



**THE  
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REVIEW**

**Spring 1973**

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# War and Peace: A Worship Service<sup>1</sup>

## CALL TO WORSHIP

*Dunbar:* Who are we?

*Eason:* Who are we? We are God's people who have gathered for worship.

*D:* Is there anything else unique about us?

*E:* Yes. Many of us are called for certain purposes. We are all called to be followers of the man Jesus. And we are also called to responsible leadership.

*D:* Is there any particular reason why we are here now?

*E:* We are here to express some of our concerns, our guilts, and our commitments.

*D:* Are these expressions different from just any other worship experience?

*E:* They are different in that we are now seeking to examine both past suffering and future commitment in relation to the Vietnamese and to *all* who have been drawn into suffering in this war.

## hymn 544

*Eason:* We have considered *who* we are and *why* we are here. We would now like to examine *where* we are. Members of the community may now express their feelings and concerns on this question.

## WHERE ARE WE?

*Allen:* O Lord, we come before you feeling a bit uneasy. It's not an uneasiness for the wrongs we have consciously done,

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<sup>1</sup>The following service of worship took place in York Chapel on Friday, January 19, 1973 under a keen sense of urgency: There had been little time for "planning." Some of the student and faculty contributions were entirely spontaneous. Only slight "editorial reworking" has been done here. The participants in the order in which they spoke were the following: Walton Dunbar, William Eason, Nancy Allen, Creighton Lacy, Bryant Wilbourne, Roland Murphy, Frederick Herzog, Marvin Morgan, Susan Halse, Charles Robinson, Bryant Kendrick, (visiting retired Bishop) Edwin Garrison, O. Kelly Ingram.

but an uneasiness brought about by the questions the war in Viet Nam raises. You promised peace through Jesus the Christ. Yet we continue to wage war and build weapons. Where is the peace you have promised? Where is justice? Help us see the directions to this justice and peace. Enable us, Lord. Amen.

*Lacy:* It was nearly seven years ago in Tokyo, Japan, that I met Emmett de Wilde, a 19-year-old kid with blond hair and a Virginia drawl. To run into him again a few hours later in the world's largest city was the kind of miracle some people call coincidence but I call Providence of God. The boy was too desperately lonely to enjoy what is ironically called "R & R," Rest and Recreation. We gave him a Chinese meal and hours of "home talk" and promised to write his mother that we had seen him. A few weeks later, at the end of our own journey, I got around to keeping my promise. A note came back promptly from Virginia with a newspaper clipping announcing that Emmett de Wilde, artillery spotter, had been killed in action, in a war millions of Americans at that time had never even heard of.

From the beginning, as an Asian by birth, I had known we had no business to be in Viet Nam, and I hated war, which I had seen literally in the streets of my own home town. Now that involvement had become intensely personal. But my attitude reflected a perspective that has characterized much of our nation. I grew up among "the Gooks," knew and loved hundreds of them. Nevertheless I could partly parrot the line that in their society life was cheap; that a thousand Vietnamese killed or maimed or orphaned hardly equalled one American.

Even today, for the avowed purpose of rescuing a few hundred prisoners of war, we have been willing to keep on killing thousands of Asians. We have been blind—but never "color blind." In this one respect we have been very "discriminating" in our otherwise indiscriminate murder. As Oscar Hammerstein wrote 25 years ago:

You've got to be taught to hate and fear . . .

You've got to be taught to be afraid

Of people whose eyes are oddly made

And people whose skin is a different shade.

You've got to be carefully taught.

God, how we have been—*terribly*, carefully taught.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

*Wilbourne:* Speaking from the perspective of a student pastor, we (by "we" I mean my people and I) need to be forgiven for the times when we forget that we are loved. For only when we come to accept the love of the Father can we love without self-centered motives. For only when we recognize that we are loved can we see Bach Mai as a more urgent demand upon us than getting that shingle replaced on the steeple, or fixing that commode that ran over and flooded the fellowship hall, or finding somebody to play the organ since Miss Florence quit because of her arthritis, or wondering who will make the posters to advertise the March Fish Fry, or deciding who will prepare the fruit basket for Miss Amie who's in the rest home, or signing a get-well card for Garland who's recuperating in the hospital after passing a kidney stone, or seeing that the choir robes are cleaned and pressed in time for the worship service Sunday, or getting the film entitled "The History of the Bible" ready for showing at the Methodist Men's meeting Tuesday night, or making sure that the family who donated the flowers for the sanctuary are given proper recognition in the bulletin, or having all visitors sign the visitor cards and drop them in the collection plate. May we be forgiven when we lose all sense of urgent need because we have forgotten that we are loved.

