

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983. 154 pp. \$11.95.

Gordon Fee has set his hand to a task that is destined to fill an urgent need. There are several good books on the topic of exegesis that can be recommended for students and pastors wishing to sharpen their skills. However, until the publication of *New Testament Exegesis*, there has not been a book that takes its reader step by step through the process of exegesis from the opening of the Bible to the writing of an exegesis paper or the preparation of a sermon.

The titles of the four chapters that make up this work are self-explanatory: "Guide for Full Exegesis," "Exegesis and the Original Text," "Short Guide for Sermon Exegesis," and "Aids and Resources for the Steps to Exegesis." Each chapter is subdivided into numbered, progressive steps of proper exegesis. An "Analytical Table of Contents" becomes a cross-reference for each procedure.

Chap. 1 can serve as an excellent example of the well-thought-out organization of the book. The first section deals with the "Initial Steps for All Genres," and presents the reader with eight steps to follow. Then "Special Consideration for Different Genres" deals with each major division of NT literature; e.g., "Exegeting the Epistles," "Exegeting the Gospels," "Exegeting Acts," "Exegeting the Book of Revelation." Each of these different genres is subdivided into progressive steps that will help the reader to exegete the genre as a unique piece of literature. Then the chapter closes with a section that presents further steps in exegesis that are common to all genres.

Chap. 2 indicates how the original text should be handled. There is a section that shows how to deal with variant readings, another that shows how to analyze the structure of a Greek sentence and its grammar, and a section that shows how to do a word study. Important tools are introduced, as Arndt and Gingrich, Moulton and Milligan, Kittel, etc. The student is not only told where these tools are to be used in the successive steps of exegesis, but, more importantly, how they are to be used. This chapter closes with an explanation of how to establish the historical-cultural background of the passage being exegeted and how to analyze a pericope.

All of the foregoing help a student to organize and write a paper. To the credit of Fee, he has not forgotten the lifelong student who already occupies a pulpit and may feel unsure about doing exegesis for the purpose of sermon preparation. Chap. 3 is, as noted above, a "Short Guide for Sermon Exegesis." It, too, is divided into progressive steps that will help make exegesis an indispensable part of sermon preparation.

Finally, the last pages are devoted to resource tools that will aid in exegesis. These tools are divided into subsections that are cross-referenced

to the various steps in exegesis explained and demonstrated throughout the book.

Teachers of NT will find *New Testament Exegesis* to be a remedial tool that can be recommended to students who have problems in writing exegesis papers. They will also find it to be an excellent textbook for beginners. All students and pastors who take seriously the charge to rightly divide the Word of Truth will find this book to be a necessity for their libraries.

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Halpern, Baruch, and Levenson, Jon D., eds. *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981. xiv + 446 pp. \$22.50.

This tome, dedicated to Harvard University professor Frank Moore Cross, Jr., on his 60th birthday, is designed to open the world of modern biblical scholarship to the intelligent non-specialist and layperson. The task is accomplished in fourteen essays by specialists in various fields of study. The reader is confronted with a sample of each biblical period in the OT and NT and introduced to the cutting edge of contemporary critical scholarship. All chapters are explications and extensions of the wide areas of scholarship of Cross, to whom also "An Appreciation" (pp. 3-7) is dedicated by David Noel Freedman. This "Appreciation" contains many valuable insights into Cross's career and achievements.

The first essay is by John A. Miles, Jr., entitled, "Radical Editing: *Redaktionsgeschichte* and the Aesthetic of Willed Confusion" (pp. 9-31). It contains a strong reaction against the historical-critical method, calling for a full-fledged reappraisal of this entire methodology and revealing its internal problems.

An essay by Conrad E. L'Heureux on "Searching for the Origins of God" (pp. 33-57) makes accessible the principal conclusions of the historical study of the early religion of Israel and adds the dimension of theological reflection. Baruch Halpern has addressed the topic, "The Uneasy Compromise: Israel Between League and Monarchy" (pp. 59-96), by tracing Israel's history in the premonarchy period.

Under the heading, "Withholding the Word" (pp. 97-114), W. Janzen discusses the topic of false prophecy, while Robert B. Coote discusses the story of Elijah and Elisha in "Yahweh Recalls Elijah" (pp. 115-120). Richard J. Clifford, S. J., expounds Ps 78 in an essay entitled "In Zion and David a New Beginning: An Interpretation of Ps 78" (pp. 121-141); and