chapter dealing with the question of "How to Interpret the Prophetic Scriptures" should be much more comprehensive than what Ladd presents, even in the limited space devoted to this subject. What guidelines, e.g., should be applied in attempting to understand apocalyptic symbolism? how are literary type and literary structure related to interpretation? what relationship do literary and historical context and backgrounds have to a sound hermeneutic? what differences are to be noted between apocalyptic and general prophecy? These and other questions surely deserve—indeed demand—at least passing attention, in addition to the Christological hermeneutic that is elaborated.

The author, though polemical toward dispensationalism in a good portion of this volume, nonetheless displays a candor and fairness which also distinguishes his other writings. Indeed, his sense of fairness leads him at times to present in favorable light certain alternative evangelical views (not dispensationalist views, however)—such as exegesis of the parable of the sheep and goats (pp. 98-102).

A word should perhaps be said about Ladd's chapter on "The Intermediate State" as being one of the most perceptive presented by an evangelical scholar. Ladd treats a number of the so-called "problem" texts, but recognizes that the language must be understood in the context, not of disembodied spirits, but of resurrection of the body. He gives full weight to the fact that the biblical point of view is in opposition to the Greek concept of dualism, and in fact states explicitly that the Hebrew concept is "not dualistic" (p. 31). On the "notoriously difficult passage" in 1 Pet 3:19-20, he indicates that he can "do little more than mention the three major interpretations": the patristic view that "Christ in the spirit went and preached the gospel to the spirits of dead men imprisoned in Hades who lived either in the days of Noah or in the time before Christ"; the view of Augustine and many Reformers that "Christ in his pre-existent state of being preached the gospel through Noah to Noah's living contemporaries"; and the view "most widely accepted today" that "in the intermediate state Christ proclaimed the victory of the gospel to fallen angels imprisoned in Hades" (p. 38). He does not opt for a position other than to indicate that Jude 6 may support the third alternative (p. 39).

As for his treatment of another difficult passage, 2 Cor 5:1-9, he rightly concludes that a disembodied state is not the thrust of the passage, but that the emphasis is on the importance of the resurrection body (see pp. 35-37). He indicates that Paul in Phil 3:20-21 expects the transformation to take place at the *parousia* of Christ (p. 36), but nevertheless surprisingly concludes his discussion of the passage in 2 Cor 5 with a statement that "even so death holds no fear, for the dead will be with Christ while they await the resurrection" (p. 37). Just preceding this statement he

has gone so far as to paraphrase part of the text as saying, "We are of good courage [even in the face of disembodiment], and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord" (ibid.). A careful reading of the text and its context certainly does not support the interpretation presented by Ladd in the bracketed material.

On the whole, this is an excellent little book in spite of certain gaps in its presentation and the occasional instance of what, in my view, is exegetical and interpretational aberration, such as that just mentioned. Undoubtedly this volume will be particularly helpful to laity who find themselves confronted with concepts fostered by dispensationalist/pretribulationist teaching.

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KENNETH A. STRAND

Martin, Ralph P. *New Testament Foundations: A Guide for Christian Students*. Vol. 2: *The Acts, The Letters, The Apocalypse*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978. xii + 463 pp. \$11.95.

This is the final volume of Martin's Introduction to the NT. It is a large work because it includes matters not usually dealt with in ordinary introductions such as historical, religious, and philosophical backgrounds, an extended treatment of the contents of Acts, the authority of Paul's letters and other issues in Paul, three samples of exegesis of NT texts (in 1 Corinthians), and an epilogue more appropriate in a NT theology dealing with the issue of the central message of the NT. He has obviously tried to do too much at the expense of doing too little in some areas, e.g., with respect to Romans, Hebrews, and Revelation.

The author approaches the issues dealing with introductory matters with a conservative orientation but with a serious effort to deal with the problems objectively. This means in some instances that he must admit that a final answer is not possible. Such is the case with the question of the location of the Galatian churches, the place of Paul's imprisonment when he wrote Philippians, what happened to Paul after his Roman imprisonment, and to whom the letter to the Hebrews was sent.

Martin also deviates from the strict traditional conservative position when he considers 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as an independent fragment which later became attached to its present position, that Gal 2:1-10 is to be equated with Acts 11:27-30, that Colossians was written during Paul's Ephesian imprisonment, and that Hebrews was written between A.D. 80-100. In matters concerning authorship Martin, having espoused the view that pseudonymity is "kosher," can attribute Ephesians and the Pastorals to a later Pauline compiler, 2 Peter to a devoted student of Peter's earlier epistle, and the Johannine Epistles to a Johannine editor. It would be interesting to watch the reaction of conservatives to these positions which approach the generally held liberal views.

Martin deals adequately with the major issues raised with each of the books of the NT. If a student wishes to pursue the matter further, the extensive footnotes and the select bibliography at the end of the volume will give him ample material. The book is written well, but in certain instances there is lack of clarity as to the author's meaning or position, even in cases when he says that he cannot give a final answer. Also, at times certain basic information for which a student looks is not provided; e.g., nothing is said about the author of the book of Hebrews or the place from which this epistle was written.

In spite of these criticisms, students will have much to gain from this volume and its earlier companion.

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