As a student pastor: that little flock looks to me to help them remember that they are loved. I need forgiveness for the times when I did not help them remember that they were loved. But instead I beat them into a forgetful stupor by *demanding* that they love everyone, everywhere, at all times.

As a student pastor: that little flock also looks to me to help them direct their actions when they do remember that they *are* loved. I need forgiveness for the times when I failed to confront and guide them with the urgent demands of the Gospel. Simply because I was so elated that they had finally caught on to the fact that they were loved, I hesitated to come down from that mountain top experience into the world where the stench of the atrocities of Bach Mai slap us in the face seeking a word from us who call ourselves "Christians."

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

*Murphy:* Where am I?

In confusion and distress, as so many others.

Growing in moral sensitivity because of the brave and conscientious sacrifices of the war-resisters, and grateful for what they have given me.

Struggling with the ambiguities of moral judgment: my view of the situation as against the views of those who differ with me. And even more difficult: my responsibility, the measure of my responsibility, for the present war in which we are still involved.

Rebelling against a system—political, religious, social—that has proved to be morally bankrupt, and yet accepting the conveniences and benefits, the safety, of that system.

But also hopeful: that the lessons of this horrible war are burnt so deeply into the soul of America that we can come truly to renounce war as a means of resolving conflict.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

*Herzog:* What we need today is not so much confession as progression—an advance in understanding and the will to change things.

What would we need to confess? Being implicated in one of the great horrors of history? Collective guilt? We have done this before.

I looked at some of the “figures” again, so that I might be prepared for whatever there was to confess. Guilty of 4,000,000 tons of bombs dropped on Indochina, 6,000,000, 8,000,000? What difference does it make? 2,000,000 casualties, 3,000,000, in civilian deaths, wounded, homeless? Can we really imagine what these figures represent? In the towns and hamlets of what we like to call “an underdeveloped country”?

Already a decade ago, 1963, there had been about half a million casualties counted. Maybe we can imagine better what that meant: a town five times the size of Durham. And yet the carnage remains beyond our comprehension.

Perhaps we can at least understand an individual caught in the carnage. A young Buddhist monk wrote already years ago:

Here is my breast. Aim your gun at it, brother. Shoot! Destroy me if you will and build from my carrion whatever it is you are dreaming of.



Who will be left to celebrate a victory made of blood and fire?

We need to progress, so as to prevent this from happening again: strengthening world rule of law, the United Nations, the World Court.

We need to progress to *prevention* of new Viet Nam wars. Once they are upon us they are beyond us. That much we have learned.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

*Dunbar:* I don't think I have ever felt so helpless. When I thought about today's service I knew I wanted to say something. I started to say that my brother and father died when I was five years old and that this could help me understand some of the suffering of orphaned Vietnamese children. But it can't. I at least had someone who cared. And I didn't have to watch it happen.

I feel very guilty. You see, I voted for the present administration in '68 and before that I even wanted to be a Green Beret. I wanted to be a hero. Confession may be good for the soul. But I don't feel good now. And don't think I will for a long time. I hope God will forgive . . . No, I know he will forgive me. I know also right now I just want to do something.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

*Morgan:* I am not opposed to denunciation of the war. I do not want to give that impression. I, in fact, feel it is good for Divinity students to speak up and express these concerns. Nevertheless, all of this talk about Bach Mai Hospital raises some questions in my mind as to whether our priorities are in the right place.

You say you are concerned about the restoration of Bach Mai because innocent people have been hurt and more innocent people will suffer unless it is rebuilt. You say its location in the North does not bother you because, after all, your concern is for the elimination of human suffering regardless of nationality. You want to send a financial contribution to Bach Mai because the bombing was wrong and we owe them our support.

As a Black American, I sense that bombing is not limited only to North Viet Nam. There have been hospital bombings right here in America. Black hospitals are struggling continuously to withstand the onslaught of bombs dropped upon

them by a white racist society. "Bombs" are of more than one kind.

