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Becoming Human in New Community
Elisabeth and Jürgen Moltmann

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If Luther Were Alive Today . . .

He would be *very* old, 499 to be exact, a citizen of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), and incurably crotchety. Where would he stand on the ERA, a nuclear freeze, the governance of the emerging united Lutheran church of the United States, or reunion with the church of Rome? Would he and Katie hop a jet to the New World and hit major schools in a joint lecture tour?

That's what **Elisabeth and Jürgen Moltmann** did. Their dialogue essay is no debate, but an analysis by two highly-skilled theologians (who happen to be married to each other) of patriarchal domination, the wants of women, the church, and the feminine character of the Holy Spirit. Women want a whole life, filled with a trust that transcends biological death. They want the living God of the Bible, not the God distorted by a patriarchal system with its idols of power and domination. The true God can and does suffer; a "God" who is only almighty is a monster. Real loving makes others mature instead of smothering them. The Moltmanns urge us to begin to trust ourselves and the renewing power of our religious experience.

The older Luther, of whom **Helmar Junghans** writes, is the Reformer from 1526 (after the publication of the German Mass) until his death in 1546. Two-thirds of Luther's extant work comes from this period. Here he dealt with the question of church order, a necessary condition for the preaching of the Gospel. In his catechism, written in 1529, he also showed how trinitarian theology was an integral part of his message. For the older Luther history was a battle between the realm of God and the realm of Satan, leading to apocalyptic fears and fierce polemic. While many consider his calling Duke Henry a "screwball" (Hanswurst) to be in poor taste, it surely also shows that he was not a docile servant of princes. Perhaps most pastors and lay people today face challenges more analogous to those addressed by Luther in his later years, when controversial religious questions were no longer at the center as they once had been.

Ralph W. Klein calls for renewed reflection on what the Bible means by "Masters" and "Lords." The Old Testament had little

patience with oppressive masters, as is shown by the parable of Jotham, Samuel's critique of the monarchy, and the stories of Solomon, Naboth, and Jehoiakim. But the Bible also pushes for people to be responsible individuals capable of independent action. God needs human lovers of the poor and human peacemakers if his will is to be done on earth. Such "Lords" have their job description filled out in Genesis 1, Psalm 72, the messianic promises, and the Yahwist's theological interpretation of the p/matriarchs and the Exodus. True liberated leadership is kingship like that of Yahweh, passionate for the weak and intolerant of social inequities.

While we ask about the evangelical agenda for today, we keep on inquiring about the shape and substance of the theological argument back in Reformation times. **Hans Zorn** unpacks the term "necessitating Christ" against the background of Aristotelian science. God's unmerited forgiveness grasped by faith in Christ was the primary theological principle of the Confessors. They and we fail theologically if we are unable to show how this makes the death and resurrection of Christ absolutely necessary. Their theological practice was not all that different from their scientific method.

James A. Rimbach discusses those many prophets whose words were not preserved in the canon. Prophets existed long before kings, though conflict with the kings probably provided the impetus for gathering and preserving the prophetic words which were being ignored. The value of the prophetic word — then or now — is not dependent on whether the prophet's words see the light of printer's day.

One of the most massive and most promising Christologies of our day comes from a Roman Catholic, Edward Schillebeeckx. **David G. Truemper** helps us to see in it the intimate connection of soteriology and Christology. We have no access to the experience of salvation apart from the interpretation thereof in the New Testament, but the images of salvation in the New Testament do not exhaust or establish limits for the range of interpretive elements in the Christian experience of salvation. The good news about all this is that God exalted Jesus-the-failure, who trusted God and freely made God's cause the cause of his healing and freeing of humankind. Jesus is God's countenance towards us. He is especially concerned for the humble of the earth, all those who are crucified.

If Luther were alive today, he would have to wrestle with the issues here enunciated by voices we call Reformed, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran. Are not these the ones whom even a seven-year old knows are holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their Shepherd? (Smalcald Articles, XII) Is this not *how* Luther stays alive today?

Becoming Human in New Community

Elisabeth and Jürgen Moltmann

Dr. Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel is a doctor of theology and a free-lance writer. Prof. Jurgen Moltmann is professor of systematic theology at the University of Tubingen, Federal Republic of Germany. *This paper was presented at the WCC Consultation on the Community of Women and Men in the Church, held in Sheffield, UK, June 1981. It first appeared in The Ecumenical Review* published by the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland.

I

Elisabeth:

Church history begins when a few women set out to pay their last respects to their dead friend Jesus. It begins when, contrary to all reason and all hope, a few women identify themselves with a national traitor and do what they consider to be right, what in their eyes equals quality of life, namely, loving one who sacrificed his life, never abandoning him as dead. Church history begins when Jesus comes to them, greets them, lets them touch him just as he had touched and restored them in their lives. Church history begins when the women are told to share with the men this experience, this life they now comprehend, this life their hands have touched.

This story as told by Matthew is generally known as the Easter appearance to the women but never as the beginning of church history. Officially, church history begins with the mission of the men apostles and, officially, no women are present on that occasion. Right up to the present time many churches have traced their origin back to this apostolic succession. Almost all the leaders of these churches are male and depend mostly on males for their order and their ideas. The idea of God is conceived mainly in masculine terms: male leadership roles are used to describe what God does — he reigns, judges, governs; what God is corresponds to what men would like to be — judge, king, ruler, army commander. In the process, women's experiences of Jesus have been forgotten — Jesus as a friend who shares their life, and is ever near them, a friend who offers them warmth and tenderness in their loneliness and powerlessness. The feminist movement in the Western world has given many women the courage to discover themselves, to express again their own religious experiences, to read the Bible with fresh eyes and to rediscover their original and distinctive role in the Gospel. For these women feminism is not a white, Western, bourgeois movement but one deeply rooted in the Gospel.

In the social upheavals and cultural crises of the last 15 years many other groups have made the painful discovery that God is on the side of patriarchy. Above all, God has become a stranger to many women in the Western world. It is no longer possible for them to reconcile him with their conceptions of life and with their identity. Certainly, patriarchy is not to be blamed on the men. Men should not feel or be held personally responsible for it.

Patriarchy is a cultural form dating back thousands of years, and many cultural and economic achievements of our world would have been inconceivable without it. But, essentially in the last two centuries, disastrous associations with colonialism and racism, capitalism and

sexism, have arisen out of patriarchy, leading us to start seeking the fundamental causes of these evils. In the process it has become alarmingly clear that colonialism, capitalism, racism, and sexism have been supported, justified, and even religiously glorified by a patriarchal Christianity. "Gott mitt uns" ("God with us") were the words inscribed on every German soldier's belt buckle in the First World War. In the name of a triumphal, social-reforming God, people were enslaved, workers exploited, and women taught to hold their peace. And only minority groups of Christians protested against all this.

Today women are once again setting out to discover life, to enliven all that has become dead, to know Jesus as the One he once was for them. They are seeking to liberate themselves from the patriarchal domination in which their thinking was done for them as well as for others considered to be not fully adult. They want to free themselves from being treated like children, to be free from the tutelage which denies them any say at all, or allows them only a limited say, in society. They no longer want to accept the values imparted by the patriarchal world system — either for themselves or for their children or for society as a whole.

What do women want?

I would like to take a little time to consider this question, for many people even in the Church are afraid of women. Men are afraid that women hate them, women are afraid of women who could cause their traditional roles to become insecure. There is a fear of any kind of radicalism which supposedly is not in harmony with the love of Christ. What women want is a new community in which those with power begin to listen to those without power. A community where there are opportunities for the powerless to express themselves and get organized. A community in which power is redistributed and those in power learn to give up their power — for the sake of justice. Women want a community which is not obsessed with profit and economic growth but concerned with the basic needs of all human beings. They are able to stand up for all this passionately and credibly because they have first-hand experience of what it is like to be treated like children, to be in tutelage, without rights, to live a life at second-hand (the husband's or the man's), to give life but to be allowed to fashion it only within a limited domestic circle and not in society as a whole.

What women want is a whole life, one which embraces body, soul, and spirit, no longer compartmentalized into private and public spheres; a life, moreover, which fills us with a trust and hope transcending biological death.

This seems a huge and impossible utopian program. In the last analysis, however, it is simply taking seriously what can be read in the prophet Isaiah's visions of peace and a part of what the apostle Paul once recognized, in a flash of inspiration: namely, that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female. It is also the old vision of the women



which we find in the song of Miriam, one of the oldest passages in the Bible: trust in the God who has thrown horse and rider — today we can say sex and domination — into the sea. This feminine tradition, which is found in many women's songs — of Hannah, of Deborah, Judith, and Mary's Magnificat — and which has always been with us, makes us keenly aware of what is happening in the world and what is going on within ourselves, in our bodies, in our souls, and in our spirit.

— Women on the way to discover life.

— Women in a church which is firmly in masculine hands.

— In which direction lies the way?

Certainly away from a patriarchy in which women have been oppressed, silenced, and are unable to speak for themselves. Away, too, from the Church and its patriarchal structures? Away, too, from God, who — as Kate Millet said — was always tied to patriarchy or, to be more precise, was always occupied with patriarchy? For many women — even among us — this decision still has to be made.

Jürgen:

You have been asking: is God on the side of patriarchy? Let me attempt to answer that by being self-critical and asking which God this is.

It was not Christianity which introduced patriarchy into the world. Patriarchy is a very ancient and widespread system of male domination. Christianity proved incapable of successfully opposing this system. Indeed, quite early on, Christianity was already taken over by men and made to serve patriarchy. This had a crippling effect on its liberating potential, as has been perceived by theologians of hope, liberation theologians, and political theologians in other contexts, when they criticized the "Constantinian captivity" of the Church. It has now been fully demonstrated by feminist theology. The liberation of woman and then of man from patriarchy goes hand in hand, therefore, with a rediscovery of the freedom of Jesus and of the energies of the Holy Spirit. Leaving the monotheistic God of rulers and males behind us, we shall discover from the sources of Christianity the god who is in relationship, the God who can suffer, the uniting God, the God of fellowship and of community. This is the living God, the God of Life, who was distorted through a patriarchal system with its idols of power and domination. In this living God the male, too, will experience deliverance from the distortions which he himself has suffered and still suffers under patriarchy.

Oppression obviously has two sides: one the one side, there is the tyrant, on the other side, the slave; here the dominating man and there the serving woman. Oppression destroys humanity on both sides: the oppressed person is robbed of humanity and the oppressor becomes an inhuman monster. Both suffer alienation from their true nature, with the difference, of course, that one of them suffers in consequence, whereas

the other appears to feel fine. On both sides, however, liberation from oppression is needed. But how is this possible for men, whose ideas and feelings are deeply influenced by patriarchy and who seem to enjoy their privileges?

The starting point for us men, just as it is for you women, is to become aware of the real situation and to realize the extent to which patriarchy cheats us out of the blessings of true Life. Each man can achieve this anamnesis for himself by asking how he was trained as a child to "become a man," what feelings he was expected to suppress, what instincts he had to control, what roles he was taught to adopt. He was trained to be a worker, a soldier, a father, a breadwinner, a conquerer, and a ruler. The first lessons he learned, therefore, were self-control and self-possession. He was terrified of becoming a "nothing," a "nobody," and ruled by the desire to "make something of himself."

Patriarchy cut the male in half. It split him into a subject, consisting of reason and will, and an object, consisting of heart, feelings, and physical needs. He had to identify himself with the former and keep his distance from the latter. This isolated the male and brought about a certain self-hatred. This division in the male is reflected and takes an aggressive form in the male subjugation and domination of the supposedly "frail," "emotional," and "physical" women. It is also reflected in the other reality that every ruler not only needs people at his command but also a throne to sit on. As can be seen from such symbols as Isis and Horus, Mary and the child Jesus, the throne on which the male ruler is seated is the mother. This division of the woman into mother and wife is a product of patriarchy. Unresolved mother-fixations and "machismo" vis-a-vis other women go together. There must be an end to both mothering and domination if the man is to become free and mature.

The distress of the divided and isolated male is reflected in the majesty of the God of patriarchy. He is the Almighty, the Lord, the Absolute. He determines everything; nothing influences him. He is incapable of suffering. According to Aristotle, He loves only himself and causes everything to accord with his self-love. If He is assigned human traits, they are male traits. Knowledge of him ascends from the family patriarch *(pater familias)* to the national patriarch *(pater patriae)*, from the national patriarch to the patriarch of the Church, and finally reaches the greatest patriarch, the Father of all in heaven *(omnipater)*. And in the legitimation of authorities, one then descends from the heavenly Father of all downwards. Between this heavenly Father of all and the mystery of Jesus' Abba-Father there is no connection. On the contrary, this God of patriarchy arises from the first division of the world into heaven and earth: heavenly father-mother earth.

The God of patriarchy is often portrayed through Christian forms in terms of the head and the body. The man is the head of the woman, Christ is the head of the man, God is the head of Christ (I Cor. 11). Only under the man as head is the woman in God's image, but not for herself alone (Augustine, Thomas Aquinas). He is the leader, she the led (Karl Barth).

The distress of the male Ruler-God lies in his lack of a name and his loneliness. He is defined only by his function as ruler and proprietor of the world. Who he himself is remains unknown. Thus patriarchy divides, separates and isolates God. A God who is no more than "the Almighty" is not a God but a monster. Any man who emulates this God becomes a hapless beast; he is no more than an ex-

pression of the will to power. Since the modern, white male became afflicted with this "God complex" (H. E. Richter), patriarchy has ceased to be a source of order and protection and has instead become a source of destruction and fear.

You said that women today are on the way to discover life, a life which is whole and one of community. Men who wish to discover life for themselves and then in community with women must shake off the pressure of patriarchy as they would some nightmare and eliminate these suppressions of true life, so as to become full human beings. What happens to us here is rather like what happened to the disciples who hear the women's Easter message and then, half believing, half disbelieving, go off to find for themselves the living Lord whom they had forsaken shortly before his crucifixion. In this common "resurrection-movement" we men could discover "the new community of women and men" which delivers us from patriarchal distortions and opens up to us the wholeness of human life.

Elisabeth:

Both men and women are crippled, but in different ways and with different consequences. You still cling to the throne of Isis, even though we no longer want to be the mothers who carry Horus.

Women today, therefore, should lead the way to a new community of women and men. They should do so not so much in order to make good the discrimination they have suffered and the injustice which has been inflicted on them. This precedence of women need not be humiliating to men. They should see it more as an opportunity to leave women room to discover and point out the obstacles along the way. For only in this way can a sustainable community grow.

Since we began to discover what *our* life is, our life as women, our life in solidarity with all the women in the world who suffer discrimination, our spiritual life, our life as Christian women, a life which we want to take hold of, feel, endure, change, we have constantly come into collision with the barriers of our Christian tradition: our faith is the faith of the "fathers." Our religious testimonies are derived from a Bible edited by the patriarchs, obviously to the exclusion of any female participation in the process. Christian life is celebrated in our hymns in a paternalistic style. In our theology the man "leads" and the woman is "led" (Karl Barth). And when we inspect it in greater detail, we find that the tradition from which we are supposed to live is full to the brim of hostility to women. In any case, the life assigned to us as women is not a whole life. According to one biblical passage, we women are to be saved by childbearing, you men by faith. We are to hold our peace, you are permitted to speak. We tempted you and were the first to sin. But even if we turn a blind eye to these biblical blunders, the life assigned to women is a life at second-hand, life as supplementing that of the man, life from the Spirit and the Word but not life in the unity of body, soul, and spirit. In the distorted, patriarchalist view, our body has for far too long been considered embarrassing, unclean, repulsive. In short, it is not life in its wholeness but a halved life.

Can the Christian tradition offer us any help to extricate ourselves from this halved life? Where do the sources and motivations exist for this in respect of our identity? What Christian traditions can accompany and support us on the way to wholeness? What Christian traditions can also help the man to be "whole" and give him an identity other than that of a patriarch?

Jürgen:

It is very true that the biblical, Christian, and church traditions were mainly written and edited by dominating men. At first sight, therefore, they provide little help for the liberation of the woman. History, it has been said, is always written by the victors. The oppressed have even been deprived of the conscious memorial of their own history of defeat and suffering. But these traditions "from above" can also be read, contrary to their intentions, "from below." When we do this we discover in the histories of tyrants the suppressed histories also of the rebels against tyranny. In this sense, in and underlying the male history of the Church there is also a history of Christian women, a female history of the Church. To some extent, you yourself have rediscovered this history and found within it symbols and motifs which can lead women out of a divided life and into a whole life. Let me mention only three examples:

1) For centuries, Christians have learned the story of the fall as it is told in the second account of creation (J), and told extremely graphically. This account also includes the first male disclaimer of guilt: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree. . . ." (Gen. 3:12) Unfortunately, we find this in the New Testament as well: "For Adam was created first, and afterwards Eve; and it was not Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who, yielding to deception, fell into sin." (I Tim. 2:13-14) This was used to prove woman's inferiority.

The story of the fall as told in the first account of creation in the Priestly tradition (P) was more or less forgotten. This tradition makes no mention of the apple, the woman, and the serpent, or of Adam — innocent if not very bright — but speaks of something quite different: "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence." (Gen. 6:11) Of what did the corruption and sin consist? It consisted in the spread of "violence" among humans and animals. God therefore decided on the destruction of both in the flood. Evil and sin here are at their origin nothing other than violence, brutality, and "rape." Redemption means, therefore, a "non-violent life" as commanded and promised by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. If we had paid heed to this account of creation, the myth of women's inferiority would not have arisen.

2) Women today ask sharply: "Is God a man?" In fact, the Christian doctrine of God is spoken of chiefly in male terms: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Is this really true, though? There is an ancient but suppressed tradition of the maternal office of the Holy Spirit, the divine motherhood. The Christian communities which were subsequently driven out of the mainline men's Church found it natural to speak of the Spirit as the mother of Jesus. In Ethiopian pictures of the Trinity the Spirit is depicted as a mother. The nuclear family of Adam, Eve, and Seth was often used by the Greek church fathers, too, as an image of the Triune God on earth, which certainly presupposes that the Holy



Spirit is female and archteype of the mother. Nor was it mere chance that Count Zinzendorf rediscovered the maternal office — the motherhood — of the Holy Spirit when founding the Pennsylvania community of brothers and sisters in 1741: "This is the divine family upon earth, for the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our true Father, the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ is our true Mother, because the Son of the living God is our true brother."

Personally I find this idea helpful not only because it discovers the female principle in the Godhead but also because it picks up an element of the truth in pantheism. If the Spirit is our mother, then I am able to feel that I am not only "under God," but also "in God." This idea delivers me from one-sided monotheistic father images of God and helps me to experience the whole God with my whole being. It helps me to find the community-God in our own community.

3) Finally, it seems to me that the undoubtedly difficult and abstract development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Christian concept of God was nevertheless already itself paving the way for victory over the masculine Ruler-God. It is true, of course, that "Trinity" sounds just like something out of the abstract male theology "from above." What I mean by it, however, is the mysterious whole by which our whole life is embraced.

There is always a mutual interaction between knowledge of God and our self-knowledge. The theology of the Western Church located the divine image of humanity in our "reasonable soul" which governs the body. By its control over itself and over the earth, humanity (i.e., the male) corresponds to the Ruler-God. Individualism in the view of humanity and monotheism in the view of God are twinborn.

Since we know today that humanity constitutes a unity of body, soul, and spirit and finds its salvation in experiencing the wholeness of life, it cannot only be the human soul which is the divine image on earth. Humanity itself in its bodily nature, humanity itself in the community of women and men, corresponds to God. To which God? There can only be one answer: to the God in relationship, the unifying God, the God of community, i.e., the Triune God. The rule of this God is not "divide and conquer" *(divide et impera);* the Triune God is present, rather, in the uniting of the divided and in the healing of what is separated and torn into pieces. The mighty man may be an imitation of the Almighty but only a human community in which human beings have all things in common and share all things, irrespective of individual characteristics, can be an image of the Triune God. This thought helps me personally to seek God not only in the heaven above, not only in the inward depths of the soul, but also and above all between us in our community.

You asked: What can help us to liberate ourselves from our divided life? What Christian traditions can help us along the way to wholeness? Our traditions are always a collection of past hopes

and past experiences. These have their value, but it is only a limited value. No tradition can settle the future. At best, traditions can prepare the way into the future. What the Spirit itself creates is always something new and always full of surprises. The Spirit is not tied to the traditions but takes from them that which points the way to the future. Christianity is more than a tradition, it is a hope.

Elisabeth:

Many women will still find it difficult to rediscover themselves in the female correlations of male conceptions of God. What they are really asking is whether we women should rediscover our identity in male symbols — supplemented by feminine ideals.

