

One may regret, however, that Raitt does not commit herself more clearly on the thorny issue of Beza's role in the development of the doctrine of predestination. She seems to see in Beza's position an inevitable development of Calvin's thought. One cannot read her chapter, though, without being impressed by her ability to expose the unity of Beza's theology.

Robert Kolb's essay on Jakob Andreae and Derk Visser's on Zacharias Ursinus also deserve commendation for drawing clearly the theological framework of the thought of those men. John Donnelly has brought out the controversialist's skill of the Jesuit Peter Canisius. In a few of the essays, the biographical sections are excellent.

Moreover, one cannot help noticing the decidedly ecumenical spectrum of the book, which takes us from the Gnesio-Lutheran Matthias Flacius to the Unitarian Faustus Socinus, with stops on the way in the Reformed and Catholic streams.

The type face is very pleasant to the eye, and there are few mistakes. Ironically, what is perhaps the most glaring error appears on the first page of the editor's own chapter, where Beza's birthday is given correctly in the title as "1519" but appears seven lines later as "1516." Finally, it may be said that even though price-wise the book is not exactly cheap, its wide range of difficult-to-obtain material makes it nonetheless quite a bargain.

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Weber, Timothy P. *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982*. Enlarged edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983. viii + 305 pp. Paperback, \$8.95.

"One of the least expected developments in American religion since World War II," writes Timothy Weber, "has been the evangelical renaissance" (p. 3). Of special concern to Weber is the development of a widespread interest in Christian eschatology that has made it possible for Hal Lindsey's *Late Great Planet Earth* to sell over twelve million copies in such unlikely places as drugstores, supermarkets, and "secular" bookstores.

Part of Weber's purpose in producing this volume was to provide a clearer picture of the historical rise of this interest in biblical prophecy. More specifically, however, he purposed to "ask behavioral questions about the history of American premillennialism. . . . For example, what difference did believing in the imminent second coming of Christ make in the way people actually lived? How do modern, educated people behave in a growingly complex industrial society, when they are firmly convinced that

this age might suddenly be turned into the age to come by the personal return of Jesus Christ?" (p. 8). Thus, the word "living" in the title is quite accurate in revealing the book's primary purpose.

It is Weber's behavioral approach that differentiates his work from a mere reiteration of the evolution of premillennialism as a movement. This methodology, developed by Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., in *A Behavioral Approach to Historical Analysis* (New York, 1969), endeavors to supplement more traditional approaches to the historical craft, rather than to exclude them. It is Weber's behavioral analysis that constitutes his main contribution to our understanding of premillennial thought in American life.

Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming was originally formulated as a doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Martin E. Marty at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. In 1979, Oxford University Press published a revised version of Weber's dissertation that covered the period from 1875 through 1925. The recently published enlarged edition has brought the coverage up through 1982, and has thus caught the post-World-War-II interest in premillennialism that has been largely fueled by events related to the founding and growth of Israel as a nation.

Weber's subtitle, *American Premillennialism, 1875-1982*, is somewhat misleading, since he does not provide an account of the development and behavioral impact of premillennialism in general. Rather, he focuses on a particular variety of premillennialism—futurist, pretribulationist, dispensational premillennialism. Other positions (i.e., historicism, midtribulationism, and posttribulationism) are introduced briefly, to provide a context for Weber's discussion of pretribulationism. Perhaps his misleading subtitle can be forgiven, in view of the fact that pretribulationist dispensationalism is by far the majority view among American premillennialists. At any rate, Weber makes his focus clear in his introduction, even though he brings in some attention to posttribulationism and midtribulationism in his final chapter.

The first of Weber's nine chapters provides a context for his discussion throughout the volume. This chapter's focal point is the distinction between the "new premillennialists" (i.e., the dispensationalists) and the "old premillennialists" (i.e., the Millerites). In order to succeed in the latter part of the nineteenth century, according to Weber, the new premillennialists had to establish two related truths: "that they had nothing essentially in common with the discredited Millerites, and that they were just as evangelical and orthodox as the rest of the Protestant mainstream" (p. 16). Within the framework of these needs, chap. 1 briefly surveys dispensationalism's historical roots and its cardinal points of prophetic interpretation.

Chaps. 2, 3, and 4 are in many ways the core of the book in terms of the impact of premillennial belief on daily Christian living. These three chapters highlight the dilemma which the Christian premillennialist faces as he seeks to live responsibly in (and even improve) a world that is soon to be destroyed. Chap. 2 explores how premillennialists adjusted their personal lives in the light of an imminent second coming, while chaps. 3 and 4 probe the relationship between belief in an any-moment second coming and revivalism, world evangelization, and the inherited evangelical commitment to social reform. These three chapters shed light on issues faced by premillennialists of all stripes, and are of themselves worth the price of the book.

Subsequent chapters include the reactions of dispensationalists to World War I and issues of prophetic interpretation in the twentieth century, particularly with respect to those prophecies dealing with the reestablishment of Israel. Chaps. 5 through 9 provide extensive coverage of the historical development of this line of prophetic interpretation, but, unfortunately, do not remain especially faithful to the author's purpose of demonstrating how these beliefs influence behavioral life-styles.

Despite Weber's deviation from his primary purpose, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* is a volume that deserves serious attention from scholars who are interested in the history of fundamentalism, the development of dispensational thought, and the effect of this thought on Christian living.

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