There is nothing inherently wrong with restoring bombed hospitals in North Viet Nam. That is not the point I want to make. But I wonder if we should not also be concerned about demolished hospitals in our own Black communities. We say we want to eliminate human suffering, while overlooking the fate of these facilities near at hand.

Where was Duke Divinity School a few years ago when Lincoln Hospital here in the city of Durham was struggling for survival? Or where were we in November when Reynolds Memorial Hospital in Winston-Salem was struggling to remain in operation? Where will Duke Divinity School be when a little Black girl or boy dies *merely* because they have to be carried clear across town to a hospital because the one in their own community has closed from lack of support.

The "bombs" that fell upon these institutions were in the form of white doctors who insist that their patients be admitted to the predominantly white hospitals—as is done repeatedly in spite of patients' desires to enter Black facilities in their own communities. Other "bombs" were in the form of county officials who pour taxes into white hospitals and withhold funds from those in the Black community.

What I am saying, fellow students, is that while it is good to restore Bach Mai, there is also a need to restore the Black hospitals which have also been demolished. While we struggle to get on this national or international bandwagon, let us not overlook the bombs which are destroying hospitals in our own cities. As we struggle to see the forest, let us not overlook the trees.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

### WHERE ARE WE GOING?

*Halse:* We've talked about *who we are*: what brings us to this place, what we share in common. And we've talked about *where we are*: personal and collective expressions of guilt, concern and frustration over our involvement in the plight of Indochina. And now Marvin has brought our concern much closer to home, focusing on the plight of Black Americans right here in North Carolina.



But the real question now for me becomes: *where are we going?* What can we do? Where do we turn now?

Malcolm Boyd's thoughts about war and peace in *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* express some of my own questioning. I would like to share those thoughts with you now:

"We can't make it alone, Lord.

"God knows, we've tried, and we've even reached the point where we could blow up everybody, including ourselves. Teach us how to listen carefully and patiently to other people. Teach us how to say what we have to say clearly, simply, and openly. Teach us what responsibility toward you and others really means.

"Cut through all our egoism and self-interest, Jesus. Make us understand what patriotism must mean in one world of conflicting nationalism. Educate us to support the United Nations and other international organizations which bring people together in a shared sense of human concern. Work with us, Lord, to bridge gulfs and divisions between nations and persons.

"What can I do about war and peace?

"I mean, how can I do anything which will affect the power structures which hold the key to basic decisions about waging war or maintaining peace? I've marched in peace demonstrations, fasted in protest against nuclear experiments, signed petitions, and tried seriously to study the issues involved. But what have I been able to accomplish?

"I know we can't pass over this situation, yet we are somehow supposed to live with the outrage of doing exactly that.

"I see the beauty of your creation, and am grateful, but then I see in my mind's eye the very real possibility of its destruction. How can I stand this, Jesus? What is prayer supposed to mean if I am passively accepting a peril which it is sinful to accept? I don't want to misuse prayer to lull me about this crisis, Lord. I want to accept my responsibility of cooperating with you in the continuing and present act of creation. How can I do it?"

*Robinson:* Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget.

We dare to hope that "peace" of a sort will soon come to pass. And then what? Then how great the temptation—how easy—just to "forget the whole business": to push this hellish nightmare into the oblivion of the past as "now over and done with" so that we can get on with "business as usual" in a return to "normalcy."

God have mercy on our souls if we forget!

Yet at the same time, in another sense, God grant us the grace to “forget”—to forget in the sense of the Apostle Paul: “forgetting what lies behind and pressing onward toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

For it might also be relatively easy and all too cheap just to go on agonizing over questions of past guilt, indulging in judgmental recriminations, analyzing the “demonology” of those with political power or even in our own hearts: hypnotized by the power of evil.

Whatever God’s will for us—God’s way toward our future—may be, it is surely not that we be “overcome by evil,” but that we—in whatever ways and however small—begin by his power to “overcome evil with good.”

Continuing just to “curse the darkness” will help no one. “Lighting a candle” will.

If we believe that Jesus is the Light of the world—and if we do not believe this we had better get out of what we’re in and stay out—if we really do believe that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, then surely the time has now come for us to begin by the power of his Light to light some candles. And let us beware of hesitating lest the candle we might light seem so “small.” If his Light kindles it, it is worth the lighting.

Lord God of Hosts, may we never forget.

Yet forgetting what lies behind let us press onward, in receptivity to the power of him who is the Light of the world, to light the little candles.