They will put more trust in their own imaginations than in the tradition. They are already developing their own language: God is the baker's woman. Jesus can be their sister. They can pray: "Our Father-Mother in heaven . . ." Feminist theology — its very name sends cold shivers up the spine of many theologians! — is for many women the only possible way they can speak freely and discover themselves to be daughters of God. Women have a culture of their own. It is still very different in the different countries in Asia and in Africa. It is a more concrete and pictorial culture than the corresponding male culture in each case, though it is often buried underground. For us, therefore, theo-phantasy takes its place alongside theology and frequently re-excavates the buried sources.

For theology, largely commandeered by men, what matters most is that it should take seriously not only past experiences and traditions but also contemporary and coming experiences and traditions — theo-phantasy. Life — including Christian life — is much more diverse and colorful than any written tradition. What will be important here is that men learn to listen and to sit at the feet of women, as Mary sat at the feet of Jesus.

II

Elisabeth:

A new community can only mature and bear fruit if women remain autonomous human beings. The contribution they can make to community will not be a vital and lively one unless they retain their singularity, specificity, distinctiveness as women. The life women have been looking for and have now rediscovered will only become everyone's common concern if they continue to make it their cause.

Many find that statement difficult and paradoxical, women as well as men. We are used to thinking of the Church as a great big loving family in which everyone is self-effacing for the sake of the others, forgetful of self in the interests of a great cause. Everyone and everything should be united in one great first person plural — one great "we."

If women and men are to come together in a new community, they must say goodbye to such wishful thinking. They must each separately accept the pain of division and even the possible deprivation of love. They can discover themselves, in their wholeness with all its unexplored possibilities.

Many women in the Church may find this particularly hard to accept, for they have gotten used to sacrificing themselves readily, taking a back seat; it has become almost second nature to accept that this is their Christian lifestyle. Men find it hard because they have gotten used to working with women who are always eager to help and because, in virtue of their official rank in the churches and the power that goes with it, the men have

turned the cause of Jesus into a patriarchy of love. We have to relearn what loving means; we must learn a love which makes others mature instead of smothering them or glorifying them, a love which creates an area in which there is no domination.

The responsibility which men have become accustomed to assume and the renunciation which women have become accustomed to practice are patterns of behavior which derive from a strict allocation of sex roles. The life of our churches is based on patriarchal patterns of behavior from which no new community can possibly grow today. Women have begun to free themselves from these roles. How are the men to be liberated from these roles?

Jürgen:

Before I come to the question of the Church, I think I should try to develop one point a little further. It is the men who are mainly "disconcerted" by women who emancipate themselves from age-old subjection. Women should not cover this fact up out of love nor should we men deny it out of pride. We are becoming insecure in the masculine roles which have been instilled into us. We have to relearn everything, and every existential experience of relearning is painful. But the problem lies still deeper. The man also feels that his manly pride is violated. His sense of self-respect is shaken. His patriarchal identity disintegrates. He no longer knows who he really is. One reaction to this is aggression. But the most common reaction is depression.

Women are experiencing their new identity, their dignity and their liberation into complete humanity. The reason men find it difficult to follow them in this way is because, to discover the starting point for their liberation into complete humanity, they have first of all to return deep into themselves. They have to break through the hard crusts of their alienation in order to reach the core of their human nature. Moreover, man must abandon self-righteousness if he is to learn to trust his humanity. To put it simply, the ruling "lord" in man must die so that the brother can be born, ready for honest friendship.

For men this also means no longer identifying themselves with the male caste but instead breaking out of the male code. To do so may earn them contempt and they can become lonely. In the education of the child to "manhood," the male caste has always played the leading part. It also brands its dissenters as "traitors."

Any man who is willing to abandon the masculine privileges conferred on him by the patriarchal society must also learn to abandon his male responsibility for the so-called "weaker sex." The "noble," "knightly," and "gentlemanly" overtones of this morality make its abandonment particularly difficult for many of us. But men who welcome and respect the coming of age of the woman must also learn to limit and to give up this "responsibility" feeling.

III

Elisabeth:

The churches sometimes seem to me just like these men's associations. Can they possibly cope today when so many women who have been kept in tutelage are "coming of age"? Is the Church prepared to take seriously these women who have rediscovered their subjectivity?

And by "taking them seriously" I mean recognizing their rights and according them power. This subjectivity is potentially explosive; it could produce an explosion of previously pent-up creativity. It has implications for many church traditions. It calls into question religious images and forms of church life. Many women today are saying: "We are the Church." Does their way lead to a new community of men and women?

Jürgen:

The Christian Church finds it particularly difficult to limit responsibility clearly. The reason for this is that, in the Church, the supreme values are service, care, sacrifice for others, and therefore, responsibility. This mild dictatorship of love, this "patriarchy of love," as you call it, is very difficult to escape from. Are not Christians always on active service and do they not exist only "for others"? I also used to believe that, but not any more. It now seems to me to be actually false and a concealed from of domination. Christians are in the first place simply "with others." Only as those who delight in life with others do they then, when need arises, also sacrifice themselves "for others." Their love comes up against its boundary in the autonomy of others. Not even Jesus came to fetter human beings to himself by his ministry, to make himself indispensable for them. "Your faith has saved you," he habitually says when people want to thank him for being healed. Your *own faith! God himself exists "for us" only* in our distress, for it is his will to live "with us" in eternity. He wants us as "autonomous human beings," as you rightly said.

As long as a church regards itself as a "servant church," as a "church for the nation," or a "church for the world," or "a church for others," it will always regard the subjectivity and adulthood of those it "cares for" as a threat to itself. Only when this "caring-from-above" church becomes a community of the people will it welcome the autonomous subjectivity of women, of workers, of disabled people, as energy of the Spirit. In the established churches there are few women pastors and only one woman bishop. But in many basic communities in Latin America, the leadership of women is a matter of course. Up to the present, only persecuted communities and basic communities have experienced the full range of charismata in the free community of men and women, a community without above and below. Paradoxically enough, it will be from "below" that the Spirit will come into the established male churches. We should look for the Spirit where human beings become autonomous agents of their own life and take the initiative for themselves.

IV

Elisabeth:

The power which is renewing women today in opposition to patriarchal struc-



tures and their own insecurity and discouragement, the power which liberates them and enables them to stand upright like the healed crippled woman, the power which enables them to discover their sisters, is the power of the Holy Spirit. For many women, the Spirit was for long enough something exceptional, miraculous. But many of them are now finding in the power of the Spirit that self-identification which the male Church, the male God, the man Jesus, was unable to give them. They speak of the Holy Spirit as female, the Holy Spirit who in the language of Jesus really was also of the female gender. This is not something which is happening for the first time today. In the long history of the patriarchal Church women were able again and again to breach the dominant structures in the power of the Holy Spirit. But the Church constantly distrusted both the women and the Spirit, condemning their works as extremism, heresy, paganism. The Holy Spirit was chained to official ministries and robbed of renewing power.

Today — on the way to a new community — is it possible for us to begin trusting the Holy Spirit once again? The Spirit of extremists, crackpots, outsiders, visionaries, the Spirit of those who saw and touched life as did the women on Easter morning and whose reports seemed to the disciples as no more than "idle tales"? Can we — contrary to all reason — venture together on a new start in the name of this Spirit? Can the age-old suspicion and distrust of women — except when the speak cautiously, rationally, in a male language — be dispelled?

Jürgen:

Many find it hard to accept the feminist appeal to the Holy Spirit because they are not sure whether it is really the Holy Spirit or some other spirit they are appealing to. There have always been many different charismatic and spiritistic communities, inspired by a variety of spirits, not only the divine. Fearing the chaos of spirits, therefore, the Church quite early in its history tied the Holy Spirit to the successive holders of the episcopal office, especially in the old doctrine of the monarchical episcopate. In addition, the Western Church also tied the Spirit to the chain of Christology by means of the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed. The Spirit then becomes simply the internal subjective reality of Christ, of the Word and Sacraments of the Church. No room is then left for the creatively new or for the surprises of the Holy Spirit, nor even room to expect them.

If we are to be ready for the new and surprising work of the Holy Spirit, I suggest we differentiate more clearly between the *source of the Spirit* and the *criterion for discerning the spirits.*

The source of the Spirit is God, and what comes from this source is as colorful and diverse as creation itself. This is why, when Christians in the New Testament speak of the Spirit, they always speak in superlatives of the fullness, the richness,

the inexhaustability of the Spirit. This was how they themselves experienced the Spirit. Everyone had gifts of the Spirit in abundance. None suffered any lack there.

But the criterion for differentiating between the different spirits was for them the remembrance of the crucified Christ. Anything that could stand in the presence of the crucified Christ was divine Spirit. Anything that contradicted the crucified Christ, because it was the spirit of power or vanity, was rejected.

To come back to the story we began with, how did the women actually recognize the risen and living Christ? They might also have taken him for a ghost or some other figure. They recognized the risen Jesus at once because they had remained faithful to him right up to his death on the cross. They recognized him at once by the marks of the nails and from his way of dealing with them, familiar to them from experience. Nor is the life-giving Spirit to be recognized in any other way. The Spirit brings us into the liberating community of Jesus and brings Jesus into our midst in a uniting way.

Elisabeth:

One question I find inescapable: how did it happen that this experience of the women sank so soon without trace? How are we to explain the fact that almost 2000 years ago a viable community of women and men failed to materialize? Was it the fault of the women, who showed more confidence in the social structures than they did in themselves, obeyed men more than they did God, retreated into their ancient female roles and failed to trust in the renewing power of the resurrection? In our different countries and different churches we champion the cause of the women. Some of these women are struggling simply to survive; others are claiming their right to be pastors or priests. It is a question of money, influence, teaching posts, a better social order. We live in different societies and have different assumptions.

There is one thing, it seems to me, which is important and which we all share: all of us need to begin again to trust ourselves and the renewing power of our religious experience; to trust our capacity to communicate life by all our senses and energies; not to give up in the face of overwhelming structures and never to lapse back again into an illegitimate obedience; to become ourselves again, in body, soul, and spirit, so that this spark may spread to men, to brothers and fathers, to mothers and children.

Interpreting the Old Luther (1526-1546)

Helmar Jünghans

Professor of Church History, Karl Marx University, Leipzig, German Democratic Republic. *This essay was translated from the German by Inge Forssman. Stylistic revisions by Maria Grossmann, Walter Grossmann, Frank G. Parker, and Ralph W. Klein are gratefully acknowledged by the author.*

Whoever treats Luther's life between 1526 and 1546 need not complain about a lack of sources. In the Weimar edition of Luther's works, volumes 19 through 54 cover this period. This includes 46 volumes, some of them being divided into several parts. One can also trace Luther's thoughts and actions after 1526 via his correspondence, as collected in volumes 4 to 12. Six volumes of his table talks deal with the years 1529 to 1546. Even the texts pertinent to Luther's translation of the Scriptures, published in the section "Deutsche Bibel" of the Weimar edition, mostly date from the years after 1526. In sum, two-thirds of Luther's extant work date from this last period of his life. It all bears witness to the continuous productive power of the Reformer.

On the other hand, the amount of research published about the later period of Luther's life is rather scarce after 1918. Less than one-third deals with Luther's life after the German Peasants' War. Although some of Luther's later works have been investigated several times, for instance his discussion with Zwingli and his confessional writings, the Luther research of the twentieth century has been concerned primarily with Luther developing into a Reformer and with the early period of his life. This fact induced Heinrich Bornkamm, on the occasion of the first international congress of Luther research in Aarhus in 1956, to encourage his audience to begin work on the older Luther. Bornkamm advised his daughter Karin to write her doctoral thesis on a late publication of Luther, his lecture of 1531 on the epistle to the Galatians, a task she carried out with excellence. More recent publications include Wolfgang Günter's *Martin Luthers Vorstellung von der Reichsverfassung* (Munster, 1976), Eike Wolgast's *Die Wittenberger Theologie und die Politik der evangelischen Stände* (Gütersloh, 1977), and H. G. Haile's *Luther: an Experiment in Biography* (1980).

Haile placed the older Luther into the center of his presentation. Hence some readers will miss the description of the decisive early developments known to have been of importance for Luther's life and history. But he thereby avoided the danger of getting lost somewhere between 1511 and 1519 in a fruitless search for a date on which Luther discovered the essence of the message of the Reformation. Taking too much time with the early Luther could have resulted in Haile's never arriving at the point of Luther's presence at the Diet of Worms in 1521, or his meeting with the Nuncio Pietro Paolo Vergerio in 1535.

Because of the surprising scarcity of published research on the older Luther, a team of theologians concerned. with research on the history of the Reformation, which meets once a year in the German Democratic Republic, is working on a commemorative publication for the Luther year 1983 that is *restricted* to Luther's life from 1526 to 1546. More than forty authors have cooperated. The

manuscript is now complete, and we cherish the hope that it will be published before the Luther jubilee in 1983, and that it will encourage others to work on the later Luther. What are the reasons for talk about an older Luther and for drawing the line at the year 1526?

The Periodization of Luther's Life

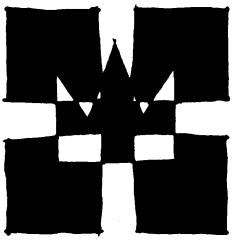
Heinrich Boehmer's famous Luther biography, entitled *Der Junge Luther* (literally, The Young Luther. Its American edition was called *Martin Luther: Road to Reformation)* ended with Luther's sojourn at the Wartburg. There Luther celebrated his 38th birthday on the 10th of November 1521. Even nowadays, one is not considered overly young at 38. For the sixteenth century such a classification is even less helpful since the general life expectancy was so much lower than today. For most people, of course, the "Young Luther" is the Luther before the posting of his theses in 1517, even if that makes him only four years younger. Only his reformation theology was "young" at that time. Much could be said for labelling the period of his life before his entry into the monastery in 1505 as the period of the "young Luther." But it would not be worthwhile to try to introduce a new usage. Anyway, we should always bear in mind that the expression "the young Luther" should be applied more to Luther as a Reformer than to Luther as a biologically young man, and that he in no way should be treated as a case for a youth psychologist.

After Boehmer's untimely death, Bornkamm extended Boehmer's biography of Luther, entitling his book, *Martin Luther in the Middle of His Life.* It covers Luther's life until 1530. Bornkamm intended to continue the story until 1532, the year when the Edict of Worms was muted, but not voided. It is a sensible periodization, based on Luther's legal status within the German Empire. Unfortunately, Bornkamm died before completing this project.

If we follow Boehmer, the concept of the young Luther includes the Edict of Worms when Luther was outlawed. The following years were made difficult by the repeated demand of the Roman Catholic church to put this edict into effect. Beyond any doubt, this threat was not unimportant for Luther. But was the Edict of Worms really so important for him that a periodization based on it is of any great help for understanding Luther's life? Were the reactions of pope and emperor more important for Luther than his own spiritual and theological experiences? It is preferable to build our periodization on Luther's reformatory achievements. This would result in three major divisions:

a) The Origin of the Reformatory Message

The first period covers Luther's development before he published his



new insights for a wider public. The *Turmerlebnis* (the well-known tower episode) does not really divide Luther's life into a pre-reformatory and a reformatory period. First of all, we cannot fix the day when Luther was overwhelmed by his new understanding of God's justice. In addition, such a division would obscure the fact that Luther did not transform overnight from a Scholastic into a Reformer, nor change his theology within 24 hours. Rather, he detached himself rather slowly from the scholastic tradition, as he more and more applied the philological method, developed by the biblical humanists, to his exegesis. His new understanding of the Bible gradually permeated his interpretation of the Gospel and thus of his reformatory message. There have been high points and surprising discoveries which deeply moved Luther, but we may be sure that these discoveries only developed that which had already begun in Erfurt. Luther did not deliberately search for a definite answer, but he came to it against his own expectations. This process may be described with the abstract word "development." Later indeed it was evident to Luther that God was the cause of this process. This formation of the reformatory theology led to a disputation. In September 1517, he conducted a disputation that was a direct attack on scholastic theology, and which signalled that the basic concepts of a new theology had appeared.

b) The Demand for a Reformation

When Luther sent his 95 theses concerning indulgences to Albrecht of Brandenburg, archbishop of Magdeburg and Mainz, a new epoch in his life began. Up to October 31, 1517, Luther had reported his insights to his students or discussed them with friends. Now he called on the archbishop, his religious superior, to withdraw the instructions for granting of indulgences and to direct the preachers of indulgences to undertake a different approach. Luther thereby put forth a substantial demand for change in the church. The ensuing trial against Luther incited him to additional demands of reform that shook the church to its foundations though he was reluctant to introduce these changes himself. At first he expected them to come from the ecclesiastical authorities. After 1520 he looked to the secular authorities. Luther welcomed all Christians who on their own broke with the medieval church, but he firmly opposed all those who attempted to found a new evangelical church in an unauthorized, legalistic, or premature manner, and who wanted to force it upon others.

c) The Realization of the Reformation

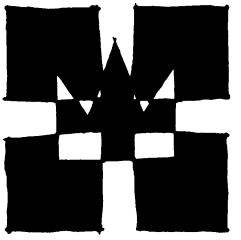
In the third period Luther personally implemented the Reformation. On October 9, 1524, he took off his monk's habit and read his sermon in a black gown. He demanded the end of the mass in the Castle Church at Wittenberg. On

June 23, 1525 he married and thus broke the law of celibacy against which he had preached and written for years.

In this context, the death of the elector Frederick the Wise, on May 5, 1525, had important consequences for Luther himself. This prince had freely tolerated the preaching of the reformatory message and the defection of some of his subjects from late medieval piety or even the papal law. Monks and nuns were openly leaving their monasteries. But now the prince's brother and successor, John the Constant, decided to support the Reformation in his territories, including its new organizational forms. During his rule well organized church visitations launched the establishment of an evangelical church. As a result of this imperial policy, the Diet of Speyer facilitated the establishment of a new church. But Luther was now overwhelmed with responsibilities and disappointments. They mark this period of his life to such an extent that I think we should look at the rest of Luther's life from this aspect and designate it as, "the older Luther." Of course, no new period in history brings with it something altogether new, and old problems do not evaporate overnight. Even before 1526 Luther based the expansion of the Reformation on the preaching of the Gospel. But something new was now the focal point. Thus we are entitled to recognize a division with the introduction of the German Mass in the fall of 1525. When the German Mass left the printer's press on January 1, 1526, it hinted to the public that in Wittenberg the Reformation was about to take on its own special form of organization.

The Unfolding of Reformatory Theology

The formidible work of the later Luther is not merely a repetition of what he had written before 1526. I would describe it rather as an "unfolding." In choosing this word I want to avoid the word "development" as it could easily contribute to the misconception that Luther developed a theological system out of a specific theological insight, a theological system in which all statements were closely associated. Such an understanding is incorrect for two reasons: on the one hand, it assumes that Luther made use of the scholastic method when he wrote down his theological statements, whereas it is well known that he resolutely fought against this brand of theology. On the other hand, we must also keep in mind that the idea of a unified system in philosophy and theology has developed only within the last two hundred years. Whenever research looked for such systems in earlier times, it ran into many road blocks. In fact, Luther never argued by means of philosophical logic, but tried to understand the Holy Scriptures in their entirety though he centered around certain insights that for him were essentially the Gospel. Thus Luther's



theology can no more be a uniform system than can the biblical tradition.

Let me take the liberty to interpret the term "unfolding." Think of a long and broad strip of paper that is folded up. Now Luther is the writer or the painter who fills sheet after sheet. These sheets are by no means alike. They are marked by religious experiences, biblical texts, works of tradition (creeds of the early church), inquiries of friends, attacks of enemies, and historical events. Day by day, challenges of every sort are unfolded in front of Luther, and he covers these sheets with his answers. He does it in quite different ways. He chooses indistinct colors when he himself is still searching and questioning; he uses soft colors when he comforts or invites us to participate in the Gospel; he sketches in lively colors to make people realize their problems; and he sketches with rough strokes and in the harshest colors when he fights against his enemies, above all against the devil.

In this manner a post card folder is produced, in which about 800 cards are covered with essays, about 2,500 are covered with sermons, and over 3,000 with letters all written by Luther himself.

Today, this "long map" is unfolded for all of us, and it reveals a multicolored picture. Yet, all the different maps are attached to each other. Evidently Luther created this diversified opus out of some fundamental insights of reformatory theology. Indeed, there is essentially no disagreement between the young and the old Luther, as we have emphasized several times. He who wants to reduce Luther's statements to a few abstract findings will put aside many ideas of the later Luther as insignificant. In fact, however, this very diversity represents great riches. Whoever interprets the texts of the mature Luther should not only ask for the central ideas, but will have to take seriously the motives behind every individual publication as well as its historical background. We must check closely the respective leaf of the folded map and work out its identities with and its differences from former statements on the same set of problems. We need to find out in which way Luther enlarged, differentiated or even corrected his former insights. That's what I mean by his "unfolding" theology.