*Kendrick:* This war is not over. And the outcry against this war expresses a witness of the Spirit against the “warring spirit” not only of our present involvement in Viet Nam, but also of the values and policies which brought us there and have kept us there: values and policies which will *not* simply *end* when this particular war “ends.”

These values and policies are, for example, operating at this very moment in our decision at the U.N. to stand against the liberation movements now occurring in the African colonies of Portugal. We are now funnelling our military hardware to Portugal to be used for killing Blacks in order to maintain an oppressive foreign rule.

In the voice of His prophets God has already spoken an everlasting No to the policies of this country which seek to

stifle and destroy the legitimate desires of peoples to determine their own destinies.

We may continue to oppose it: but His Will shall prevail. The warfare is not over.

*Garrison:* We have been deeply moved by these reminders of the suffering in South and North Viet Nam brought on by the war which our nation is waging there. We are touched by the helpless suffering of men and women and little children.

Now we come to a moment which may well prove to be a watershed in our personal lives. It is possible that we may go from this place worse persons than when we came. We see the need now and hear the cries for help. We can decide that it is nothing to us, that we can pass by on the other side. Or we may drift away, pushing the subject from our minds. That also is a decision. Or we may remember that Jesus said that as we do for the "least" of His people we do for Him and, remembering that, we may rise to serve.

Perhaps you may think me sacrilegious, but one thought strikes awe in my heart: If the Church is the body of Christ and if I am a member of that body, is there not a sense in which I am an extension of the Incarnation of God? Hands of Christ reaching out to heal and help? Or hands pulling back? Do we accept our role as a part of the body of Christ? So "comes the moment to decide."

"Decide just what?" you may still wonder. I suggest just two examples.

First, is it just "self-evident" to you that—as seems to be in the wind—as the Indochina war finally whimpers to a halt, our military budget "must" nevertheless still keep going up and our investments in meeting wretched human need at home and overseas "must" be cut back? For *whose* sake "must" these things be so? For the sake of the "least" of Jesus' "brethren"?

In the next few months and years many of these crucial issues dealing with our national priorities in such matters as taxes and budgetary allocations will be coming before Congress. Are you willing to commit yourself here and now not only to staying informationally alert, but also to writing your Congressmen on these issues as they arise and prodding others to do the same? For those of you who are willing to do this, we shall provide a Directory of the names and addresses of members of Congress.

Secondly, it is said that "money talks." If you are willing to commit some of your own money to doing some of your talking, there are various agencies through which you can relevantly channel it. But in order to get right down to particulars we are suggesting today that you might give through "Medical Aid For Indochina." You will have in a moment the opportunity to place cash or checks upon the altar as an offering to Jesus Christ whom we call "Lord." The need in this moment is beyond calculation.

Moreover, that need will not disappear in the next several months or several years. So if you are willing also to commit yourself to a long-term pledge which goes beyond a momentary handout, we have made pledge cards available. (You can channel future contributions through Walt Dunbar or mail them directly to

Medical Aid For Indochina  
140 6th Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142.)

Those of you who now choose to do so may bring your gifts and pledges to the altar as an offering surely "acceptable to the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

So now I pledge my own obedience to Christ's call and for us all I pray:

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.

hymn 242  
BENEDICTION  
(Ingram)

We disperse now,  
frustrated by our helplessness,  
and yet encouraged by the efficacy of our strength;  
aware of divergent perceptions,  
and yet heartened by the oneness of our concerns and purposes;  
oppressed by the tragic dimension of human existence,  
and still looking for the resurrection hope of our Lord,  
Jesus Christ,  
who continues to be both the disturber of our consciences  
and the possibility of our inward peace.

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<sup>2</sup>Contributions together with some pledges were over a thousand dollars.

We go, therefore,  
into the contradictoriness of our world  
in the love of Jesus who is our way,  
our truth, our life.

Amen.

# The Tragic in Black Historical Experience

by CHARLES L. HELTON<sup>1</sup>

I do not understand the nature of the tragic in the Black experience. The yearning to understand still boils within my mind and I may not be able to do this discussion complete justice because it is still being shaped within me. Nevertheless, there is, I believe, a pervasive sense of tragedy in being Black and American in a society where Black oppression is a part of the socio-economic and political structure. Black humanity has known and felt a sense of the tragic (can it also be called the "trans-tragic"?) for some 353 years. We have known suffering and endured a long night of oppression to the extent that one wonders: "How long, O Lord, how long?"

The Christian faith speaks and addresses the problem of the tragic. I feel that Black humanity must begin to set a new agenda. And it may be that a sense of the tragic can be the basis for this. Because of the urgency for us to be "about our father's business," I would hope that my sense of the tragic might strike a responsive chord in others to the extent that when "one member suffers all suffer."

Louis Armstrong, the Black poet and musical genius, raises a question of primary concern in one of his songs: "What did I do to be so black and blue?" It would seem as though the Black man must have committed some sort of "sin" to be given such a status in life. The words of the song imply a sense of the tragic. They imply that a Black man's destiny is somehow tied part and parcel to his skin color, and that the responses made to that man, a human being, are based on a matter of surface pigmentation.

On the other hand, in the words of Ronald Fair, a young Black writer, we find a new focus on blackness. Fair relates: "God, it must be terrible not to be born Black in this day and age." The words from Louis Armstrong's song and the words of Ronald Fair, in his affirmation of the tremendous

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1. Charles Helton is a senior in the Divinity School and an ordained member of the Carolina Conference of the CME Church.



meaning of being Black in this age, are not simply two opposite exercises in dialectic. Rather the contrast between them represents a significant forward movement and shift within the understanding of how Black people are able to view themselves in a *tragic* and suffering perspective in which there is still a sense of *hope*: The hope that through a profound faith in God suffering and oppressed men will yet be liberated to worlds unknown.

What I am suggesting here is that Black people have been conditioned to a kind of tragic sensitivity which has positive dimensions. It is a sense of tragedy "transformed." While having what might be called a "tragic sense of life," Black people also have a "trans-tragic hope" with a strong Biblical context. There is a growing recognition by Black Americans of a unique strength within the heart of our blackness; and that strength is transformed into a gift. It is a "gift" in the strange sense that one is allowed to be captured by and entrapped in an institution of racism and oppression and *still* maintain his sanity and the perspective of faith. I do not speak here of a "gift" as a fantasy or heuristic tool to relieve the deadliness of life. But I speak of the gift of Blackness in terms of a new level of tragic toughness, of what Vincent Harding, the Black historian, has called a "brutal experience which nevertheless produces a new reality, a new reality that may benefit the entire society and the entire world."

I would certainly at this moment think of my own experiences as testifying to what I called a "transformed" tragic experience. For example, I recall applying for a new position at a well-known industrial corporation where I worked a few years ago. My educational background and abilities to perform the job responsibilities proved adequate. However, because the job duties and responsibilities would have brought me in contact with white office staff, mainly female, I was not employed. In another case, when I confronted the task of finding living accommodations, I contacted several real estate agencies about vacancies listed in the newspaper. In two instances when inquiring by telephone about rentals I was told that I could get the house by making a deposit. However, after going to the real estate agency and identifying myself to the white agent, I was immediately told that they were sorry but they had "just rented" the house. A thousand + incidents of similar nature frustrate Black destiny. But there is also a

“madness” of self-perception within me that makes the tragic a springboard for living *with* and *above* the tragic sense of life that confines human personality and constricts human relationships.

Even in the pervasive tragedy of typical Black experience, one may find deep meaning and purpose. This meaning and purpose embrace joy, hope and even fulfillment. One may simply call it a “trans-tragic” view and life-orientation pattern. But I think that it is more than that. Black people have long staked claims on Jesus Christ as “Liberator.” He has shown the power to lift men who are trapped and enslaved, even in the jail houses of racism, to new levels of existence. It is my contention that this faith, seen as a gift at work within the Black experience, has been the major factor that has given Black people wholeness and adequacy, direction and determination, perspective and possibilities, and indeed the worth and dignity of their Black heritage. The discovery of the power to get at and transform the depths of suffering and bondage and oppression toward hope and fulfillment and joy represents what I consider a tremendous insight into the meaning of the human experience.

The gift of this faith for Black people comes to verbal expression in their songs, with words like these: “Nobody knows the troubles I’ve seen, Glory Halleluia! Nobody knows the troubles I’ve seen. Nobody knows but Jesus!” How can one be tied by a system that denies equality and justice and freedom and still sing, Glory Halleluia? This is speaking of the gift of a faith which implies that it is only in the midst of “troubles like nobody has seen,” a tragic experience, that there can develop a fitting sense of the true meaning of the glory of human existence. This has made it possible for Black people to keep on struggling, wrestling and pressing on for Black liberation and freedom. Faith liberates.