Word and Order

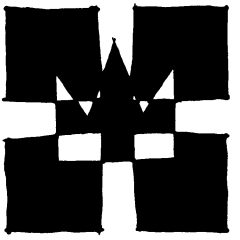
The young Luther felt it to be his most important task to understand God's word in the right way, to liberate it from the scholastic interpretations, and so to discover the true Gospel. This was his first goal toward the public. But when in 1522, under the leadership of Andreas Bodenstein from Karlstadt, the town council of Wittenberg introduced a new church order, Luther strongly opposed it. He reduced the contrast between his ideas and the deeds of the Wittenbergers to the formula: "By means of the word, not by force." But as Luther became

older, he felt that sometimes one had to rely on force. We have to notice, however, that for him force meant a universally accepted order and not just the execution of punishment. When the evangelical church was established with the help of the Saxon electors, political authority took measures to guarantee the security and the functioning of the church. If it had not, the property of the church would have been threatened to be taken over completely by the nobility and by the city governments. Many resources would have been lost for the church, for the schools, and for the support of the poor. Not only was the property question settled by the use of force, but at the same time unorthodox and unqualified priests were evicted,though this was done with the utmost discretion. Did the older Luther act contrary to the Luther before 1526 or had he only unfolded former ideas?

Luther was so elated about the discovery of the Gospel of God's gracious love that it seemed to him natural that everybody else would gladly accept this view of the Gospel. The rapid spreading of his publications and the vast response they aroused seemed to justify him. However, ecclesiastical visitations showed that the masses were by no means elated by the message of the Reformation. Quite a few discarded their obligations towards the papal church, but did not work for the new church. No longer could Luther explain the election of new ministers as founded only upon the desire of the congregations to obtain a preacher of the Gospel. Rather, he addressed the territorial princes and urged them, as the most important members of each parish, to provide for the spiritual care of the congregation. Luther conceded to them the right to force the congregations to support a given minister.

Had he thus abandoned his principle "by the word, not by force"? Not at all! His views on church order were always concerned only with providing the essential conditions for the preaching of the Gospel. Indeed Luther did not want to force every single person to live in one specific Christian way. He knew that only the Holy Spirit can renew women and men. Till the end of his life Luther combined such instructions with a warning against establishing new church orders.

When certain people within the evangelical church showed up who contradicted the Wittenberg theologians, a new leaf had been turned over. Luther now acted in two different ways. He fought with tracts against such doctrines as seemed to him false and dangerous, especially when these erroneous ideas were widely publicized. In his immediate surroundings he also used political authority. He did not aim to force people to stick to a certain theology, but he wanted to protect the recently founded church from false doctrines and as well from schisms and other damages. Experience had taught Luther that not everyone could be converted to his theology



by means of speech, by the word. So in 1532, in his publication "Von den Schleichern und Winkelpredigern" (roughly, Concerning Vagabond Preachers), he demanded that all those who preached without proper ordination be reported to the spiritual and secular authorities, in order that they could be called to task and, if necessary, expelled. He did not force heretics to convert to the Lutheran creed or die. But he took certain precautions in order to protect the new congregations under his special responsibility. This responsibility motivated him increasingly after 1526, although in varying degrees. In some territories he would tolerate differing trends as long as these did not lead the congregations into errors, as for instance the special features of the Bohemian Brethren.

Trinitarian Theology

When interpreting the Sentences of Peter Lombard, the young Luther felt it necessary to work on the doctrine of the Trinity. So he studied this doctrine in the works of Hilary of Poitiers and Augustine. Later it became less important to him. Although the issue did not arouse his opposition, the intensive scholastic speculation about the Trinity did not seem pertinent to evangelical preaching. His attack on scholastic speculation, therefore, resulted in neglect of the trinitarian doctrine. Nevertheless, Luther always accepted the Trinity and included it more and more into his theology, as Ranier Jansen in his *Studien zu Luthers Trinitätslehre* (Studies in Luther's Doctrine of the Trinity) has shown. A special occasion for expressing his views presented itself in the interpretation of the Apostles' Creed and in sermons on Trinity Sunday. Since about 1520, Luther felt that the doctrine of the Trinity should be derived only from the Holy Scriptures, and not from any speculation. As a result, the Apostles' Creed, that formerly had been divided into 12 or 14 statements, was not put into three articles. Each of these he underlined by a characteristic term which he found only after years of searching: creation, redemption, sanctification.

When it became evident that the general knowledge of the evangelical theology was indeed very limited, Luther wrote the Small and the Large Catechisms, both printed in 1529. Luther did not compose "Loci communes" as Melanchthon had done in 1521, but he developed his insights for the believers by interpreting certain texts: the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Order of Baptism, the words of the institution for the Holy Communion. In his catechism, however, he interpreted the Apostles' Creed under the viewpoint of creation, redemption, and sanctification. Luther thus made trinitarian thought an integral part of his message to the new congregations.

After having inserted the doctrine of the Trinity into the structure of the new

church, Luther asked himself how the new congregations were to be held together. He increasingly gained the impression that a correct trinitarian doctrine was vital in recognizing and in refuting false doctrines. Therefore he began to publish on these questions more intensively in 1538.

Luther's ideas on the Trinity help us to understand the unfolding of his theology. We should not look at Luther's use of this doctrine and its integration into the Lutheran Confessional writings only as an outward or even tactical step to avoid attacks from the Roman Church. Already during his stay in Erfurt Luther had deep insights into the trinitarian doctrine of the early church. But he developed it only as far as it was essential for the foundation and establishment of the evangelical church. It would be an oversimplification of Luther's theology to restrict investigation to the young Luther and to declare that reformation theology did away with the doctrine of the Trinity. Interpretations of the later Luther always have to take into account Luther's underlying motivations.

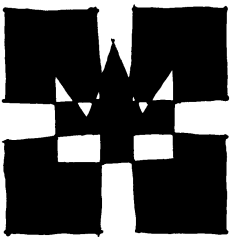
The Battle of the Two Realms

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing,
Our helper he amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

This best know of Luther's hymns was probably composed in 1528 when Wittenberg seemed to be threatened with danger. Since 1526 its medieval fortifications had been adapted to the new techniques of war. Luther did not think highly of them since he believed that weapons never can defend God's word and need not do it. For him God is the mighty fortress, a safe stronghold.

This hymn is a poetical expression of Luther's vision of history, echoing that of Augustine. The history of the world is seen as a battle between then realm of God and the realm of Satan. As early as 1509 Luther had studied Augustine's *De civitate dei* (The City of God), in which this African church father stated his vision of history. Already at that early period Luther made statements based on Augustine's views. Their importance, however, increased the more he realized that preaching the Gospel incites attacks from many quarters. Everywhere he perceived Satan at work.

He becomes aware of Satan's work even within himself. He complained about his headache which he suffered at Coburg Castle in 1530 and wrote that he did not know whether it was caused by Satan or by old wine. To him the Anabaptists seemed to be led astray by the devil, but in 1528 he opposed their being killed since they had already been punished enough for their errors. Luther



did not want to harass any people, but to alert people about the battle of the two realms in order to shield them from the temptations of Satan. In this spiritual battle, the weapons were God's word, preaching and prayer.

At times, this vision of history caused Luther apocalyptic fears, and these led to his harsh speeches against Turks, Jews, and papists. In his eyes they were combat troops of the devil. His polemical writings may be compared with the menacing sermons of the prophets of the Old Testament.

We should also distinguish between Luther's doctrine of the two realms and his doctrine of God's two reigns, which for the later Luther likewise became most important for his exegesis of the Gospel and his attitude towards theological, social and political issues. But we must pass over this problem because time and space are limited.

The Wealth of the Work of the Older Luther

In his work *Luther and the False Brethren* (1975), Mark Edwards referred to the judgment of Heinrich Bullinger who had characterized Luther's polemical efforts in his *Against Hanswurst* (1541) as unbecoming, completely immodest, entirely scurrilous, and frivolous. This judgment should not be dismissed as the opinion of a humanist (Bullinger) about someone who is not considered a humanist (Luther), but it also does not provide an accurate portrait of the later Luther. The harshness of Bullinger should induce us to reconsider the interpretation of the words of the older Luther.

Luther attacked Duke Henry of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, who has recently been called a typical man of the Renaissance, full of activity, greedy for power, and without any scruples *(Geschichte der Deutschen Länder,* Wurzburg, 1964). Henry suppressed the Protestant movement in his territories. In 1538 he had a quarrel with the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse. Polemical pamphlets were exchanged. At first Luther kept silent, giving voice to his opinion in letters only. Then Henry challenged him, declaring that Luther had called his own Elector a "Hanswurst" (roughly, "screwball"). In 1541 Luther also took up his pen.

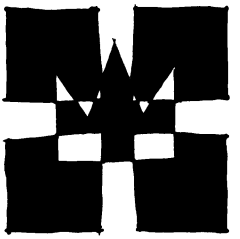
It seems to me typical of Luther that he in no way rushed into the battle, eager to fight, nor was he at all frivolous. We can trace this attitude through all his life. As early as 1516 he saw the vast difference between himself and Erasmus of Rotterdam, but only in 1525, after Erasmus had publicly challenged him, did Luther make himself heard with a treatise against Erasmus. Scott Hendrix showed in an essay on Luther and Albrecht of Mainz, whish is to appear in the *Lutherjahrbuch* 1982, how long Luther hestitated to attack the archbishop of Mainz in public. He yielded only in 1538 when it could no longer be

doubted that Albrecht of Mainz had to be blamed for the death of Hans of Schonitz. For a long time Luther watched calmly, even if somewhat distrustfully, at the efforts of Martin Bucer to enforce the Wittenberg Concord of 1536 in the South of Germany and in Switzerland. When he saw his suspicions verified, he published *Kurzes Bekenntnis vom Heiligen Sakrament* (short confession about the Holy Sacrament) as he did not want to share the guilt for a false understanding of Holy Communion. Even the acid pamphlets against the papacy appeared only towards the end of his life when the preparation for a church council had led nowhere and the pope claimed anew his supreme authority over the emperor. All these pamphlets had not been published in a frivolous manner but Luther gave vent to his anger in a criticism delayed for a long time. In such cases everyone runs the risk of growing vehement.

Was Luther's *Gegen Hanswurst* really completely immodest? Is this publication proof that Luther was a coarse fellow and far remote from the humanistic mode of expression? I don't believe that this view helps us to understand Luther. In 1516 the first part of the "Letters of Obscure Men" appeared in which the Erfurt humanist Crotus Rubianus, who formerly shared Luther's lodgings as a student, exposed monasticism to ridicule. At that time Luther felt the mode of expression of this publication unsuitable. Apparently humanists had many modes of expression at their disposal.

To understand his pamphlets we must follow the method of the Swedish scholar Birgit Stolt, who investigated mataphorical usage in the militant pamphlets between Hieronymus Emser and Luther. Some of rhetoric used in pamphlets *against* Luther were taken over by him in his own publications. We should be aware that since his university years Luther was well versed in humanistic rhetoric and made use of it with skill and seemingly with pleasure. Whether it uses overstatement or understatement, we should never take Luther's text at face value.

But was *Gegen Hanswurst* really unbecoming? In 1541 Georg Helt had called Duke Henry a tyrant. Lutheranism has often been reproached for its uncritical attitude towards rulers and for having raised nothing but submissive subjects. Even Luther himself has been reprimanded for this through the ages. Indeed, in later editions of Luther's works, published after his death, quite a few of his criticisms of rulers were omitted. So interpreting *Gegen Hanswurst* gives us a welcome occasion to oppose the view of Luther as a docile servant of princes. Bullinger felt that "modesty, prudence, piety, and gravity" would be more fitting for a theologian. Luther could, indeed, have struck a more pastoral note in his pamphlets against the peasants. Whether this pastoral note would have been appropriate in a pamphlet against the tyrant Henry, who



had aldready proved unamenable, seems to me questionable. Not all of the tract *Gegen Hanswurst* consists of verbose attacks. It contains important statements about the characteristics of the true church and an interesting description of the expansion of the Reformation. Above all it was written in the conviction that the attacks of Duke Henry once more bore witness to the fact that the church of Wittenberg suffered the persecution prophesied by Christ. Here, too, Luther mentioned the battle of the two realms. This very publication is imbued with an inner certitude. We have to keep in mind that Henry was not only a literary but also a politically active adversary and his territories were not far from Wittenberg. Luther lived what he sang: "And though this world with devils filled, should threaten to undo us, We will not fear for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us."

We are not required to think highly of everything which ever came out of Luther's pen. But the words that do irritate us should not cloud our sights, and we should be aware that Luther up to the end of his life kept writing booklets of comfort, pastoral letters, and even a hymn in praise of music. It is true that he could be severe against all those he felt had a false understanding of the Holy Scriptures and in this he felt encouraged by his friends at Wittenberg. Yet we should not overlook that even on his deathbed he was aware that in his understanding of the Gospel he felt himself a beggar. We are only now beginning to discover the wealth concealed in the works of the older Luther and to appreciate his devotion to the expansion and maintenance of the new church.

Is the older Luther appealing? I'm sure he is. Certainly the battles in his early period, with their clear-cut attacks against Scholasticism and Rome, are more impressive and easier to grasp. But as a rule, the life of most pastors and theologians can be more easily compared to the life of the older Luther. Ministers are dealing with congregations where controversial religious questions are not at the center as had been the case in the early years of the Reformation. For their work they can learn more from the older Luther. And for historical research, too, it is high time to turn more thoroughly to the study of the events between 1525 and 1555.

Liberated Leadership: Masters and "Lords" in Biblical Perspective

Ralph W. Klein

Professor of the Old Testament, Christ Seminary — Seminex, St. Louis, Missouri and editor of ***Currents in Theology and Mission***

"Hierarchical" and "authoritarian" are two of the biggest buzz words in today's diction, and they are often used to criticize the contemporary family or our ecclesiastical and governmental institutions. Feminist theology has been especially and correctly vocal in its rejection of all that is hierarchical and/or authoritarian.

Such legitimate criticisms become excessive, in my judgment, when they claim to reject all use of power or when they encourage a privatistic or pietistic lifestyle. Power should not be confused with, or identified with, force or violence. The church, for example, has enormous power in moral leadership, in family education, and in seeking world peace, and it ought to cultivate this power. Citizens exert power in electing officials or passing initiative petitions. Christians — with others — have used power to bring about racial justice or to end unwise military adventures. Education, exhortation, and organization are exercises of power. While a majority vote is not always right or the will of God, it is the way most of us govern ourselves and use power to positive ends.

Aversion to power sometimes leads to purely private goals — the improvement of the individual, self development, freedom to be what we want to be. At its worst such privatism becomes narcissism, the endless trip inward. For the narcissist the good word "politics" is considered almost automatically dirty.

Much as we should welcome the renewed criticism of hierarchy and authoritarianism, we need to put the best construction on words like power and community involvement. We need to recognize the value of the powers that be, especially since *we* often are the powers that be in the organizations and institutions of which we are a part. No to hierarchy and authoritarianism; yes to power and effective leadership. This paradox is what emerges for me in a study of the Old Testament's evaluation of those persons we call "masters" (a bad word) and "lords" (a good word). Retracing what the Bible says about "masters" and "lords" may provide models for liberated leadership today.

Masters

Why was Israel so basically opposed to masters? The root of this attitude is contained already in the first commandment and the theology it implies. Since Yahweh was the king of Israel, it would be wrong to grant sovereignty to any other power. Yahweh demanded that Israel choose between him and Baal; the political counterpart of this demand was the choice between declaring opposition to kings or submitting to them. "A god is that to which we look for all good and in which we find refuge in every time of need. To have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe him with our whole heart." So wrote Luther in the Large Catechism. A recent statement by an Old Testament professor in Mexico City



differs but little: "Every king demands exclusive loyalty from his subjects. In this respect Yahweh is no different. The key stipulation of Israel's constitution is exclusive loyalty to Yahweh" (George V. Pixley, *God's Kingdom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981], p. 27). Monotheism and its legal codification in the first commandment undercut the pretensions of any earthly rulers. This is especially true of the unjust or oppressive ruler, but implicitly true also of all those rulers who credit themselves with any kind of ultimate significance. This inherently revolutionary tendency in Israelite theology has been picked up by a number of recent scholars (George E. Mendenhall and Normal Gottwald come immediately to mind). It is worth remembering that even those parts of the canon which seem to have a more sanguine attitude toward rulers and masters (Romans 13; I Peter) must always be understood in dialectical tension with the radical word of the first commandment.

What is the job description of this divine Master? We might start an answer with a quotation from Exodus 15, perhaps the oldest poetic passage in the Scripture. In this Song of Miriam (or Moses) the poet recounts the terrifying, warlike acts by which Yahweh defeated the Egyptians and led Israel into her land. By these acts Yahweh established his kingship in the land of Israel, which is his holy abode, mountain, and sanctuary. The poem ends with an affirmation that celebrates the divine enthronement: "Yahweh will rule as king for ever and ever" (Exod. 15:18). Whatever else divine kingship might mean or come to mean, it connoted right from the start that set of liberating and saving actions by which Israel had been set free and through which she had become a people. Israel hailed Yahweh as king because he had saved them and initiated their peoplehood.

A second picture of Yahweh's kingship comes in Psalm 97:

> "Yahweh reigns; let the earth rejoice . . .
> Yahweh loves those who hate evil;
> he preserves the lives of his faithful ones; he delivers them from the hand of the wicked
> (vv. 1, 10.)

and again in Psalm 98:

> "Yahweh comes to judge the earth.
> He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity" (v. 9).

As George Pixley remarks, "Judgment is part of a king's task, and judgment here means to subdue the wicked and to free from their dominion those who trust in Yahweh."

One of the strongest statements of this divine, royal passion for justice is in Psalm 82. The Psalm consists of a lawsuit, with Yahweh as prosecutor and the "gods" as defendants. The divine prosecutor asks the gods:

"How long will you judge unjustly

and show partiality to the wicked?" (v. 2) and then goes on to instruct them:

"Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
Maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (vv. 3-4).

These mandates for social action and social justice, while apparently addressed to the various gods of the world, apply equally to the various nations — Edom, Moab, Ammon, etc. — which are under these gods' protection. Clearly, from Israel's perspective, these foreign nations had judged unjustly and had showed partiality to the wicked, they had not given justice to the weak and fatherless or maintained the right of the afflicted. The supposedly divine masters of these nations are exposed by this Psalm as frauds:

"I thought you were gods, sons of the Most High, all of you;
Nevertheless, you shall die like men and fall like any prince" (vv. 6-7).

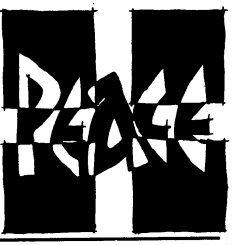
True leadership, or liberated leadership, is kingship like that of Yahweh: passionate in its concern for the weak and oppressed; intolerant of social inequity.

Because of Israel's doctrine of God, she was opposed to anyone who would claim to be king or master over her. Monarchy, at least to certain factions within Israel, seemed *essentially* evil.

Consider the fable of Jotham (Judg 9:8-15). Jotham was a son of Gideon (Jerubbaal) and lived at a time when a certain Abimelech tried to have himself installed as a king in Shechem. The fable goes somewhat as follows:

"The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them; and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.' But the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my fatness by which gods and men are honored, and go to sway over the trees?' And the trees said to the fig tree, 'Come you, and reign over us.' But the fig tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit and go to sway over the trees?' And the trees said to the vine, 'Come you, and reign over us.' But the vine said to them, 'Shall I leave my wine which cheers gods and men, and go to sway over the trees?' Then all the trees said to the bramble, 'Come you, and reign over us.' " You probably have already guessed (or recalled) the response: the bramble — the most worthless plant, particularly in comparison with the olive, the fig tree and the vine — was more than willing to be king of the trees, provided that all the trees give him undying allegiance. "Come and take refuge in my shade," he urged. "If you don't act faithfully, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon." As Hans Walter Wolff remarks, "This fable exposes the monarchy to resounding laughter. What irony for the bramble to praise its shade and at the same time to threaten the cedars, which give the finest shade of all! . . The theme of the criticism is the monarchy's lust for power, which destroys the best in life" *(Anthropology of the Old Testament* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), p. 193).