It was this faith that liberates, embracing the coming of the Deliverer, that kept the tragic from becoming merely destructive. Faith in the coming of a deliverer was expressed in songs like: “Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt land, tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.” This faith has been an important part of the very life blood of Black people in America. We have believed in the long night that there would come a Moses that would say, “Let my Black people go.” Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, Denmark Vessy, W. E. B. Du Bois, Harriet Tubman,

Martin Luther King and many others all seem to have had some gift of faith to believe that Pharaoh did not have the power to keep men enslaved forever. If the Gospel account is true, and Jesus' words are true—"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"—this truth shall rise from a crushed earth. A crushed humanity, a despised humanity, a rejected humanity, a material humanity sold as slaves, will rise from a crushed earth. It is the *gift* of faith that has added *meaning* to this dimension of human existence.

Faith continued to be operative in the Black experience even after we were no longer content just to "sing about Heaven" and wait for our "pie in the sky." In the midst of the ongoing struggle—when things in the North seem not a whole lot better than things in the South—there was a strange mixture of suffering and hope. I drove through Newark in 1968 as well as Harlem in 1967. I was on 14th Street in Washington, D.C. in 1968. But there were also the Birmingham's and the Selmas and the Oxford's and the Montgomery's, all of which were struggles to break the trap door of a tragic experience.

At this point in time how can a Black man speak not out of anger but out of love in an American system which dehumanizes him, without something called either "faith" or a "madness" that cannot be explained? It could be that the same faith was implied even in the singing of the blues. Though it may have been a pointless faith, a strange faith, it had meaning. The blues said, "feeling tomorrow just like I feel today," somehow knowing that tomorrow would only bring another bitter today. But even here it seems, however absurd or out of order, there was some expression of tragic experience which helped to relieve frustration and tension in outreach toward some source of *meaning*.

For me at least, there is an understanding and awareness that faith can give the possibility for a new liberating existence for Black men, which accounts in part for our capacity of continuing endurance within a sensitivity to the tragic. If my own experiences in the face of racism and oppression bear any truth, one of the tremendous gifts that Black people have to offer this society is that of reading and telling the American story "as it is," not as written by white men in most history books and public school text books. The "justice and equality" of democracy and the "ever upward-and-onwardness" of Amer-

ican society have little to say to Black people whose ancestors were held in a dehumanizing and destructive system of slavery. This is what Langston Hughes, the Black poet, meant in his marvelous poem: "America, you've never been America to me."

The tragedy of Black experience has been manifest in incalculable suffering. Nevertheless, the "gift of prophecy" has played a crucial role in shaping the peculiarly Black-American tragic sensibility. There are voices both past and present who have been able to penetrate the surface and get at the inner hidden trends of racism and oppression which conspire to lock Black humanity within the confines of the tragic. In our own time Martin Luther King exemplified the courageous faith of a prophet of unrelenting conviction whose faith defied the tragic. He spoke most cogently to the tragedy of blackness. He also spoke honestly to white people concerning what they claimed to believe in and what would happen if they continued to deny their own avowed convictions of faith. It seems to me that King's voice, arising out of the tragic, was indeed a divine gift which transcends the tragic. At the end of the March on Washington, August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech to an estimated 200,000 people gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial to demonstrate for "jobs and freedom." I watched and listened to the speech on television. It was, to say the least, an emotional crescendo arising out of and soaring beyond the tragic. His message—which follows in part—probes at the heart of the tragic soul of a nation and at the same time points toward a Power which can transform tragedy into the call of imperative opportunity:

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity. But one hundred years later, we must face the *tragic* fact that the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile

in his own land. We have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check—a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now . . .

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred . . .

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back . . . I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive . . .

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal." . . . I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places



will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together . . .

This is, I think, the genius of the Black gift of prophecy offered to a nation and indeed the world. It is symbolic of the insane direction of America that a man experiencing the tragic so profoundly could nevertheless show forth in word, in life and in death such manifestations of the gift of prophecy. The tragedy of the Black experience is surely enough to make Black people angry. But the strangeness of the Black experience is that it has not spoken out of hatred for America. Rather it seems to me that it points the arrow in another direction—the direction of deep concern to find a new and loving way for mankind in which racism and oppression shall no longer be tolerated.

Out of this kind of concern, I think it important to say that those of us who have known humiliation and despair in America may well have been granted the gift of a sense of compassion for the humiliated of our society and our world. And it may be that we are able to understand more clearly than white Americans what it is that the rest of the poor and the oppressed and the dying may angrily shout at America even in the midst of a “peace” that may seem to be based more on American power than on American principle or love. The rejected of the world have had spokesmen for faith within the Black heart of American society in remembrance that the loving Father never disowns any of his children—surely not those who bear the burden of the tragic. It was indeed Jesus who said:

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives; and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. (Lk. 4:18, AV)

The words of Jesus express a concern for liberation of the oppressed as an imperative perspective. My own ingrained conviction is that even though the Black experience embraces the *tragic*, our situation has given us a *higher* perspective on this society and on this world that makes it possible by faith for us as Black people to be *free*—including freedom from the deadly narrowness of such impulses as white racism and self-righteousness. It may well be that 353 years of ethnic and racial prejudice towards Black humanity has made it pos-



sible for us as Black people to extricate ourselves from the strange and mad roles of being caught up in the vice and veil of a society which enslaves human personality.

To understand blackness and the experience of tragedy in blackness is to understand the impetus of Black liberation. White Americans can take their cue from this, I think, as a Gospel imperative. The tragedy in blackness, if properly seen, might make possible a new deliverance from the madness of American power, to seek a Power that does not seek human superiority over others, but a Power that seeks fulfillment of purpose in Jesus Christ as Lord. Seeing blackness as meaningful may help one to transcend the merely tragic. As a means of challenge, tragedy in the Black experience involves trans-tragic sensibilities which call Black men to lead the way toward transforming our society. It is not totally a Black task. But the peculiar gift of this task seems to be distinctly characteristic of those who share—directly or empathetically—in the Black experience.

The Black man has suffered long under the yoke of white oppression: the meaning of this suffering as a mere phenomenon is not in itself clear. But the tragic in the Black experience has elicited many new elements of trans-tragic sensibility. The Black man has embraced his blackness and given thanks to God. A new sense of selfhood is emerging: our own blackness is no longer experienced by us primarily as a "burden" but rather as a gift of God.

It is precisely this exhilarating sense of blackness that overshadows in some ways the tragic. An expression of this blackness has been given us by a young Black poet, Sarah Webster Fabio. She writes:

### "Black Is"

#### Pigmentation

A mirror image of black on black; a preference that leans away from fading colors and imitation white.

#### Posture

An on-your-toes approach to the maze of the real world; a shoulder squared against that's happening—the man, the hawk, bad luck, blues. A motion, a dance, a gesture, a cool stance; a walking that walk, talking that talk, that is "now" man.

## Position

Apartness, uniqueness; a separation permitting cutting through white irrelevancies to confront basic issues; a revolutionary zeal to overthrow oppressive might, a moral obligation to change a wrong to a right.

## Perspective

A clear black eye that peers through the midnight much of a man; a denigged aspect and value; a defiant thrust to wipe out white wash; positives of assertive acts, affirmations a strong "yes," not negatives, invisibility, non-entity.

## Pride

People power people magic—soul an exuberance of existence; an escalation of self-awareness and appreciation. Gut knowing-buried deep in the womb of oppression turning stone to bone, to flesh and blood, and tears and smiles, to love, to life; pulling pulling a magnet pulling you all the way back home into a thing that

is

BLACK

Black is beautiful,  
 Love is beautiful,  
 Truth is beautiful,  
 Knowledge is beautiful.

The Black experience has certainly transformed the tragic. It has many new dimensions in which a new destiny is etched out of the tragic. It moves toward a new theological reference—namely, Black Theology. So it seems to me that blackness in light of our Black experience is no longer a matter of question but an inescapable reality which embraces a uniqueness that must be celebrated.

*God* I think has worked through the Black experience. He has made possible for Black people an unusual *gift* of faith. A faith courageous in the midst of the tragic sensibilities of life. How else could one live in a humiliated hell? As I view the shape of the Black experience in our society, it seems apparent to me that our existence would have been only stark tragedy without this gift of faith. It has been a faith given—

as seen in hymns and spirituals, laughter and dance, suffering and the audacity to say: HALLELUIA! It has been a faith discovered in the depth of our suffering which undergirds the meaning and glory of a truly awakened and redeeming Black experience which was born in the tragic.