Perhaps even better known is Samuel's famous denunciation of kingship. The aged judge-prophet reported to the people the kinds of claims that kings or masters typically make: "Your sons he will take and appoint them for himself over his chariots and his horses, and they will run before his chariot. He will appoint them for his use as officers over thousands and as officers over fifties, to plow his fields, to reap his harvest, to make his weapons of war and the equip-



ment of his chariots. Your daughters he will take as perfumers, cooks, and bakers. Your fields, your vineyards, and your olive orchards — the best ones — he will take. . . . Your slaves, both male and female, your fine cattle, and your asses he will take. . . . Your flock he will tax at ten percent, and you yourselves will become his royal slaves" (1 Sam. 8:11-17).

We should not miss the repeated use of the word "take" or the fact that these taxes are used for the king's self aggrandizement or his military establishment. Such a king is no threat to establish a welfare state — would that he were!

A third example of a king as "criticized master" is provided by the example of Solomon. This king, often praised in parish educational programs for his wisdom, also instituted the use of forced labor in Israel so that he could build his various royal projects. Israel began when Yahweh delivered them from Egypt, from the house of slaves. Solomon ran that program in reverse by conscripting free Israelites for service in defiance of their theological heritage. Solomon's son and successor, Rehoboam, was so insensitive on this issue, that when representatives of the Northern tribes asked him to reduce his impositions, the brash king responded with the ancient version of "You haven't seen anything yet": "Whereas my father laid upon you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kgs 12:11).

Even Solomon's building the temple, often recounted to children as a model of pious churchmanship, was at best a most ambivalent institution. The divine king, who had lived in a tent and tabernacle, and who had chosen to appear where and when he willed, was now assigned to a predictable place in the king's royal chapel. God the liberator became the patron of the Davidic dynasty, and the guarantor of the status quo. Not the one upon whom the Spirit rushed — as with Saul and David — but the one whose father happened to be king, he now became master of Israel. There *is* a good side to the Davidic dynasty, and the temple also had its positive role in the religious pilgrimage of Israel, but we should never forget that these two institutions brought with them the potential for an oppressive rulership and a religion of *ex opere operato.*

A fourth example of the dangers of kingship and of Israel's opposition to masters occurs in the story of Naboth's vineyard. This is not the place to recount the greed of Ahab, the rigging of Naboth's trial and execution by Ahab and his wife Jezebel, or the pouting of the king as he lay in his bed. The danger inherent in this incident is epitomized in the question Jezebel asked her husband, "Do you now govern (perform kingship) in Israel?" (1 Kgs 21:7). In other words, "To the king belong the spoils. Get up out of bed and enjoy the fruits of the imperial monarchy." To be king, in her estimation, was to have the trappings of kingship.

A final example of the king as master is Jehoiakim, the third last king of the

southern kingdom. Admittedly, our best source for reconstructing his reign is the Book of Jeremiah, hardly an impartial source. The prophet predicted that Jehoiakim would receive the burial of an ass, dragged out and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem (Jer. 22:19). What irritated Jermiah — among other things — was Jehoiakim's priorities. As Jerusalem was besieged by the Babylonians, he decided to remodel the palace! Worse yet, Jehoiakim made his neighbor (read: subjects) serve him for nothing and paid them no wages (Jer. 22:13). The servants of God were treated as slaves! Jeremiah wished that Jehoiakim were more like his father, good king Josiah. That famous king "judged the cause of the poor and needy" — that policy exemplifies what it means to "know Yahweh."

Israel's opposition to "masters" comes as no surprise to any student of the Bible, though its radical character ought to be shocking to us who are more willing to give government the benefit of the doubt. Someone might object, of course: "Did not Israel become oppressive? Did not events like the conquest or institutions like Holy War embody the same kind of quest for mastery as did the kingship in its worst aspects?"

There are a number of responses we could make to these questions, and these responses, individually and collectively, may not be totally adequate. Consider, nevertheless, the following:

1) Revolutions can and do become establishments, and freed slaves can become as oppressive as their former masters. The prophets offered a clarion call to return to the former ways, when folks did not join house to house and lay field to field until every small farmer was forced out of business. The fact that the Old Testament contains so many passages against kings as masters, some of which were discussed above, presupposes that kings and masters were no rare occurrence or unimportant threat. In other words, as the Bible itself admits, the charge is true: Israel did at times become a master.

2) The conquest of Canaan is a moral problem, for which no theological rationalization is ever satisfactory, but we must remember that the same God who led Israel in her wars of conquest is the same one who, the prophets announced, would wage war *against* Israel because of her apostasy. "Woe to you who desire the day of Yahweh [as a day of military victory]," Amos warned. "It will be darkness and not light" (Amos 5:18).

3) The conquest is really the flip side of another theological truth — the land had been promised to the patriarchs and matriarchs. In fact, this promise and that of descendents were the basic saving promises in Israel's earliest tradition. As Robert Frost wrote about our own American possession of the land: "The gift of land was many deeds of war."

4) Should we not ask why the Bible recounted the conquest as it did? The record of the battles in Joshua 1-12 was not part of a theological argument legitimating Israel's right to possess the land. If these chapters had been that, they would justifiably provoke our modern uneasiness. But these chapters in the Deuteronomistic History are part of a long recounting of Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel, a faithfulness that should have put Israel under obligation, but which, in fact, had been met with a series of rebellions and seekings of other gods from the day after Joshua died until 587. Do we err in demanding from Joshua 1-12 an answer to a question which these chapters were not addressing?



5) A final, partial response to this dilemma may arise out of modern reconstructions of what really happened in the Israelite conquest. George Mendenhall and Norman Gottwald, for example, have argued that the conquest did not consist in an invasion of hordes of people from the desert, who gobbled up land like a nineteenth century colonial power. Rather, they believe that the conquest was basically an inside job. People resident in Palestine, living under the oppressive and stratified city state system, were motivated by a group of freed slaves who had come from Egypt to throw off their chains. This peasant's revolt was not, at least in principle, Israel's lording it over other peoples. It was, instead, an example of how the "anti-master theology" of Israel, forged in the events of Exodus and Sinai, moved people to act decisively against their overbearing overlords.

Such responses are partial, to be sure, but they should not divert us from the persistent and consistent message of the Old Testament: God is opposed to masters. Masters tend to monopolize power and to care not a fig for the weak, the oppressed, and the helpless. Masters are betrayers of Israel's birthright. Still, the record of Israel should not be used to legitimate a polity of perpetual revolution or anarchy. How *are* the children of God to rule themselves and others?

"Lords"

The term "lords" is not totally adequate for what I want to say — hence the quotation marks. What I seek is a word to be paired positively with the word servant. I seek a word that expresses positive connotations for the use of authority, that takes account of ruling responsibilities, and that is flexible enough to encompass the examples I cite below. I settled for "lord" because the Bible does use servant and "lord" positively and in tandem. When Jacob and Esau were reconciled, for example, Jacob referred to himself as servant and to Esau as his "lord" (Gen. 32:3; 33:14). So "lords" it will be, but throughout the reader must also think of "positive ruler," "responsible citizen," or the like whenever "lord" appears. Do not construe "lords" negatively as in "He lorded it over them."

People are "lords" according to the priestly creation account. They are not prisoners of war nor essentially evil. God decreed their true status at creation when he blessed them and installed them as vice presidents in charge of his estate. Classically, this has been known as the image of God. The oldest commentary on this passage appears in our Bibles as Psalm 8:

"You have made mankind little
less than God,
you crown them with glory and
honor.
You gave them dominion over the
works of your hands;

you have put all things under
their feet" (vv. 5-6).

This image of God has come under fire in recent decades because it has allegedly been the theological rationale for the excesses in Western technology and industrialization. Critics of the Judeo-Christian tradition have argued that this passage has given religious permission for strip mining, for the wasting of nonrenewable resources, for polluting the atmosphere, and for sanctifying growth as an unblemished good. Some of these criticisms could be labelled "cheap shots." Others may reflect the perverse effect this passage has had because it was misunderstood. If any have used Gen. 1:28 to justify the environmental atrocities recited above, they have understood this passage as if it referred to masters instead of to "lords."

An ancient cylinder seal offers a corrective comment on this misunderstanding. The seal shows a man with his foot resting gently on the neck of a deer, a posture that connotes rulership. But the man depicted on the seal is at the same time arm-wrestling with a lion, which was trying to prey on the deer. Such benevolent, protective rule over the animals exemplifies what the sacred writers in Gen. 1 and Ps. 8 were trying to say about the human assignment to rule the world. How we carry on that rule and how we are friendly to the environment need spelling out in modern terms with modern understandings of environmental impact. But we need to be "lords" in creation in any case, and it would be a terrible tragedy if the recent criticisms of the image of God from secular sources would let us relax the intensity of our concern for the wise rule of all of creation.

Good Kings

Though Israel at first opposed kingship — and some Israelites perhaps always did — the majority in Israel learned to compromise with the new institution *if* through it God's rule was expressed. What is said about good kings can and should be said about any who would be "lords." Recall Ps. 72:

May the king judge your people
with righteousness,
and your poor with justice! (v. 2)
May he defend the cause of the
poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor! (v. 4)
He delivers the needy when he
calls,
the poor and all those who have
no helper.
He has pity on the weak and the
needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
From oppression and violence he
redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his
sight. (vv. 12-14).

The Messiah

This enlightened view of kings as "lords" is present also in Israel's messianic passages in which the prophets told of the good king (or kings) who was (or were) to come. The birth of the king announced in Isa. 9, inaugurates a new era, which Jesus would probably have called the age of the kingdom:

Of the increase of his (the
messiah's) government and of
peace there will be no end,
upon the throne of David, and
over his kingdom, to establish it
and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and for
evermore (v. 7)

The shoot and branch promised in Isa. 11 would be gifted with the Spirit. We



who receive the Spirit in Holy Baptism might well model our life as "lords" after his:

> He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear;
> but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
> and he shall smite the tyrant with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked (vv. 3-4).

Jeremiah spoke of a coming righteous branch, who would be given the name, "The Lord is our righteousness" (or: Yahweh is the source of our vindication). This person would reign as king and deal wisely; he would execute justice and righteousness in the land (Jer. 23:5).

A Blessing to the Nations

A third series of passages that spell out the job descriptions of "lords" are found in the Yahwist stratum in the Pentateuch. J reminds his readers that the power and riches of the Davidic-Solomonic empire are not something they have achieved by merit nor is their power an occasion for them to lord it over their surrounding nations. The true and realistic picture of the reader is seen in Adam and Eve, who wanted to be like God; in Abraham, who passed off his wife as his sister in order to save his own neck; in the wilderness wanderers who responded to God's gift of food and water by incessant murmuring. Abraham and Sarah were what they were as son and daughter of God, and Israel was what she was under David and Solomon, solely because of God's unmerited promise: all of God's promises to Israel's forebears had now come true. What now?

J suggests that Israelites might be "lords" like an Abraham, who offered unflagging intercessions for those who were perishing in Sodom and Gomorrah, the ethnic ancestors of the Moabites and Ammonites. These nations were actually conquered by David. Should not victorious "lords" imitate father Abraham in their attitude towards these erstwhile enemies. And what of Isaac who had been ready for peaceful agreement with the Philistines. Should Israel's relationship with the Philistines be only competition and conquest? Jacob offered material aid to Laban, his Syrian father-in-law, and the Syrians were the economic and military rivals of Israel for a considerable period of time. Should "lords" play economic hard ball, or should they offer financial assistance? Joseph's morality and wisdom brought blessings, first to Potiphar and then to all Egypt. Moses prayed for Pharaoh and led Israel out of Egypt so that they might get a blessing for the Egyptians. At the time of the Yahwist all families of the earth were blessed only in the word of promise; Israel's task still remained to be completed. By her all families of the earth were to be blessed.

God's Trusted Creatures

We are beggars, poor miserable sin-

ners; we were in bondage and we could not free ourselves. These are good and worthy confessions. But the Bible knows that in the eyes of the Creator and Redeemer we are also something else — "lords" or responsible individuals, capable of independent action. With one hand firmly locked on the doctrine of justification by faith for Christ's sake, we are also called by such passages as Deut. 30, which read:

> "This commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you. . . . The word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. . . . I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live" (vv. 11, 14, 19).

Walter Brueggemann has argued that the wisdom traditions are one of the best — and most unused — repositories for the kind of action that we would hope to come from "lords." Wisdom represents a protest against deferring the goal of justice or righteousness to some indefinite future or to the world to come — a game that masters have often played with blacks, women, and the poor. Wisdom seeks what is right and good, not in specific biblical injunctions or in answers at the back of the book. Wisdom knows that what needs to be done will often be determined by our common, enlightened experience. Wisdom recognizes that men and women have responsibility for their own destiny. Human choices fix human destiny. What will happen to the poor or between nations is ultimately under God's control. But God needs human lovers of the poor and human peacemakers if his will is to be done on earth. Wisdom celebrates men and women as the "lords" of creation. Our capabilities and responsibilities have to do with our relation to our natural and social environment (*In Man We Trust.* [Richmond: John Knox, 1972], pp. 17-24).

Conclusion

We need to echo Israel's criticism of masters, whether they appear in church or government or family, whether the masters are others or ourselves. Such criticism is but half of our vocation. We are also called to be free, responsible, and independent "lords," governing creation in God's stead, mimicking his messiah and that one whom we joyfully hail as the Christ. We need to be latter day Sarahs and Abrahams, Rebekahs and Isaacs, Zipporahs and Moses's, striving in a variety of religious and secular ways to bring God's blessings to the nations. We are, as God's new and trusted creatures, called to live as sensitive and caring people.

So far this has been put forward as a Judeo-Christian goal or an Old Testament-biblical goal. I would propose that we make it a distinctly Christian goal.

The old hymn, "Praise God the Lord, Ye Sons of Men," appears in non-sexist form as "Let all Together Praise our God" in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (47). It's fifth verse bears repeating, both in its older and its newer translations:

> "He serves that I a lord might be,
> a great exchange indeed."
> Or
> "He is a servant, I a lord:
> How great a mystery!"

Our liberated lifestyle as "lords" is possible only and solely because of the one who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor. Servants take the first giant step towards being "lords" by joyfully affirming:

> "How strong the tender
> Christchild's love!
> No truer friend than he."

The Confessors Meet Aristotle

Hans Zorn

Christ Seminary — Seminex, 1981; graduate student, University of Notre Dame

A standard way of justifying theological positions in the Lutheran Confessions, and in Lutheran theology generally, is to point out how the doctrine or position in question "necessitates Christ." Whether a certain system of theological explanation is adequate depends in large measure on its making the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ central and necessary to understanding the Christian faith.

Unfortunately, it is not always clear how this criterion of theological adequacy is to be applied: in what sense does any statement "necessitate" Christ or "lead to" him, and what does "necessitating Christ" have to do with the truth or falsity of statements, theological or otherwise? The criterion is so vague that it can be used, it seems, to justify nearly any theological position.

I hope to clarify the meaning and use of "necessitating Christ" by noting the theoretical framework in which the Confessors introduce that formula. The framework is provided by Aristotelian science and scientific method, with which both the confessors and their scholastic opponents in the medieval church were familiar. We are accustomed to thinking of the Confessors as taking their stand on the unalloyed Word and rejecting anyting that smacks of pagan philosophy; yet their emphasis on necessitating Christ reflects a concern that theology conform to the rational principles of science as Aristotle had propounded them.

The confessors tried to fulfill the scientific imperative "to save the phenomena": to construct theories in such a way that they account for all the observed facts, without distortion. In Aristotle's philosophy this princple reflects both a commitment to empiricism and a concern that explanation be adapted to the nature of the phenomena to be explained. The confessors' emphasis on necessitating Christ reveals a concern to preserve the central phenomenon of Christian life and thought (the death and resurrection of Jesus) in theological theory. To unravel this point and its implications we must turn to consider Aristotle's views on science.

Aristotelian Science

If anyone were to be considered the founder of empirical science, whether it be the natural philosophy of the Middle Ages or modern science, it would have to be Aristotle. The model of science he bequeathed to us is essentially mathematical or deductive. For Aristotle scientific knowledge is knowledge of what is necessary, with particular facts being deduced from a few primary universal principles. Primary principles provide the premises on whose basis one derives the whole body of fact belonging to a science, including the descriptions of the phenomena to be explained. Thus individual facts are set in a framework of necessary connections[1] and universal principles, and so rendered knowable.

In other words, the principles of a science necessitate the phenomena to be explained: that is just what it means to provide an explanation, or to "save the phenomena." If a primary principle entails results that conflict with the observed data, or that simply fail to account for the phenomena, then it is to be rejected, just as in logic a premise which entails a contradiction is thereby proved false. Scientific theory is accountable to the observed facts, as Aristotle points out in various contexts.

The nature of the phenomena to be saved by theoretical explanation varies according to the nature of the science. In the treatises *On the Heavens* and *On Generation and Corruption,* Aristotle refers to phenomena as observed facts, the hard data of empirical science. Thus he argues that his geocentric model of the universe accords with observation of the stars' movements,[2] as does the theory that the heavenly sphere in which he thought the stars were embedded is unchanging,[3] since after all the stars' movements are not observed to vary. His more modern-sounding theory that the earth is round is confirmed by observation of eclipses,[4] and he upbraids opponents whose theories do not accord with the observed data.[5] Scientific principles, he says, must be exposed to empirical test and judged true or false according to their issue, which in the case of natural science is "the unimpeachable evidence of the senses as to each fact."[6]

The phenomena with which theories deal, however, are not always hard, sensible data. In the *Nichomachean Ethics,* Aristotle cites as phenomena the common opinions of people on matters related to ethics and politics,[7] and he declares the task of ethics to be that of proving the truth of the received opinions. Religion as well as ethics has received opinion for its phenomena, as a passage from *On the Heavens* indicates. Here Aristotle, as a pious man, tries to reconcile the conflicting views of the gods presented by the ancient myths. The various stories about the gods cannot all be taken at face value without contradiction, but Aristotle saves the phenomena of religious tradition by singling out the lowest common denominator of all the myths. They all agree that the gods are eternal and unchanging; and according to Aristotle's astronomical theory the heavenly sphere is also immutable. Since the heavenly bodies were commonly supposed to be divine, Aristotle simply reduces ancient theology to astronomy. The ancient stories about the gods, he says, are mythological statements of the heavens' eternality and immutability,[8] the two marks of the divine for Aristotle.

So far we have noted how scientific first principles are accountable to the phenomena they are intended to explain, and how the occurrences of individual phenomena follow necessarily from the primary principles. We have yet to consider how one arrives at the first principles themselves, and in fact this is a very ambiguous and unsure process.

For one thing, there is no necessary inference from particular data to the universal principles which explain them: first principles necessitate data, but not *vice versa.* Aristotle does insist that the

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[1] Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 71b 15, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle,* ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941). All references to Aristotle's works here are from this volume.

[2] Aristotle, *On the Heavens,* 297a 5-7.

[3] *Ibid.,* 270b 5.

[4] *Ibid.,* 297b 24.

[5] *Ibid.,* 303a 23; 306a 5; *On Generation and Corruption* 315a 5.

[6] *On the Heavens* 306a 18.

[7] *Nichomachean Ethics* 1145b 1-7.

[8] *On the Heavens* 270b 5-25.

terms in which explanation proceeds be derived from the phenomena themselves, but the primary principles can only be had by induction from particular facts.[9] This position reflects Aristotle's empiricist presuppositions. We can only reason backwards from phenomena to universal principles because particular observed facts are better known to us than are universal principles, which are only prior and better known "in the order of being."[10] Our only access to the order of being is through what is better known to us, particular facts.

This predicament leads to the result that several different principles of explanation can be used for the same set of data. Aristotle's astronomical theory as presented above is a prime example. By observing the apparent movement of the stars around the earth Aristotle posited an unmoving earth at the center of the universe to explain the observed facts: the stars were embedded in a transparent sphere revolving around the earth. This geocentric model does in fact account for the observation of the stars' movement; but the phenomena can also be explained by supposing the earth to rotate on its axis, as Copernicus suggested and as we now know to be true.

The nature of the principles one infers from the observed data, then, is not entirely determined by the facts but can also be influenced by the scope of the data one considers, one's theoretical presuppositions, and one's interests. In fact there is apt to be a circular relation between phenomena and principles: reflection on the data is essential to discovering primary principles, but the nature of the principles themselves influences which sets of data are to be considered in each case, and how they are to be considered.

Science in the Confessions

The Lutheran confessors, of course, never tire of heaping ridicule on what they take to be an undue reliance on philosophy in matters touching the faith. However, in opposing the scholastic theologians of their day along with their heavy reliance on Aristotelian method and teaching, the confessors themselves relied on the old Aristotelian principles.

We can focus on an especially important passage in the *Apology* to illustrate this point. In the course of arguing against legalistic or philosophical concepts of righteousness, the question arises:

> If this is Christian righteousness, what difference is there between philosophy and the teaching of Christ? If we merit the forgiveness of sins by these elicited acts of ours, of what use is Christ?[11]

The argument, here as elsewhere, is that the scholastic teaching does not account for the key phenomenon in theology: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The function of scientific theory for Aristotle is to show that the observed facts follow necessarily from the first principles of a science, thus placing them in a framework of universal truth. Theology has failed, then, if such an important phenomenon as Christ's death and resurrection is not seen as necessary.

Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection are phenomena of overriding importance in theology for two reasons. First, they are central to the scriptures and creeds which help constitute the total phenomenon of the Christian faith.

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[9] *Prior Analytics* 46a 19-22.

[10] *Posterior Analytics* 72a 1.

[11] *Apology of the Augsburg Confession,* in *The Book of Concord,* ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 109.

Second, the confessors' concern to necessitate Christ follows from their taking God's free, unmerited forgiveness grasped by faith in Christ as their primary theological principle. If this is, indeed, the basic premise from which the rest of theology must follow, then the sacrifice and merit of Christ must take precedence as the phenomenon of greatest importance.

Now, one could object that the medieval, scholastic system of theology necessitated Christ as well as the Lutheran doctrine. The legalistic system of penance against which the reformers were fighting, for instance, also necessitated Christ, for after all whose merit was dispensed by that system, if not Christ's?

In light of the confessors first principle, we can answer this objection in two ways. First, the system of penance required human agency in effecting forgiveness and so negated the principle of justification by faith alone. Second, the penitential system violated the principle of parsimony, that one should not provide more theoretical baggage than is absolutely necessary to account for the facts. This principle, "Ockham's razor," does not follow directly from Aristotle's methodological assumptions, but it is entirely consistent with them. If indeed we must reason from things better known to us to things better known in nature or in the order of being, then it behooves us to be as cautious as possible in reasoning from the comparatively certain data of experience to those less obvious principles underlying them. Theoretical explanation is only valid in so far as it explains experience, and has no ground for acceptance aside from its ability to explain the facts, so it should be used as sparingly as possible. How much more rational, then, to dispense with the elaborate theory behind the penitential system and to concentrate on the work of Christ made available to the believer immediately in faith.

As noted earlier, one's choice of first principles can affect the choice of phenomena to take into consideration, as well as the weight one assigns to various phenomena. The confessors recognize that if one adopts as a first principle the premise that grace is at least to some extent a reward for good works, then other phenomena must be saved along with the work of Christ. As the *Apology* sarcastically puts it, with some exaggeration, it would be perfectly logical to preach Aristotelian ethics instead of Christ.[12]

For their own part, the confessors have some difficulty in accounting for other phenomena of the faith. The law, for instance, proves troublesome. It can no longer be held to be a guide to a godly life leading to salvation, as in traditional theology, without violating the principle of justification by faith alone. The phenomenon can only be saved by taking an altogether new tack and treating the law as a mirror which shows sinners their need of salvation and forces them to put all their trust in God's grace.

Again, there is some arbitrariness and circularity in the confessors' procedure, as we might expect from the practitioners of science in the Aristotelian mode. They would not have arrived at their primary principle of justification by faith alone if they had simply considered all the various aspects of the Christian faith and given each separate phenomenon equal importance. Instead they focused on the phenomenon of guilt, unworthiness, and forgiveness in personal experience. Their derivation of a primary principle thus reflected particular concerns and approaches to the data. They came up with a principle necessitating the phenomena

[12] *Ibid.*

with which they were concerned, and in so doing they downplayed the concerns of their opponents. Compelled as we are to work backwards from phenomena to their explanatory principles, we can claim no more certainty for the confessors' way of saving the phenomena than the certainty of their primary principle.

Conclusions

In so far as the confessors rejected much of the content and formal method of scholastic theology, and brought new concerns to the field, their theology is not Aristotelian; nor were they concerned to produce a monument of science. Nevertheless, they could not avoid using the mode of thought which dominated their era, which was decidedly Aristotelian. We must take that into account as we appraise and appropriate their theology.

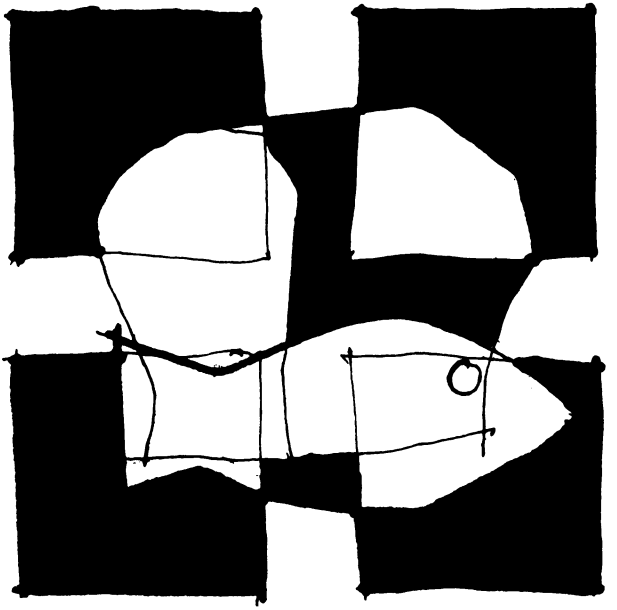
In particular, we must proceed with caution in using the concept of "necessitating Christ." If we use the phrase at all, we should use it as a criterion for determining the adequacy of fundamental theological principles. It is misused when applied to every particular item of doctrine; these must follow from the primary principle or principles, but there is no reason why they must all serve to necessitate a single phenomenon, at least not directly.

Finally, we must pay attention to the particular concerns that help shape our general explanatory principles. Theology is often condemned as a subjective, unsystematic practice; yet in principle a certain arbitrariness and circularity are also involved in the very sciences we tend to revere so much today.[13] As the confessors recognized implicitly, if not explicitly, theological practice need not be all that different from scientific method.[14]

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[13] See especially the writings of P. K. Feyerabend, N. R. Hanson, and T. S. Kuhn.

[14] This essay is a revision of a paper originally written for an independent study in medieval theology at Christ Seminary — Seminex in the summer of 1980. The study was supervised by Prof. Robert Bertram, who suggested this line of inquiry.



Unpublished Prophets

James A. Rimbach

Concordia Lutheran Church, Pullman, Washington

Among the "goodly fellowship of the prophets" are many who have customarily been referred to as the "non-literary" prophets. What is to be said of those ancient worthies noted to have borne the prophetic office in Israel, but to whom are attributed none of the preserved scriptural writings? Are they in fact second-stringers, the "B-squad" among the Word-bearers?

This discussion has grown more complex in recent years with the widespread acknowledgement that, with very little exception, none of the prophets was "literary" in the sense that he wrote the biblical book named after him. Rather, his words were often preserved orally by listeners and disciples for varying periods of time until, via a process of collecting and editing, the prophetic book emerged. Consequently, it is more accurate to speak not of "literary" and "non-literary" prophets, but of prophets whose words were preserved and of those whose words were not so preserved.

We must also note the mention of writings attributed to prophetic figures and preserved for a time, but which have not survived to our own day!

The Chronicler provides a rather long list of prophetic writings now unknown to us:

— The records of Samuel the seer (1 Chr 29:29)
— The records of Nathan the prophet (1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:24)
— The records of Gad the seer (1 Chr 29:29)
— The prophecies of Ahijah the Shilonite (2 Chr 9:29)
— The visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam ben Nebat (2 Chr 9:29)
— The records of Shemiah the prophet (2 Chr 12:15)
— The visions of Iddo the seer (2 Chr 12:15)
— The treatise (midrash) of the prophet Iddo (2 Chr 13:22)
— The records of Jehu ben Hanani (2 Chr 20:34)
— The history of Uzziah which Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, has written down (2 Chr 26:22)
— The visions of Isaiah ben Amoz, the prophet, in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel (2 Chr 32:32)
— The records of (Manasseh's) seers (2 Chr 33:19)

The Chronicler also makes mention of prophetic figures otherwise unknown from Scripture: Azariah ben Oded (2 Chr 15:1), Eliezer ben Dodavahu of Mareshah (2 Chr 20:37), Oded (2 Chr 28:9-11), Hanani (2 Chr 16'7), Jehaziel ben Zechariah, son of Benaiah, a Levite of the clan of Asaph (2 Chr 20:13; cf. 29:30 and 30:15), Zechariah (2 Chr 24:17-20; cf. Luke 11:49-51).

To the above listing could be added the prophetic groups mentioned in 1

Samuel 9, 10, and 19, and various unnamed prophets who are mentioned singly and in groups (Judg. 6:8-10; 13:6; 1 Kgs 13; 20; 2 Kgs 2 and 4). In addition, our consideration is drawn to well-known prophets such as Elijah and Elisha, Ahijah of Shiloh and Micaiah ben Imlah, about whom others told stories in third-person narratives, but to whom is attributed no writing activity.

It is appropriate to notice that the prophetic office was also held by a number of women, such as Miriam (Exod 15:20), Deborah (Judg 4:4), "Mrs." Isaiah (Isa 8:3), Huldah (2 Kgs 22:14), and Noadiah (Neh 6:14), with brief written material assigned only to the first two.

There is much that we cannot and will not know about these persons. Nonetheless, some very important conclusions can be drawn from these references about the entire movement which we refer to as "prophecy." First, we are reminded by these scriptural notices that the prophetic movement had an extensive history, whose parameters extend far beyond the figures of the "classical" prophets and the materials associated with their names.

Secondly, the prophets were not in the publishing business. Their work was done for the most part in the immediacy of proclaiming the divine message to the often stopped-up ears of their contemporaries.[2]

To understand the history of the prophetic movement we need to be aware of the examples of prophetism among Israel's ancient Near Eastern neighbors — often greatly pre-dating the appearance of the prophetic movement in Israel itself. Sufficient attention must be given to the biblical notices, implicit and explicit, that prophetism was not a monolithic institution. Note only the use of such varied terms as "man of God," "prophet," "seer," "visionary."

It is a commonplace that the sources of Israelite prophecy are hidden in history[3] and that it became a public movement only with the rise of the monarchy. While this observation contains much that is true, it is also misleading. The reason for the confusion is simply that the beginning of the monarchy is also the beginning of extensive literary activity in Israel, and *this* accounts for the undue, but understandable, emphasis on the written records of prophecy. When the prophetic movement is considered in terms of the development of theo-political structures, its beginning can be found in the pre-monarchic era and the transitional early monarchic period.

The notice in Judges 6:8-10, "When the people of Israel cried to the Lord . . . the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel," should be seen as typical for the pre-monarchic era, and not just for the Midianite crisis under discussion in that chapter. 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, and 1 Kings bring us the most frequent mention of prophetic individuals and organized groups, bands and schools of the prophets, that is, precisely in the pre-monarchic and early monarchic era.[4]

It might then be surmised that the tension between monarch and prophet, so colorfully recounted in the biblical record, provided an impetus for the preservation of prophetic words beyond the moment of their immediate delivery. This is given explicit support in Isaiah 8. Here we find the prophet, having delivered his oracle to the monarch — and no longer expecting it to have a successful reception — giving the following instruction:

> The record is to be folded and the sealed instruction kept among my disciples. For I will trust in the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob; yes, I will wait for him (Isa 8:16-17 NAB).

Isaiah 30:8-10 is even more explicit in making the connection between committing an oracle to writing and its negative reception:

> And now, go, write it before them
> on a tablet, and inscribe it in
> a book,
> that it may be for the time to come
> as a witness forever.
> For they are rebellious people, ly-
> ing sons, sons who will not hear
> the instruction of the Lord.
> Who say to the seers, "See not";
> and to the prophets, "Prophecy
> not to us what is right.
> Speak to us smooth things, proph-
> esy illusions."

Surely no one would want to suggest that the essence of prophecy is that it go unheeded, but one of the prime factors in prophecy being recorded was that deaf ears were turned to the living voice.[5]

It must be emphasized that the foregoing argument does not in any way mean to discredit the nature or value of the prophetic writing which has been preserved to us, nor should the role of providence in that preservation be excluded. But consideration of the role of the "unpublished prophets" in the divine economy might serve as encouragement to that unnumbered host of contemporary proclaimers and students of the word who will themselves strive mightily in the service of their Lord and remain forever unpublished!

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[1] Georg Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion,* trans. D. E. Green (Nashville/New York: Abingdon, 1972), p. 237.

[2] Curt Kuhl, *The Prophets of Israel,* trans. R. J. Ehrlich and J. P. Smith (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 16, makes the appropriate observation that with little exception, when the Old Testament refers to prophetic activity, it does not cite the "classical" prophetic writings *or* the "classical" prophets — but the activities of others. See 1 Kings 19:10, 14; 2 Kings 9:7; 17:13, 23; 21:10-15.

[3] Or some like phrase. Kuhl's term (p. 187) is "veiled in obscurity," which may be considered synonymous!

[4] It is not an element of confusion that Samuel, last of the "judges" is in many ways the "foremost of the prophetic line." See R. B. Y. Scott, *The Relevance of the Prophets* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), p. 51, and W. F. Albright, *Samuel and the Beginnings of the Prophetic Movement* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1961).

[5] Scott, p. 72: "It was Amos or his disciples who initiated the practice of preserving in writing the substance of spoken oracles. It has been conjectured that this resulted from the ban placed on the prophet by the priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel (Amos 7:12-13)."

A Book Worth Discussing: On the Way to a Christology — Comments on Schillebeeckx' *Christ**

David G. Truemper

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

There are four points on which I wish to comment, as a way of indicating (with mild reservations) my appreciation of Schillebeeckx' massive Christological work.

I

First, a comment on the whole concept and approach taken by Schillebeeckx: why call this Christology? After all the original title of this book is "Righteousness and Life: Grace and Liberation."

In an earlier volume, *Jesus,* Schillebeeckx provided a careful look at the church's progressive identification of Jesus, with a view to discerning as clearly as possible the historical phenomenon of Jesus. Now, in *Christ,* he moves to an even more careful and detailed look at the New Testament expressions (and their subsequent interpretations) of the Christian experience of grace and salvation from God in Jesus. That is, Schillebeeckx examines how it is that "Jesus" is anything more than a cipher, a kind of code-word or symbol for the original phenomenon of Christian faith, namely, people's experience of deliverance in connection with Jesus' life of radical freedom to do good. Accordingly, the Christological enterprise is born in the move from describing what Christians encountered *in connection with Jesus* to the various attempts to interpret and explain *the person of Jesus.*

Surprisingly (given the title of the English translation), that move from the experience of salvation in connection with Jesus to the interpretation of the person of Jesus is not yet the subject of *Christ.* Rather, the book restricts itself to an examination of New Testament Christianity's experiences and expression of salvation in and through Jesus, and to a discussion of the question of the circumstances in which the New Testament witness provides an authoritative orientation for the present-day experience of salvation.

Schillebeeckx' early disclaimer (p. 25) is therefore more than excessively scholarly modesty. A contemporary Christology can be built up, he says, only by stages. "Perhaps it will be possible to make a beginning on what is called 'christology' *after* this second volume." That is to say, the two volumes *Jesus* and *Christ* are only prolegomena to an eventual Christology. No accident, that. For Schillebeeckx observes that any Christology which is relevant to life is itself possible only as a prolegomenon, i.e., as a search for the right word, the faith-enabling Gospel word.

II

These preliminary considerations lead to a second area, the relationship between soteriology and Christology. It seems to me that here Schillebeeckx is on

* *Schillebeeckx, Edward.* ***Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord.*** *Tr. John Bowden. New York: Seabury, 1980.*

the right track, or at least on a very promising track. By taking up (even in painful thoroughness) the experience and interpretation of salvation, one is first of all gaining clarity about why one needs to bother about taking up the "who is Jesus?" question. Who is Jesus, if in connection with him we experience salvation as from God? That question is the driving force behind the entire Christological enterprise. What do we need to say about Jesus, given his place at the focus of our experience of grace and salvation?

To reverse the process, to suppose that one could discharge the Christological task prior to or apart from soteriology, would not only be a version of "Christology from above" (in which case one would be at least out of fashion, if not dead wrong). It would also be to change the nature of saving faith from essentially trust in the promise or offer of salvation to the adopting of an ideology made up of assertions about the person of Jesus. Then the Christological titles and statements would come to function as the basis or the grounding for faith. And Christians would be, by definition, those folks who hold such and such (otherwise incredible) notions about Jesus of Nazareth.

As a defense against that eventuality, Schillebeeckx gives us the prospect of a well-aimed Christology — aimed, that is, at the saying and the doing of the Christian story in and by and for a new community of believers.

III

Early in this second volume Schillebeeckx discusses at some length the nature of experience and its interpretation in a way which I find to be helpful, yet which tends to relativize the entire enterprise. By pointing to the distinction between the experience of grace and the interpretation of that experience, Schillebeeckx raises the serious question about what is normative. What possible access does one have to an authoritative core, or at least to something paradigmatic, in the New Testament presentation of the Christian experience of salvation in Jesus? Since what the New Testament provides is not the experience of grace itself, but a variety of attempts to interpret that experience, our access to the event of salvation is mediated, and thus partly veiled, by the plethora of New Testament images and interpretations.

Nevertheless, the distinction between experience and interpretation provides a tool by means of which to avoid distortions of biblical theology. While thinkers on the right tend to collapse the tension between experienced reality and interpretative elements in favor of the latter, thus fixing on an inspired and inerrant scripture as source and norm for doctrine, those on the left collapse the tension in favor of the former, thus seeking to replicate the primitive experience of grace in contemporary experience. Against both poles, Schillebeeckx' position has the ring of catholicity, though at the price of an unresolvable tension between experience and interpretation.

While some will fear the consequences of the relativization which Schillebeeckx' position brings with it, others will rejoice that the same tactic can be used to relativize the relativization. Just as we may have no access to the original experience of salvation in Jesus apart from the intrepretations thereof in the New Testament, so we may raise no absolute objection to the notion of the paradigmatic character of those New Testament presentations. That is, no one of those New Testament images may be absolutized; and no synthesis of those New Testament images, in the form, for ex-

ample, of a "theology of the New Testament," may be regarded as absolute; nor, in the third place, may the list of images in the New Testament presentations be held to constitute a limit on the possible range of interpretative images or elements for the Christian experience of salvation.

That set of consequences, it seems to me, constitutes a serious blow to the fundamentalist/biblicist position, as well as to the liberal/moralist position. We have no immediate access to the core reality of Jesus as salvation from God apart from the welter of (even conflicting) images in the New Testament and subsequent Christian history and tradition. Yet that interpreted experience of the New Testament presentations is our only authoritative source or witness to that core reality. Therefore, some sort of continuity must be demonstratable, continuity between the core reality and the interpretative elements. Schillebeeckx surveys the range of interpretative elements, so as to "extract the formative structural elements which still give us, as contemporary Christians, the *bearings* [my italics] for formulating our experience of the decisive salvation in Jesus" (p. 463).

IV

Finally, I wish to make a few comments on the exquisitely delicate question of the meaning of the death of Jesus.

It had been part of the burden already of *Jesus* to resist any absolutizing (and thus mythifying) of the crucifixion of Jesus. Against all attempts to locate the saving significance of Jesus *solely* in his dying, Schillebeeckx has argued that the life and ministry of Jesus provide the decisive context and background for understanding the meaning of Jesus' death. Schillebeeckx' intention is not to shift the center of soteriological gravity from Jesus' death to his life and ministry. That would be merely a relapse into the problems of the liberal lives of Jesus in the nineteenth century. Rather, Schillebeeckx makes this move in order to reach the depth of the reality of Jesus' death. Seen in the light of Jesus' life, his death is a failure, a fiasco. Precisely as such, Jesus' death has a genuinely "redemptive significance and thus a far-reaching historical worth." (p. 823)

Schillebeeckx calls it the "fundamental problem of everyone's life" that one must confront failure — whether culpable failure or, what is even more difficult, failure where one "is in no way responsible and has done everything possible to avoid failure." (p. 824) Accordingly, Jesus' death acquires historic significance in a two-stage process. First, Jesus died as one who was enabled by his living communion with God to accept his failure (sorrowfully, to be sure, yet willingly) and to "hold it of less account than the value of living communion with God and faithfulness to man as the implication of this communion." (p. 824) Then, in spite of that failure, Christians on this side of Easter tell the story of Jesus' dying as good news. They do so because the resurrection constitutes God's "manifest recognition" of the permanent validity of Jesus' life and death. This is to suggest that the success which God achieved out of the fiasco of Jesus' life was not on the order of a divine undoing of the failure; rather it was God's exaltation of Jesus-the-failure who trusted God and freely made God's cause the cause of his healing and freeing of humankind.

The punch line, it seems to me, comes in Schillebeeckx' insistence that Jesus' failure and God's success are not two separate events, or even events on two different planes — as if the failure occurs

at the level of human history, and the success is achieved at the level of God's supra-history. "Rather, we have to say that God's transcendent overcoming of human failure is historically incorporated in Jesus' never-ceasing love for God and man, during and in the historical moment of his failure on the cross." (p. 830) Jesus the risen one is "the revelation of what is possible with God." (p. 793) The resurrection message is simply the announcement that it is all right to die as Jesus did, a God-trusting failure.

In my view that is a most promising way of unpacking the significance of Jesus' life and death. Not only do his life and death thus have a meaning or value "in and of themselves" (p. 639), but they also have a "significance for God," since the resurrection constitutes God's "Amen" to Jesus. And, in words that are in part an almost verbatim quotation (though unacknowledged) from Martin Luther, Schillebeeckx writes: "Jesus is God's countenance turned towards man, the countenance of God who is concerned for all men, especially and concernedly for the humble of the earth, all those who are crucified." (p. 639

Come to think of it, that is precisely what is the likely fate of a community engaged in the sort of orthopraxis which Schillebeeckx envisons, dealing with the contemporary human experience of bondage and suffering and engaging in the saving work of liberating men and women from failure and bondage and death.

Book Reviews

A CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. The International Critical Commentary. By C. E. B. Cranfield. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1975-1979. Two volumes, xxvii and 927 pages. Cloth. Volume I, £7.00; Volume II, £8.50. (Approximately $30.00)

The International Critical Commentary lives! After the publication of the volume on Kings by J. A. Montgomery and H. S. Gehman in 1951 the series appeared to be moribund. But the appearance of Cranfield's *Romans* signals the new life for the most important British commentary series on the Bible. The volumes appear in the familiar green binding; only the names of the new series editors externally signify the change. J. A. Emerton, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge University, and C. E. B. Cranfield, Professor of Theology at Durham, will guide the series in its new life. While no list of assignments has been published, rumor has it that K. Donfried is doing Thessalonians, W. D. Davies, Matthew, and E. Best, Ephesians. Such names are an omen favorable to the success of the series.

What does Cranfield's **Romans** tell us about the new series? A number of things. First of all, it continues the detailed text critical and linguistic analysis that was characteristic of volumes like Charles' **Revelation,** Burton's **Galatians,** and others in the old series. Cranfield also provides extensive summaries of variant interpretations of difficult passages, and indicates his personal reasoning that makes him select a particular viewpoint. Thus, for example, Cranfield lists three variant interpretations of the phrase that Christ is the *telos* of the law (10:4, II, 516-20). He passes in review the interpretations of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin and the moderns. While the majority of moderns opt for the view that *telos* here means termination, Cranfield argues that Christ is the goal, aim, intention, or substance of the law. Thus he argues a viewpoint that is in many ways a minority viewpoint today — and does it with verve and careful exegeti-

cal argument. He builds that argument up in a long passage in his second excursus (pp. 845-862), his summation of Paul's theology in Romans.

In one sense Cranfield's view of Romans might be termed quite traditional. He holds that the entire epistle we have, 1:1-16:23, was written to Rome. (He does not regard chapter 15 as an addition directed to another church.) It was written sometime between late A.D. 55 and 57, from Corinth, during the three-month stay referred to in Acts 20:2-3. The church in Rome included both Jews and Gentiles. Paul writes to introduce himself to that church, and takes the opportunity to set before them a "serious and orderly summary of the gospel as he had come to understand it."

This latter point is the presupposition for the interpretation of the book. Cranfield indicates that in an impressive sentence in his essay on Paul's purpose in writing Romans:

> We are convinced that close attention to the course of Paul's argument, the connections of thought between his sentences (which are usually indicated with care) and the general structure of the whole of 1.16b-15.13, together with, of course, close attention to what he has actually said explicitly in 1.1-16a and 15.14-16.23, is absolutely indispensable, if we are to obtain anything approaching an objective understanding of what Paul was trying to do in his letter to the Romans. (II, 819)

Thus Cranfield has no patience with theories of interpolation (O'Neill) or analyses that suggest that 9-11 are an excursus or that 1:19 to 8:39 is a kind of preliminary to the theodicy of 9-11. He both assumes and argues a unity of thought and outlook that progresses from 1:16-b-17, the theme of the letter. Indeed, he argues this so consistently that, in spite of his protestations to the contrary, he seems not to take account of the possibility that some topics are present in the letter because of the situation in the church at Rome, e.g. 13:1-7.

The bibliography (I, xiii-xxvii) lists dozens of titles, excluding periodical articles (cited frequently in the commentary). It is no idle showcase, but is used throughout the work. The commentary is excellent, thoughtful, careful, sober — and as a result has a little less passion in it than some shorter works. It gives a sensible summation of work on the letter. Coupled with Käsemann's **Romans** it would help any student to hear the great cadences of Paul's letter anew. It is a worthy harbinger of the new ICC.

Edgar Krentz
Christ Seminary — Seminex

MAKING ALL THINGS NEW: AN INVITATION TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. By Henri J. M. Nouwen. New York: Harper and Row, 1981. 95 pages. Cloth. $6.95.

IN MEMORIAM. By Henri J. M. Nouwen. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1980. 62 pages. Paper. $2.50.

The recent writings of Henri Nouwen are extended tracts of a devotional nature. In these brief works, Father Nouwen continues to invite us to discover a new peace of mind and soul by creating for ourselves a quiet space where God may speak to lives characterized by excessive worry and obsessive busy-ness.

Written to both explain and encourage the spiritual life, *Making All Things New* is a quietly inspiring distillation of thought, describing the difficulties and the joys of creating a quiet space at the center of our lives where we may begin to experience the life of the Spirit of God. One need not withdraw into an ascetic life style to live the spiritual life. Indeed, "the spiritual life can be lived in as many ways as there are people . . . what is new is that we are set free from the compulsions of our world and have set our hearts on the only necessary thing." In the second half of the book the author describes the means by which the spiritual life is achieved: the disciplines of solitude and community.

This volume serves well as an introduction to spirituality as well as in-

spiring reading, in the best sense, for all who daily struggle to create that much needed "quiet center."

Reminiscent of C. S. Lewis' *A Grief Observed, In Memoriam* is an intimate, deeply touching, personal account of the experience of his own mother's death. "In a society which is much more inclined to help you hide your pain than grow through it, it is necessary to make a very conscious effort to mourn," writes the author.

In following the process of his mother's dying, death, and burial, Nouwen applies the resources of his own faith to the chaotic, intimate, sad, yet joyous experience of the death of a deeply cherished parent, adding new dimensions to the Christian understanding of death and the process of grief. Prayer, scripture, the sacraments, and the symbols of the catholic faith are meaningfully woven into this account.

Steven Olson
Blanton-Peale Graduate Institute

ROLES IN THE LITURGICAL ASSEMBLY. The Twenty-third Liturgical Conference of Saint Serge. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1981. xi and 343 pages. Paper. $12.95.

The liturgical movement has been intensely interested in ecclesiology because the liturgy renders the church *(ecclesia)* present. The recovery of the model of the church as the mystical body of Christ has perhaps been one of the most important contributions of liturgical theology. The idea of one body with a diversity of members, each en dowed with gifts of the Spirit, has provided impetus for the recovery of a liturgical assembly in which a variety of roles are being exercised. The explication of the different roles in the liturgical assembly was the subject of papers presented at the Twenty-third Week of Liturgical Studies at the famous St. Serge Institute in Paris. All the papers except the one delivered by P.-M. Gy are collected and translated in this volume. They present to English (especially American) readers the historical-critical work of some of Europe's leading Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Reformed liturgical scholars. The notable absence of Lutheran, Anglican, and Free Church contributions can be attributed to the fact that the bulk of the contributors are French-speaking and writing. The unusual (for a Western publication) number of Orthodox contributions can be attributed to the fact that St. Serge is the leading center of Orthodox theology in Western Europe.

The papers are mainly historical. That being the case, they might have been arranged chronologically instead of alphabetically by author. They tend to deal with particular documents rather than historical periods. Thus, there is no sweeping overview of the development and demise of the liturgical assembly and its diverse roles in the history of the Church. Moreover, while the conservative Reformation practice is not dealt with, neither is the rather important (for the Western Church) testimony of the *Ordines Romani* and the Western Medieval development. Also lacking is a sociocultural analysis of why it is in the 20th century that there has been such an intense interest in recovering a greater degree of congregational participation in the liturgucal celebration and the development of the various roles for assisting ministers.

These serious lacunae, however, do not detract from the quality of the research and reflection which are embodied in the material which is presented. Contemporary issues are dealt with in terms of the historical tradition (e.g. Jean-Jacques von Allmen's discussion of the hiatus between contemporary and classical Reformed worship, Constantin Adronikof's theological discussion of identity or distinction between "Assembly" and "Body of Christ," Serge Heitz's reflections on the liturgical assembly in contemporary Orthodoxy, Burckhard Neunheuser's illuminating comparison of "The Relation of Priest and Faithful in the Liturgies of Pius V and Paul VI," Cyrille Vogel's analysis of the question "Is the Presbyteral Ordination of the Celebrant a Condition for the Celebration of the Eucharist," and

Gaston Westphal's presentation of "The Role and Limit of Pastoral Delegation to Laymen for the Celebration of the Eucharist in the Protestant Reformed Churches" — which includes some Lutheran evidence).

It is in the North American churches, more than in the state churches of Europe, that the desiderata of the liturgical movement for a celebrating congregation with diverse liturgical roles has been more nearly realized. But the theological question which the ancient documents address to our contemporary practice is: to what extent is our ordering of liturgical roles a recognition of or bestowal of charisms? As Bernard Botte points out in his essay on "Christian People and Hierarchy in the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus," "the charismatic Church is not an anarchic Church" and "it would be a misconception to think of the institutional Church as simply a juridicial organization based on arbitrary norms" (p. 62). There can be no adequate contemporary reflection and practice without taking seriously the theological (pneumatological) challenge of the patristic documents. The extension of liturgical roles in the Christian assembly cannot be just in the interest of our socio-cultural ideal of participatory democracy. It must be a concern to manifest the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This suggests that each individual has a role to play in the liturgy which should be neither confused with nor usurped by another. The laity should not assume the pastor's role; nor should the pastor usurp the deacon's or lector's or cantor's or choir's or acolyte's or usher's or congregation's role. And those who exercise the various roles should be spiritually equipped to fill them.

Frank C. Senn
Christ the Mediator Lutheran Church
Chicago, Illinois

THE LITURGICAL YEAR. ITS HISTORY AND ITS MEANING AFTER THE REFORM OF THE LITURGY. By Adolf Adam. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1981. xv and 308 pages. Paper. $12.95.

This is another in Pueblo's series of commentaries on the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic rites. The ecumenical value of Adolf Adam's work on *The Liturgical Year* lies in the fact that many of the Western Churches have adopted/adapted the church year calendar and lectionary developed by the Consilium for the Implementation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.* While there have been a number of lectionary commentaries and homily helps, there have been few comprehensive expositions of the structure, character, and content of the church year. Adam has provided in this book such a comprehensive historical overview, from which he develops the theological meaning and spiritual significance of the liturgical calendar.

He emphasizes the centrality of the Christian paschal mystery in its annual and weekly celebrations. This is developed from the Jewish festival calendar and the weekly Sabbath, which provided a foil for the Christian eschatological Lord's Day (Sunday). Along the way he picks up the complicated growth of the Christmas Cycle the Sanctoral Cycle (saints days), and the problem of providing an annual lectionary for the liturgy of the hours. Especially enlightening for Protestant readers may be the exposition of the principles governing the veneration of the saints in the Roman tradition and the differentiation between feasts and memorials. A complete listing of the revised calendar of commemorations is provided on pp. 249-261. It would be interesting to compare this list with those in the new *Book of Common Prayer* and *Lutheran Book of Worship.*

Adam ends with an excursus on the perpetual calendar. The problem is to work with the world community toward the development of a lunisolar calendar which is both mathematically accurate and cyclically proportioned, without undermining the weekly Lord's Day or further complicating the reckoning of Easter.

Frank C. Senn
Christ the Mediator Lutheran Church
Chicago, Illinois

THE PUBLIC CHURCH: MAINLINE — EVANGELICAL — CATHOLIC. By Martin E. Marty. New York: Crossroads, 1981. 170 pages. Cloth. $10.95.

"Mainline — Evangelical — Catholic": however Christians within these broad categories define themselves, all are here taken into account, their histories examined. Our traditions, our theologies, and our personal and public behaviors are here. Reading this book is like going through a good counseling session that was both pastoral and prophetic. Things are clarified and the Gospel is alive in you again.

Marty dedicates this book to the Simon brothers, the Rev. Arthur and the Honorable Paul, "Exemplars to three generations of Martys, Agents of the Public Church in a world hungry for bread and justice and spirit." And at the end of the preface he writes: "who ... through inventions like Bread for the World and acts of legislation and works of love have embodied the style one looks for in any complex of churches that deserve the name 'public' — or Christian." There is a great cue in this dedication to the concern and the agony and hope his book is about. Will we make it now? Do evangelism and public concerns intersect? Is it possible that a sufficient modicum of civility will prevail? In our times two new "laws of history" are emerging: 1) only the belligerently exclusive grow, and evangelism means a fanatacism that rules out other groups; and 2) the civil must not be committed to any profound beliefs, and the committed dare not be civil toward others lest they lose their own faith. Will we make it in a time of listlessness in much of mainline Protestantism and Catholicism and of confusion in Evangelicanism?

Marty writes with a sense of spiritual *and* social urgency I have not always felt in him before. His concern for historical and theological accuracy does not slacken; however, this time he will not burden his readers with footnotes. He and they need to be moving on. It is as though he, and maybe we, have been caught by surprise by the pre- and the post-election rhetoric of both our two mainline political parties, suddenly and strongly supported by the religious and Christian right, with considerable following from within the presumably more experienced and seasoned third force, which is the public church.

It is as though Marty anticipated the resultant legislative assault on the poor and minorities nationwide and abroad. He anticipates the concern and the pain of his public church exemplars: of Arthur, because all Bread for the World stands for is ever more blatantly contradicted; of Paul, a brother's consistent voice in the Congress, barely re-elected last fall and now listed and targeted for defeat by the National Conservative Political Action Committee for his opposition to the cutbacks of social service and income maintenance programs, to the relaxation of federal financial and regulatory responsibility, to tax reduction versus tax reform, and to the escalation of militarism and military spending.

The outcome is dubious and the test is on. Marty's expectations of the public church are high, considering their theological and other resources and assets. A theology of the cross may need to be better comprehended by those too ready to see history turn out well, or unable to endure prophecies of worse times ahead. Temptation to self-perpetuation on the part of the leaders in the church will increase with the burdens of inflation. From within and especially from without there will be discordant voices. By no means is there consensus within the communions that God and the Simon brothers are on the side of those who hunger for bread and justice and spirit. While I would predict Arthur and Paul are quite encouraged by the new encyclical of Pope John Paul II, I doubt the popularity of its reception within U.S. Catholicism and within the rest of the church public, unaccustomed as we are to critiques of capitalism.

But count Marty among the ongoing,

perceptive observers: "Capitalism is the religion our age wants to believe in," is the title of his recent review of George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty,* the "bible" of Reagonimics.

Arnold Bringewatt
St. Louis, MO

PRIME TIME PREACHERS: THE RISING POWER OF TELEVANGELISM. By Jeffrey K. Hadden and Charles E. Swann. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1981. 288 pages. Cloth. $11.95.

Jeffrey K. Hadden (a sociologist at the University of Virginia) and Charles E. Swann (the manager of a public radio station in Richmond, Virginia) are convinced that Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell, Rex Humbard, Jim Bakker, Pat Robertson, Robert Schuller, and company are not to be underestimated. Not only are they awed by the power of this group, but they believe it may go a long way toward shaping the political future of the United States.

How many people really watch the programs? What kind of folks are they? Who is the real person behind the preacher's mask? What is the relationship of the New Christian Right to the New Right that helped to elect Ronald Reagan in 1980? Why has the mainline establishment's response tended to be so hesitant?

Hadden and Swann do an excellent job of opening the discussion. Their check of the Arbitron ratings reveals that the size of the viewing audience is largely exaggerated. At the top, to be sure, is Oral Roberts. But "Davey and Goliath," a children's program produced by the Lutheran Church in America, slightly outdraws "The PTL Club." From a political point of view, the viewing constituents are an angry group of conservatives, tired of being treated as a "lunatic fringe" or just another "interest group" that isn't strong enough to be factored into the decision-making process. Jerry Falwell is not an "antichrist," but more the caricature of a successful Baptist preacher — "intelligent, outgoing, charismatic, caring, and a little boastful."

The authors see the televangelists as useful to the New Right, but in no way bound to them. They also believe that the jury is still out of whether or not televangelism is hurting local church attendance. A more identifiable "bone of contention" is the fact that the televangelists have cornered the market on the "air time." "This Is the Life," for example, an LCMS product, now appears on half as many stations and commands only about one-fifth of the audience it once did. The real bogeyman in all of this may not turn out to be preachers or their born-again politics, but television itself, which is increasingly privatizing American life and thereby undermining the corporate nature of the church.

The book is engagingly written and well-organized. The coverage of the National Affairs Briefing in Dallas organized by the Roundtable in August, 1980, where Ronald Reagan was kept waiting in the wings while James Robison sermonized and Jerry Falwell "passed the hat," is a perfectly-splended piece of narrative. This book is a must for those who feel the need to come to terms with a major new religious event of our time.

Jon Diefenthaler
Bethany-Trinity Lutheran Church
Waynesboro, Virginia

PATHFINDERS. By Gail Sheehy. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1981. 494 pages. Cloth. $15.95.

Since *Pathfinders* is the successor to *Passages,* it seems only fair to let *Pathfinders* respond to some of the exasperated comments and questions directed to me by people who read the earlier books for Christian adult discussion groups.

"I got into *Passages* twice and threw it down both times before I had read a third of it," said one thirty-year-old woman. "It seems as if you can't move ahead without destroying everything you've done and everyone around you." In this new book, Gail Sheehy lays out

three tests for identifying pathfinders. 1) They must have emerged from the completed passage with renewed strength and expanded potential; 2) They must have done a minimum amount of human damage and not have left behind a trail of injured family members, friends, or colleagues; and 3) They must seek a balance between individual growth and a purpose outside themselves. Sheehy does not promote self-seeking family wreckers.

"*Passages* seems to say that everyone should do their own thing without any concern for others," said an exasperated middle-aged man. But as Sheehy says, "The greater the well-being a person [in my study] reflected, the more likely he or she was to have an outside purpose. The current pop philosophy of looking out for Number One sounds like a national suicide pact."

An older woman said, "There's no place for faith in *Passages.* The book is secular." Sheehy says, "In every group I surveyed, people of high well-being were more likely than the others to speak of having a faith." Faith serves, in her opinion, to pull a person out of and beyond the self.

Purpose and faith are not the only attributes that help a person successfully negotiate life's passages. Also needed are a willingness to risk and a sense of right timing, that is, of working on necessary changes at the right age. Using the best of male and female strengths is vital. When a man nurtures and a woman asserts herself, they make use of their basic strengths. It also helps to be a member of the Comeback Decade, those people from ages 46-55 to exhibit great rebound ability.

Does the scope of her study move behond the limited sample of higher socio-economic level people interviewed for Sheehy's first book? Through a questionnaire she tried to find people who had a high sense of well-being, or a sustaining sense of equanimity behind life's ups and downs. People of all socio-economic levels were included in the sample. The findings, however, do show that a sense of well-being is more likely among the more highly educated, those who are married, and older persons.

A socially conscious man in his thirties was critical of *Passages:* "It puts personal satisfaction ahead of any social change and seems to counsel people to settle for the status quo." Two chapters, however, specifically deal with people who challenged the way things were and fought hard to make them into what they could become. Those who did so, often at great personal expense, tended to be of middle age. Sheehy concludes: "It may be that a natural progression for a developing pathfinder is one of detaching roughly every twenty years from another outgrown family: moving from parental family, to the occupational and personal family, to efforts on behalf of the [whole human] family."

One woman with silver hair said, "I'm over 60, and *Passages* doesn't do me much good." For such people, Sheehy adds life stages beyond the Deadline Decade of 35-45, namely, the Comeback Decade of ages 45-55, a decade of great renewal of interest in all aspects of life. The Freestyle Fifties are characterized by being oneself and doing the things one likes to do. The Selective Sixties are those years in which one selects the most important things in life to accent and work on. The Thoughtful Seventies are years characterized by reflecting on life's meanings and purpose. The Proud-to-Be Eighties are marked by a willingness to give what one can and take what is needed from others.

Sheehy is a member of the Comeback Decade and provides a richness of detail for people of that age. She does not have much to say to people older than that. The research purist can fault her for imprecision in reporting her data and for writing more as a journalist than as a researcher. Members of the "evangelical right" will not take kindly to her criticism of their attempt to reform the country in their image. Frankly, she is weakest when she tries to become a prophet instead of a storyteller.

Robert Conrad
Christ Seminary — Seminex

GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ. By Robert McAffee Brown. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980. 89 pages. Paper. $3.45.

Gustavo Gutierrez, Peruvian Roman Catholic theologian and social activist, insists that the true preachers of the Gospel are the poor. As theologian, he merely hopes to articulate their thoughts. Brown follows his lead in this book and provides less a biography of one man than an articulation of the thought world he represents. Biography is limited to one chapter, plus a bibliography of Gutierrez' books and articles. The bulk of the book is a challenging, penetrating introduction to the theology of liberation articulated by Gutierrez.

Brown's acquaintance with Gutierrez is more than academic. He was a faculty colleague who was influenced by Gutierrez. Thus, Brown attempts not merely to introduce and inform, but to persuade, "to spread the discomfort" felt in the face of the oppressed of the world. Theology, Gutierrez insists, must be radical, revolutionary, subversive; it must come from the "underside" of history, an outgrowth of the cries of the poor. The church must seek to be not ony church of the poor but a poor church. As a tool to help analyze and understand the problems of society, Marxism is relevant for the church. Only people with full stomachs can be satisfied with the economic, political, even theological status quo. The passion of Gutierrez' commitment coupled with Brown's spirited style makes this short book a compelling presentation of liberation theology.

As persuasive as Brown is, one wishes at times that he could have maintained some distance for critical appraisal. Critics of liberation theology are written off rather casually, with the result that some fundamental questions remain. Doesn't liberation theology set for itself an impossible utopian goal, given the bent of humanity for evil? Put otherwise, has liberation theology sold short the root problem of evil by institutionalizing it? Is class struggle as prominent in the Scriptures as liberation theology suggests? Isn't the church a stranger wherever it is, even among the oppressed?

Even these questions, however, are a tribute to both Gutierrez and Brown, for confrontation has already begun. The brevity, readability, and provocative style of this book recommend it as a good, sympathetic introduction to Gustavo Gutierrez' world of liberation theology.

Henry Rowold
Concordia Seminary, Chia Yi, Taiwan

JEWISH LITERATURE BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND THE MISHNAH. By George W. E. Nickelsburg. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981. xx and 332 pages. Cloth. $19.95.

Judaism produced a varigated and significant corpus of literature in the period covered by this book, 400 B.C.E. to 140 C.E. While only a small portion of it is considered canonical, and that only in Roman Catholic circles, these materials, popularly called the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Dead Sea Scrolls, respond to the hard times God's people suffered over a five hundred year period. Though the book omits discussion of Philo, Josephus, and the Septuagint, it provides a most comprehensive, competent, and clear guide to everything else.

Nickelsburg, professor at the University of Iowa and an ordained Lutheran pastor (AELC), believes that this literature is best interpreted as a response to the times in which it was composed. Hence eight of the nine chapters begin with short historical summaries, which are then followed by introductions to the books assigned to that period by modern scholars. The only exception is formed by a chapter dealing with books which primarily expound Scripture, or whose date is very uncertain. The history ranges from the exile and return, through the advent of Alexander, the Antiochan persecution and the Hasmonean response, to the first and second revolts against Rome.

Nicklesburg's integration of history and literature is valuable and productive; his expositions of the writings

themselves emphasize content and structure. Introductory questions are handled succinctly, but sufficiently. The author's main hope is to help students read the literature intelligently. Throughout he asks wherein lies a document's integrity, its wholeness, its thrust. Each chapter ends with bibliographical references divided into three sections: lists of translations of the works discussed; references to editions of the original texts or ancient versions; and secondary literature.

Christians often neglect the literature surveyed in this volume and mistakenly dismiss the period as "Late Judaism." Many Jews, too, take inadequate account of the variety within Judaism before the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods. Both traditions have recognized this gap in recent years, and a whole new generation of scholars, among whom Nickelsburg has been a prominent leader, has rushed in to fill the gap. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the apocalyptic community that produced them has played a major role in stimulating interest and research.

This "introduction" is reliable without being obscure, readable without resorting to patronizing. We welcome a new and standard reference tool. No one who wants to learn about the period Nickelsburg calls "Early Judaism" will want, or dare, to be without this book. After all, from the people who produced this literature came Hillel and Jesus, Akiba and Paul.

Ralph W. Klein
Christ Seminary — Seminex

THE GOSPEL OF MARK. By Hugh Anderson. Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1976. xviii and 366 pages. Cloth. $17.50. (Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981. Paper. $8.95.)

Scholars have minutely investigated the Gospel of Mark in the last two centuries. In many ways it has been the primary text for source, form, and redaction criticism, especially the latter. The result has been a new appreciation of Mark as creative writer and theologian. There is no shortage today of excellent commentaries and monographs on Mark. The works of Nineham and Schweizer come to mind at once. But Hugh Anderson's work, first published in 1976 and reprinted in 1981, ranks among the very best in English.

Anderson summarizes and evaluates the results of international scholarship on Mark (his selective bibliography covers six and a half pages) and concludes that Mark is an "outstanding innovator," who originated the gospel genre. He is no simple storyteller or biographer; rather Mark's work is "impregnated with theological ideas."

Mark's sources are elusive. He certainly had a passion narrative to draw on and a few other collections of material — all of it preserved, modified, and renewed by the "concrete conditions and urgent practical requirements of the Christian community." Form criticism gets Anderson's qualified approval, even though it is often too skeptical in matters of history. It has conclusively shown that a commentator must "concentrate heavily ... to elucidate the theology" of the book and so come to terms with the truth of the gospel.

Anderson dates the gospel between 65 and 70 C.E. While recognizing that the tradition makes a strong case for its origin in Rome, he pronounces a *non liquet* over the question of provenance. The unknown author wrote to a Gentile audience. Quite the best part of the extensive introduction is the chapter entitled "Structure, Occasion, and Purpose or Message of the Gospel".

The commentary proper is very helpful and sensitive. Each section is given a general introduction and notes on specific details of the text. Extensive discussion of controverted points in the text is frequent.

The use of this commentary in the year of Mark (the primary Gospel in the lectionary for 1981-1982) would benefit preaching a great deal.

Edgar Krentz
Christ Seminary — Seminex

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR THE LONG HAUL. By Daniel Berrigan. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981. 160 pages. Cloth. $9.95.

Abingdon's *Journeys in Faith* series is aimed at people currently remapping their faith journey and struggling to "move into the 1980s with a lean, biblical, ecumenical, and human faith perspective." Berrigan, writing with the radical spiritual intensity and unabashed religious hope we have come to associate with him, has contributed a book to reenergize the most jaded among us who may have flagged in the never-ending task of peacemaking and to challenge those of us who have yet to summon up the courage to say No to the way of Caesar and Yes to the way of Christ.

This is a book of memories: of young Daniel's mother feeding an escaped convict in their kitchen; of Berrigan's later friendship with Thomas Merton; of his encounter with Gandhi and Martin Luther King and Dietrich Bonhoeffer; of a disappointing teaching semester in the Department of Religion at the University of Winnipeg [substitute just about every other university here!]; of his life with a community of Vietnamese Buddhist exiles in Paris; of sit-ins and teach-ins and break-ins and jail-ins; of meetings both chance and planned with Palestinians, with urban poor in the South Bronx, with members of the I.R.A., with Protestants and Catholics and fellow Jesuits, even with a disarming young hitchhiker on the road to Point Reyes.

It is a book of bittersweet, touchingly simple, aphorisms, like: "Don't be afraid to be afraid, or appalled to be appalled. How do you think the redwoods feel these days, or the whales ...?" and "If your first thoughts are revolting or hateful, try some second thoughts. They usually improve on the former ones," and "The cross is folly, even to the foolish." It is a book of ironic, sometimes wistful, reflections; of inner dialogues about spiritual fits and starts; and of mature contemplative vision.

Above all, it is a book that reformulates the Christian life style in compelling terms that undercut the obscuring and divisive barriers of religious, political, social, economic, and individual pretension and exclusionism. The Ten Commandments for the long haul include:

1. Love your enemies, love one another (Mt. 5:44; Jn. 15:17)
2. Do this in remembrance of me (1 Cor. 11:24-25)
3. Sell what you possess (Mt. 19:21)
4. Do not be afraid (Mk. 5:36; 6:50)
5. When you are haled into court, prepare no defense (Lk. 21:12-14)
6. Let him who is without sin be the first to throw a stone (Jn. 8:7)
7. Lazarus, come forth (Jn. 11:43)
8. Compel them to come in (Lk. 14:23)
9. Flee (Mt. 24:16)
10. Go, teach (Mt. 28:19-20).

For each one he offers an exegesis born of his own experiences of what it means to be conformed to the Gospel during the 20th century in America and in the world. Whoever is empowered to follow these commandments on her/his journey of faith, says Berrigan, has been granted a share of "the kingdom of God, the kingdom of peace ... the kingdom of the crucified." Whoever has taken the "first tentative steps" toward that kingdom has "escaped the net of the fowler, the culture that ensnares and entangles the heart, that would induct us into doom."

This book is not merely for reading. It is, rather, Berrigan's modest yet urgent invitation for all who encounter it to strike tent and set out again on the narrow path that alone leads to joy and fulfillment.

William J. Urbrock
University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh

NATURE AND RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION: FROM EDWARDS TO BUSHNELL. By Conrad Cherry. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. x and 242 pages. Cloth. $12.95.

Curry's book is a significant contribution to the history of American preaching, theology, and pastoral care.

His thesis is that the Puritan preachers made wise and effective use of the link between nature and religious imagination, but that this link was dissolved in the century that followed the death of Jonathan Edwards and was revived in the teachings of Horace Bushnell. On the basis of this thesis, Cherry suggests that American Protestant preaching swings from effective use of nature and the religious imagination to periods of didactic and legalistic moralism in the pulpit.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One concentrates on the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, who is rightly portrayed as the master of the use of natural images to present profound spiritual truths. Part Two evaluates the thought of Samuel Hopkins as a representative of the New Divinity School, Joseph Butler, William Paley, Thomas Reid and Duglas Stewart as representatives of the Scottish Common Sense movement, Timothy Dwight and Lyman Beecher of the New Haven School and William Ellery Channing. Part III concentrates on the sermons and writings of Horace Bushnell.

The book abounds in incisive and stimulating observations. Cherry observes that Edwards believed that the "intention of the image is to provide experiential participation in a truth, rather than moral enlightenment regarding that truth" (p. 31). Or again, he writes that Edwards "sought not to bully human wills into submission but to set before persons symbols that captured their minds and thereby won them over" (p. 41). Concerning Bushnell's quarrel with the methods of revivalists, he argues taht "revivalism left the impression that the whole of Christianity could be collapsed into a conversion that occurs at a specific time and place, whereas Christianity is in fact a life into which one grows" (p. 217). And again Cherry observes that "God does not redeem humans by force; he patiently loves them into salvation."

This book will richly repay reading by the conscientious preacher, the dedicated student of American life and thought and all who are looking for explanations concerning the present state of preaching in the United States.

Herbert T. Mayer
Christ Seminary — Seminex

THE RENDERING OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Dale Patrick. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981. xxv and 148 pages. Paper. $8.95.

This contribution to the series "Overtures to Biblical Theology" is an exercise in the *literary* reading of the OT and a critique of the dramatic representation (rendering) of God in biblical texts of varied periods. The book is divided into three parts: Part One, "The Characterization of God," discusses the identity and consistency of Yahweh as a *dramatis persona* of the biblical story. Part Two, "The Action of God," assesses the role of Yahweh as a participant in the affairs of the world, both in speaking and acting. Part Three, "The Rendering of Yahweh and the Identity of God," addresses the reality of the biblical God. The work ends with a chapter entitled "Divine Initiative in Human Imagination."

Patrick's work is carefully conceived and has benefited from a long prehistory in classroom presentations and varied manuscript forms. Much in the early chapters tempts the reader to judge the argument as self-evident, but a patient reading bears unexpected dividends and pleasant surprises. The presentation of the *sequential, cumulative* and *unified* action of God underlines the confessional nature of the Scriptural account and gives important clues on how this character arises from a biblical "library" of materials of diverse historical provenance.

In the last two chapters Patrick elucidates the manner in which the biblical literature "presses the claim to reality" by "seeking to define us and lead us into the way of truth." This is accomplished not alone by assertion, but by effective dramatic presentation. Such a presentation generates a confessional stance in the reader.

The vehicle for this *convincing* rendering of the character of God is the human imagination — not in its willful

individuality, but in submission to the demands of characterization existant in the community, its tradition, and its literature.

Patrick's book is the first to come to my attention in a long while of which I have even been tempted to say "belongs on everyone's shelf." It does. Yet one cannot escape the nagging feeling that there must have been available a more felicitious title word than "rendering": literary presentation? depiction? representation?

James A. Rimbach
Concordia Lutheran Church
Pullman, Washington

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS. By Walter Harrelson. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. xiv and 222 pages. Paper. $9.95.

Harrellson, who teaches at Vanderbilt Divinity School, is well-known to American scholars and students of the Bible for his articles on "Law in the OT" and "Ten Commandments" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible."* In this book he sets out to show "just how significant the Ten Commandments are for a biblical understanding of the rights of human beings in relation to others, and how significant they are . . . for contemporary human life today." The work is admittedly apologetic, for Harrelson believes that a knowledge of the Ten Commandments has been lost from common life in the Western world and with it also an understanding of "what human liberty is, what freedom of the spirit means, and how freedom is to be maintained in the world." Harrelson hopes that his book will aid those who seek to reclaim the Ten Commandments for personal and societal life today.

The book consists of three major sections. In the first Harrelson deals with historical and structural problems: issues like the origin and authorship of the commandments, their numbering, other decalogues in the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments and legalistic religion, and the general value of norms in society. In the central and largest section Harrelson offers exegetical studies of each commandment. Most readers may find this the most useful section, the one in which Harrelson offers several penetrating and challenging insights. The first three commandments (No other gods, No image of God, No misuse of God's Name/Power) present YHWH's exclusive claims upon the people who had experienced his prior love and grace in the events of Exodus. Harrelson notes that an acknowledgement of the Oneness of God involves a recognition that God is in some sense the source of the evils that befall humankind. Further, he argues that biblical thought permits only one authentic image/representation of this one God, namely, living human beings who do his will on earth. The next pair of commandments (No work on the seventh day, No contempt of family) set forth fundamental institutions that touch on the well-being of society as a whole. The fifth commandment (fourth in Lutheran numbering) has mainly in view "the care of the aged, the treatment of old parents with dignity and thoughtfulness by their adult children." Together with the fourth commandment it reminds an entire society that life is more than toil and more than those who can carry a full load of work. Harrelson views the last five commandments as geared somewhat more to individual acts or misdeeds. The present a person's "basic human obligations" (No contempt for human life, No contempt for sex) and "basic social obligations" (No contempt for the goods of the community, No contempt for the community's institutions, and No lusting after the life or goods of others). Harrelson offers a shrewd interpretation of the ninth commandment as guarding against "the mischievous misstatement of fact or judgment"; he also attempts to wrestle with some implications of the deliberately laconic generalization, "thou shalt not kill," that is the sixth commandment.

The final section, which I found rather anticlimactic and disappointing, is headlined "The Ten Commandments in Religious Life Today." It is quite brief and, in view of the book's title and stated aims, hardly fulfilled my expec-

tations on this count. Harrelson appends, but without any significant commentary, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, as a worthy supplement to the ancient Decalogue.

William J. Urbrock
University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh

THE ARCHIVES OF EBLA. By Giovanni Pettinato. Afterword by Mitchell Dahood, S.J. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981, xvii and 247 pages. Cloth. $15.95.

Early reactions to the discovery of thousands of documents written in Sumerian and a Northwest Semitic language called Eblaite were sensationalistic and heated. Many hoped to find new historical support for the patriarchs, and one well-known scholar tried to redate Abraham, on the basis of these texts, to 2500 B.C.E., the date now assigned to the main archives. Reports disclosed that Yahweh was mentioned at Ebla, and that a new parallel to Genesis 1 had been found. In the midst of such exciting and often extravagant claims, a bitter dispute arose between Pettinato, the chief epigrapher, and Paolo Matthiae, the chief archaeologist of the Syrian site. Pettinato was fired, and he and his successor have engaged in an acrimonious public debate.

Because many of Pettinato's earlier publications of texts have been in Italian, this new book will provide direct access to the Ebla tablets for the first time to many English-speaking scholars. While parts of the book explain ancient Near Eastern studies for the non-specialist, other parts deal with the esoteria of ancient economic and political texts, with the two Eblaite calendars, and with the structure of the Eblaite language. One economic text is printed in parallel columns, with the Sumero-Eblaite language in one column and English in the other, and runs on for more than twenty pages. The average reader will find the book contains too much, but the specialist will often find too little. Only excerpts of the grammer, the lexicons, the god lists, the treaties, and economic texts are published, making it extremely difficult to check the accuracy of conclusions or deductions drawn by Pettinato. Still all should rejoice even over such excerpts; perhaps a new period of sobriety in Ebla studies may begin.

Before the discovery of this archive, the location of Ebla and its great importance were unknown. Pettinato now describes it as the first empire, whose dominion extended for thousands of kilometers — and this at a time when the great pyramids were being built in Egypt. 16,500 tablets and fragments were dug up, amounting to some 5,000 or more separate documents (many fragments belong to a single document). The documents are written in a mixture of Sumerian (80%) and Eblaite (20%) though Pettinato argues that the ancient scribes would have substituted Eblaite words for the Sumerian when the read the tablets. Eblaite is Northwest semitic, the family of languages comprised of Hebrew, Phoenician, Ugaritic, Aramaic, etc.

Pettinato writes about Ebla, its dynasty, society, economy, culture, and religion — and little about the Old Testament. At this stage of the game this is very wise since Eblaite itself is very imperfectly known. More than 500 gods have been discovered, chief of whom was Dagan. Of special interest for biblical students are Kamish (probably the Chemosh of the OT), Tiamat (the villain in the Babylonian creation story), and Ya (whose identity with the biblical Yahweh is, in my judgment, open to serious question). The Eblaite creation account reads as follows: "Lord of heaven and earth; the earth was not, you created it, the light of the day was not, you created it, the morning light you had not yet made exist." Unless more data is yet forthcoming, the importance of this text for the interpretation of Genesis 1 would seem to be minimal.

Dahood's fifty-page Afterword throws most caution to the wind and lists dozens of passages supposedly illuminated by Eblaite parallels. But what illumination comes on Gen. 2:7 (Yahweh forms man from dust like a

potter) by learning that the word "potter" appears in Eblaite? Or how is the poetic use of Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa. 1:10) or Admah and Zeboim (Hos. 11:8) illuminated by the information that Ebla mentions the cities of Sodom and Zeboim? Archi, Pettinato's successor as epigrapher, has even recently argued that the cities referred to in Eblaite are nowhere near their biblical counterparts geographically. Is the name Sisera (Judg. 5:20) the same as Eblaite Sasalum? Does the word for boot in Isa. 9:4 really provide the etymology for the preposition "in" of Eblaite? Dahood, who died in March, 1982, continued to multiply parallels between the Bible and ancient texts and to reread the Bible on the basis of these parallels, but he never came up with a method that enabled him to sort out right parallelsfrom wrong ones.

This book provides important and exciting data about a major political and economic power in Syria, previously unknown. It provides raw material that will greatly enhance our knowledge of Sumerian and Northwest Semitic (there are numerous bilingual tablets which equate Sumerian and Eblaite words). The information on the pantheon, while almost teasing to the scholar because of its incompleteness, is breathtaking in its implications. Still, after the last turbulent five years, we should hope that future "progress" will be slow and cautious.

Ralph W. Klein
Christ Seminary — Seminex

THOSE WHO PONDER PROVERBS: APHORISTIC THINKING AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE. By James G. Williams. Bible and Literature Series, 2. Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1981. 128 pages. Paper. $9.95.

The once neglected child of Biblical studies, Israel's wisdom literature, has in recent decades become the focus of much attention. Williams' study of "the function of aphoristic language" is a helpful extension of aspects of that study.

His thesis comes at the end of the book: "aphoristic discourse (comprises) nonnarrative modes of reflection and poetic expression that arise out of the deeply felt ontic tension between order and disorder and that are employed either to reaffirm a tradition or to articulate a counter-order which is based in experiences not validated by the tradition." From traditional proverb to cynical aphorism, aphoristic literature moves constantly between the particular and the general, between an attempt to represent and to question, between poetic insight and philosophical statement, in order to reach for, to express, and to invite people to a deeper wisdom.

In his first three chapters, Williams documents this thesis in a study of Biblical literature. The Book of Proverbs expresses aphoristically an elemental order of existence in order to call people from lives of disorder. Koheleth uses the same aphoristic form to question the validity or relevance of that order. Jesus uses the aphoristic form (proverbs, paradoxical sayings) to move beyond the traditional order by challenging people to a deeper level of reality, not disorder but a counter-order.

The review of recent literature which usually comes in early chapters is saved for the last here, partly because its focus is more on modern aphoristic scholarship than on Biblical, and partly because Williams uses the Biblical data to support his wider literary views. Though this arrangement gives the book a somewhat disjointed structure, it does demonstrate both the continuity of aphoristic thinking thooughout human history and the validity of this literary criticism for Biblical study (and vice versa).

The brevity and carefully defined limits of this book call for supplementary study. Von Rad's *Wisdom in Israel* is still unparalleled for its theological sensitivity and insight into the worldview of wisdom. The relation between Jesus and wisdom is still unclear, and perhaps could be fruitfully pursued in terms of prophetic use of wisdom, a topic not broached here. The Book of Job also needs closer attention. These comments are less criticisms than illustrations of how far-ranging the

study of wisdom has become. In any case, the model of order/counter-order is well-documented and much to be preferred to an earlier pious/skeptical model for tracing the continuity and discontinuity of the multi-faceted phenomenon of wisdom in the Scriptures.

Henry Rowold
Concordia Seminary
Chia Yi, Taiwan

SIGN OF THE KINGDOM. By Lesslie Newbigen. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980. ix and 70 pages. Paper. $2.95.

Lesslie Newbigen is one of the most widely respected church leaders of recent history: Bishop of the Church of South India, General Secretary of the International Missionary Council, Associate General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Any book from his pen is worth reading, and this book, brief as it is, is no exception.

The occasion for the book is the 1980 Melbourne Conference of the WCC which met under the theme, "Your Kingdom Come." Newbigin addresses the theme in three chapters: a survey of twentieth century missiology in terms of "kingdom," a review of the Biblical emphases on "kingdom," and an application of the "kingdom" theme to the modern theological and ecclesiological context.

Though Newbigin welcomes a return to the Biblical theme of kingdom, he feels it crucial that the theme be bound inseparably both to Jesus Christ and to the church. Jesus Christ is the center, base, power, direction, and manifestation of the kingdom. And so in a derivative and dependent way is the church. In a world of evil and oppression, the church is called to live, as Christ did, a life of "defenseless vulnerability" coupled with an uninhibited witness. To lose these ties of the kingdom to either Jesus Christ or the church leads inevitably to distortion, whether in a politicized liberation theology or a triumphalistic church growth theology.

As always, Newbigin writes clearly, concisely, and persuasively. In reproof he is gentle, though unintimidated. Overall, his is a warm, positive call to a faithful, obedient life (personal and church) in the kingdom.

Henry Rowold
Concordia Seminary
Chia Yi, Taiwan

Briefly Noted

Though first published in German in 1943, Martin Noth's **The Deuteronomistic History** (JSOT, $11.95 paper; $21.95 cloth), still dominates the exegetical discussion of Deuteronomy-2 Kings. Noth believed that a writer in Israel's exile retold the history of Israel from Moses to the fall of Jerusalem, using the book of Deuteronomy as the measure for assessing its theological significance. The deuteronomistic historian concluded that the destruction of Israel and Judah was fully justified by idolatry and other sins. Recent discussion has only added nuances to this basic position. Some have argued that a first edition of the history was written just before the exile, and others have argued that later redactors brought the history up to date by effecting prophetic and nomistic redactions. The greatest departure has been an attempt to move beyond Noth's understanding of the history as a theodicy and to see, in addition, words in it about a hopeful future. After nearly 40 years, however, Noth's work is still basic, and many who struggled with Noth's difficult German will bless the series of translators responsible for this first English edition.

Melchizedek and Melchiresa' (Catholic Bible Association, $4.50) is the revised dissertation of Paul J. Kobelski. He studied several Qumran documents which refer to contending heavenly beings, Melchizedek and Melchiresa', respectively princes of light and darkness. This idea is traced backward to its roots in Zoroastrianism, and forward to its relevance for such New Testament ideas as the Paraclete as heavenly advocate, the (heavenly) figure of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7,

who is subordinate to Jesus, and the Son of Man motif in the synoptic gospels.

Pentateuchal studies are in ferment, and no more so than in investigations of the Joseph story. Now Hans-Christoph Schmitt has produced another analysis in **Die Nichtpriesterliche Josephsgeschichte** (Walter de Gruyter, DM 86). In this second doctoral thesis (Habilitation), Schmitt proposes that the original Joseph story, in which Judah plays a prominent role, was produced among wisdom circles in northern Israel, during the time of Solomon. This was later redacted by an Elohist, who gave more prominence to Reuben, and this in turn was supplemented by a late Yahwistic redaction. The last two redactions are dated to exilic or post-exilic times. The author sees these redactions as "actualizations," attempting to update the material for new theological situations. Unfortunately, Schmitt admits he has taken no account of the major monograph on Joseph by George Coats (1976), which finds a unity in these materials and dates them all to Solomonic times! The late-dating of parts of the Pentateuch typifies a number of recent German and American studies, while others still hold for the "traditional" J and E, and still other critics believe that source criticism, especially of the Joseph story, is a blind alley. As we said, there is ferment.

Old Testament Messages is to be a twenty-three volume commentary series aimed at the serious reader, that is, good for lay people. The first volume, **Interpreting the Old Testament** (Michael Glazier, Inc., $5.95) is a no-nonsense introduction to the methods of modern biblical study. Author Daniel Harrington, S.J., provides definitions and illustrations of the various "criticisms," shows the importance of archaeology, and demonstrates the continuity between Old and New Testaments.

In **The Old Testament and the Archaeologist** (Fortress, $4.50), H. Darrell Lance has written a brilliant introduction to this ever-lively field from an insider's viewpoint. Lance, one of the directors of the recent Gezer excavation, explains, with clarity and patience, how modern stratigraphic digging takes place, how its results are recorded, and how its findings are to be interpreted. He knows the limits of archaeological evidence and how correlations with the biblical data may be misleading, but he helps the reader to see that excavation results must be used by the serious interpreter today. His test case is the era of Solomon and especially the gates of similar design and size that are credited to him in Gezer, Megiddo, and Hazor. Ironically, almost nothing is known archaeologically of Solomon's lavish building projects in Jerusalem though 1980 excavations may have filled in that gap a little as well. This is the fifteenth volume in the Guides to Biblical Scholarship series published by Fortress.

Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P., are the editors of **Mission Trends No. 5: Faith Meets Faith** (Eerdmans, $3.95). The twenty-four essays in this volume deal with Christian mission and religious pluralism, with the nature and purpose of dialogue, and with specific interfaces with Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and even the Moonies. One of the most provocative essays for me was that by Lutheran Carl E. Braaten. To the question whether there is salvation in other religions, he argues that it depends on what one means by "salvation"? Salvation for him is that which God had done to death in the resurrection of Jesus. In that event God overcame death as the final eschaton of life. While arguing for a particularist view of salvation and a high Christology (we have no non-Christological pictures of the historical Jesus), Braaten attempts to affirm the universality of Jesus Christ (denied by certain evangelicals) and the uniqueness of Jesus Christ (denied by the universalists).

Carl F. W. Walther (1811-1887), first president of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod (1847-50 and 1864-78), was a prolific writer whose views are often hailed as normative in Missouri circles. Under the editorship of August

R. Suelflow, six volumes of Walther's works have now been issued as the **Selected Writings of C. F. W. Walther** (Concordia, $69.95). They include **Law and Gospel** (emphasizing the usefulness for ministry of this Lutheran distinction), **Selected Sermons, Convention Essays, Walther on the Church** ("The evangelical Lutheran Church has all the essential marks of the true visible church of God on earth, as they are found in no known fellowship of another name; it is therefore in no need of any reformation of doctrine"), **Selected Letters** (including a letter proposing marriage to Emilie, in which he informed her that he had already received consent from her mother), and **Editorials from "Lehre und Wehre"** (a theological journal whose title means "Doctrine and Defense"). Unfortunately, neither the translators nor the editor offer any interpretation of the significance of these volumes. While Walther's staunch confessionalism and concern for Lutheran unity were important for his day, the reader is not helped to see where Walther fit into the currents of his time, let alone where he failed. An even more burning question might concern the degree to which Walther's insights have been formative of, or distorted in, the regnant theology of the LCMS.

A deserving old friend, **The Apostolic Fathers,** translated by J. B. Lightfoot, has been reprinted for the eleventh time (Baker, $5.95). Lightfoot was the British scholar *par excellence* who studied these earliest post-New Testament texts in the nineteenth century. The translation is accurate, though in English reminiscent of the KJV. The price is reasonable, the texts important. It will have a long life in the future. *(Edgar Krentz)*

Convenient collections of pictures to illustrate the religious world of the New Testament are usually hard to find. Joscelyn Godwin of Colgate University provides an excellent set in **Mystery Religions in the Ancient World** (Harper and Row, $9.95). The 142 photographs and their captions are useful; many unusual pieces are included. Godwin's test is less satisfying, since he regards all religions as variant (and equally valid) manifestations of what he calls the "Perennial Philosophy." He identifies five characteristic features of all religions (war, asceticism, magic, love, and knowledge) in his introduction and then discusses fifteen forms of ancient religion. He includes the old Roman Gods, mythology, ruler cult, magic, philosophic religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism in the discussion. Thus his title is misleading. But many will be put off by his tendency to level all religions to one religion and to over-stress his own syncretism. *(Edgar Krentz)*

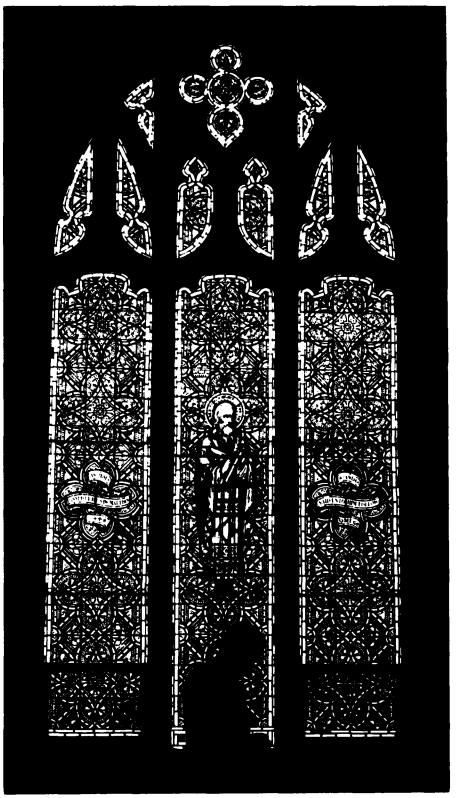
Discovering Israel. By Jack Finegan. (Eerdmans, $6.95.) This is a brief, popular guide to the Holy Land. After describing the land itself, Finegan briefly tells its history, beginning with the prehistoric past (500,000 to 3100 B.C.E.), continuing with the historic past before the common era (3100-63 B.C.E.), and concluding with the common era (actually from 63 B.C.E.) until the founding of the state of Israel in 1948. A final chapter examines what a just peace in Israel means to Christian Arabs, Jews in the United States, Roman Catholics, and Protestants. Numerous black and white photographs decorate the text.

Archaeological History of the Ancient Middle East. By Jack Finegan. (Westview, $25.00.) "The purpose of this book is to give a connected account of what happened in the ancient Middle East, primarily on the basis of the records and monuments that have been recovered through the work of modern archaeology." Finegan excells at such popularization and he punctuates his readable survey of Mesopotamia and Egypt up to the time of Alexander with forty dynastic tables, four maps, and 121 black-and-white illustrations. 348 pages of text; almost 100 of notes.

Exegetical Method: A Student Handbook. By Otto Kaiser and Werner G. Kümmel. (Seabury, $6.95.) Here is a guide to the task of exegesis, including definitions of textual, literary, redaction, and form criticism, sample exe-

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geses, and references to basic bibliography. Though both authors are "state of the art" in Germany, it is not likely that a beginning student or a non-specialist would find enough information here to enable use of the methods described. In this new, revised edition, as in its 1967 predecessor, the bibliographic notes are much too heavily slanted toward German publications. I found not a single reference to the sixteen-volume, paperback series, **Guides to Biblical Studies** (Fortress Press), which is "state of the art" for the beginning student this side of the Atlantic.

The Pentateuch. By Lloyd R. Bailey. (Abingdon, $6.95.) This volume inaugurates a series, Interpreting Biblical Tests, designed to help the reader understand what is involved in relating the meaning of the biblical texts in their own times to their meaning in ours. After chapters devoted to introductory questions about the Pentateuch and about the assumptions of the interpreter, Bailey discusses levels of meaning in the text — what the authors said and intended to accomplish, what the audience understood, how the New Testament reinterpreted it, and what it means to the modern reader. He presents sample applications of P's creation account, the call of Abraham, the naming of Isaac, and his near-sacrifice. A clear and competent guide to exegesis and the hermeneutical task.

Genesis. Volume 1, Genesis 1-11. By John C. L. Gibson; **Leviticus.** By George A. F. Knight; **Daniel.** By D. S. Russell. (Westminster, each $5.95.) These paperback volumes are part of The Daily Study Bible, an imitation of the late William Barclay's famous work by the same name which deals with the New Testament. The commentators are well-known scholars who present the fruits of critical scholarship in a popular, non-technical, and often meditative fashion. Each volume is divided into sections suitable for daily study (about three pages per day). On Gen. 3:16: "Our Victorian forefathers were fond of citing this verse as a reason for resisting the use of anesthetic at childbirth and as a justification for not giving women the right to vote. We must reject out of hand such an obscene recourse to Scripture." At the end of chapter 11: "The call to Abraham which will set the Gospel story in motion is about to be issued. It will be a long time before Israel reaches her Promised Land. It will be longer still before, constructing his own staircase between heaven and earth, God comes down again to Babel and in the person of his Son wins his decisive victory over sin and evil. . . ." I am *very enthusiastic* about this new series and commend it to pastors and lay people alike for daily study and meditation.

Genesis. The Living Word Commentary on the Old Testament. Volume 2. By John T. Willis. (Sweet, $11.95.) This 462-page volume is aimed, apparently, at the average, somewhat conservative church member. After a critical survey of the documentary hypothesis, Willis proposes that all of Genesis was written by Moses or that he wrote most of it, with a few explanations of the text, with numerous citations of parallel passages in both Old and New Testaments. Because of Willis' decision about authorship, however, the exegesis produces primarily timeless maxims about God and man (the sexist language is Willis's): God is creator, redeemer, companion, judge and redeemer; "man" is a weak being, a creature of free will, created for family life. Oh, for a living encounter with the faith and trials of ancient Israel made possible by the documentary hypothesis!

Studies in the Patriarchal Narratives. By William McKane. (The Handsel Press. Distributed by Columbia University Press, $17.50.) McKane dismisses the attempt to understand the patriarchs as historical characters (Albright, Bright, De Vaux) both because of the recent breakdown of the attempt to support their historicity by archaeology (Thompson, Van Seters), and because the understanding of the narratives as historiographical rests on a false and unnecessary assumption. Instead, he concentrates on the history of form-critical and tradition-

historical work on the patriarchs, giving primary attention to Hermann Gunkel and Martin Noth, but referring incidentally, and critically, to dozens of other scholars. Gunkel's understanding of the patriarchal narratives shifted dramatically between the first and third editions of his Genesis commentary, but despite its many useful results, tends to make a divorce between literary history and theology, with the latter supplied by the collectors of the tradition. According to Noth, the patriarchal narratives once told stories of cult founders, outside the land, who were given the promise of land and prosperity. These fathers were eventually linked in the genealogical sequence of Abraham-Isaac-Jacob, and the promises they received were connected with Canaanite sanctuaries and with the normative faith of all Israel. Throughout this literary history, however, the credal theme of promise was the kernal of the patriarchal narratives. Promise is the seed from which the patriarchal stories grew, and the one which controlled and determined the nature of their growth. While many Americans have often been given a negative evaluation of Noth's work on the patriarchs, his history of the traditions of the patriarchal narratives is the only really unitary one, which does not fall apart into separate literary and theological components.

Judges. The Old Testament Library. By J. Alberto Soggin. (Westminster, $21.95.) Soggin, who previously published a commentary on Joshua in the same series, has produced in this volume a commentary equal to, and probably superior to, the Anchor Bible Commentary on Judges by Robert G. Boling. Soggins, like Boling, provides a new translation and copious notes on lexicography and textual criticism. Two pluses over the Anchor Bible are a far more comprehensive bibliography and a more sophisticated understanding of the process by which this biblical book was redacted by the Deuteronomistic Historian. An additional advantage, of course, is that Soggins was able to incorporate the best of Boling's insights into his own text. Mark this down as the number one choice for a full-length commentary on Judges.

The Exile and Biblical Narrative. By Richard Elliott Friedman. (Harvard Semitic Monographs 22; Scholars Press, $12.00, or $8.00 to members of learned societies.) In this dissertation, Friedman divides both the Deuteronomistic History and the Priestly stratum in the Pentateuch into two editions, one issued shortly before the exile and one in exilic times, and he describes the theological posture of each of these purported documents. The divisions and datings, unfortunately, are by no means assured and the author seems unaware of major German works by Smend, Dietrich, and Veijola, which assesses the deuteronomistic corpus in a completely different way. His comparisons of Jeremiah and P are innocent of the literary critical issues in Jeremiah. One of Friedman's main historical proposals is that the tabernacle was kept in the Holy of Holies in the Solomonic temple.

The Hymns of Qumran. By Bonnie Kittel. (Scholars Press, Cloth, $13.50; Paper, $9.00.) A doctoral dissertation, accepted by the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, which provides a translation and commentary on the Thanksgiving Hymns from Qumran and studies their poetic structure.

Jewish and Christian Self-Definition. Volume Two: **Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period.** Edited by E. P. Sanders, *et al.* (Fortress, $26.95.) The twelve essays in this volume treat the question of efforts toward achieving normative identity within Judaism from Maccabean times to the solification of Rabbinism after the wars with Rome. In the first century of the Common Era, Jews and Christians had numerous options before them, including the possibility of retaining a great deal of diversity. By the early part of the third century, both Judaism and Christianity had decisively narrowed their options. This push towards normative self-definition was more the result of internal momentum than the response to external challenges, such as those offered by Hellenism or nascent Christianity.

Temple Propaganda: The Purpose and Character of 2 Maccabees. By Robert Doran. (Catholic Biblical Quarterly — Monograph Series 12; Catholic Biblical Association, $4.50.) After a thorough investigation of the syntax, style, structure and literary character of 2 Maccabees, Doran concludes that it was written in Jerusalem during the first part of the reign of John Hyrcanus, 134-104 B.C.E. The book tells how the temple and its surroundings were defended by God, and it downplays the heroism of the Maccabean family. To the author, God is the decisive actor in history, and pious observers of the law are more important than Maccabees. From these perspectives readers are urged to assess their present leaders.

Forerunners of the Reformation. By Heiko Oberman. (Fortress, $11.95.) This Late Medieval reader introduces such major themes as conciliarism, curialism, mysticism, various types of scholasticism, and the impact of Renaissance humanism. As Oberman mentioned in the preface to the first edition of 1966, "Without a grasp of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the medieval history of Christian thought is not only left incomplete, but ... Reformation and Counter Reformation seem to appear 'out of the blue.'" Selections from Johann von Staupitz, Jan Hus, Erasmus, and others.

Images of Man and God. Edited by Burke O. Long. (The Almond Press/ Eisenbrauns, $6.95.) The six writers in this book lay aside or de-emphasize the usual philological and historical concerns of exegesis to highlight the Old Testament as story. As literary critics, they attempt to draw out the deep emotional power of the stories of Joseph, David-Amnon-Absalom, Moses, Samson, the contest of Darius' guards (from 1 Esdras), and king Saul.

Peter's Portrait of Jesus. By J. B. Phillips. (Abingdon, $1.95.) The author provides translations of and a commentary on the Gospel of Mark and the two letters of Peter. He follows the early Christian tradition that Mark wrote down stories that Peter told him, so that in Mark we have the gospel that Peter would have written. 1 Peter is dated to 63 or 64, Mark to 65, and 2 Peter to 130. How the letter came to be associated with Peter is unknown "unless it contains fragments by the apostle."

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