*In Memoriam:*  
Abraham Joshua Heschel  
1907-1972

by W. D. DAVIES\*

I have been asked to speak, in a broad context, on the significance of the life of Abraham Heschel for the larger non-Jewish world. I shall do so as a student of Judaism and Christianity. The task is not easy because, above all, Abraham Heschel, while monumentally simple, was also immensely complex. Any clear estimate of his impact as a conscience at large, as a scholar and as a witness—and he was all these to the non-Jewish as well as to the Jewish world—is immediately suspect.

1. *A Conscience*

So I shall not start, as one normally would, with Abraham Heschel's beginnings in Poland, because we cannot separate his beginnings from his end, and indeed from the whole of his life. Instead I shall begin with the event which overwhelmed him as it did all Jews in our time, the holocaust in Modern Europe. He very seldom spoke about it. In all our many conversations I do not recall that he ever dwelt upon it. The holocaust does emerge in his writings, but his references to it, although devastating, are usually indirect: he does not concentrate on it as an expressed primary concern, as do so many other recent Jewish writers. This 'silence' about the holocaust always puzzled me. Was it that there were some things about which he could not speak? Was his mind so numbed by that horrendous event that he was stunned to silence? I think, in a real sense, that this was so. But his silence in any direct sense about the holocaust was a pregnant silence. The holocaust

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\*Abraham Heschel was probably the Jew who best interpreted Judaism to the non-Jewish world in our generation. The following tribute was given by Dr. Davies at the Memorial Service for Dr. Heschel sponsored by The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Woodstock College, Union Theological Seminary, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and almost all the national organizations of Jewry, at Park Avenue Synagogue, New York City, January 21, 1973.

did have a profound effect on his theology and especially on his understanding of the theological task.

Here I want to emphasize one point where the effect of the European holocaust was direct and unmistakable and important to the non-Jewish world. True, Abraham Heschel knew from Judaism that we are all bound up together in the common bundle of life, so that we are all inescapably involved with each other: true that the Torah and the Prophets led him to recognize certain inescapable social, moral and political realities so that at many times he expressed our social conscience. But I think that it was the holocaust that lent to his awareness its special urgency. I recall once, at his home, that he referred to the silence of decent people in Germany, and elsewhere, in the presence of the monstrous and unspeakable deeds of Hitler, and spoke of the need to make public protest against such. He said this very quietly. But I am fairly sure that, apart from the moral and spiritual depths to which he could appeal in Judaism, and apart from the striking example of his friend Reinhold Niebuhr, the need to "speak out," which he felt and followed so strongly, was born chiefly of his experience in Europe.

That he very publicly marched to Selma and very publicly opposed the Vietnam war—and that in a way which inevitably drew attention to his stand, because of his picturesquely noticeable presence—all this was no accident. It was his passionate reaction against the craven silence of decent people in the presence of wrong unendurable. A great American jurist said that it is important not only that justice be done, but that justice be seen to be done. Abraham Heschel felt that it was important not only that one protest against evil, but that one be seen to protest, even at the risk of misunderstanding. That he was seen to protest was in his mind a necessary part of his resolve not to be guilty of a compromising silence. How and where he was seen we have already heard. His will be a noble and an enduring Jewish presence in the history of the protest movements of our day.

## 2. *A Scholar*

But there is a second very different world to which we must relate Abraham Heschel. During this century, in the world of scholarship, there has been going on a silent revolution among Jews and Christians. Beginning at the end of the nineteenth

century among Christians, and even earlier among Jews, there has been a sustained attempt to examine the sources of Judaism in the first and previous centuries. I am here concerned with Jewish work in this field. It has been immensely enriching and illuminating. Especially in Britain and America, it has helped to create a new climate within which the study of the beginnings of Christianity, which was born of Judaism, and its separation from its mother Faith has been conducted. It is a climate of mutual respect, comprehension, tolerance, and—dare I say it?—affection.

To bring this matter home, let me here pay tribute to the institution which Abraham Heschel so long served, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, whose impact in this field has been immeasurable. If I mention the names of a few of those who are now gone or are *Emeriti*—Schechter, Ginzberg, Finkelstein, Lieberman—without noting the students whom they raised and who are now carrying on their work, you will be aware of the great contributions to which I refer. I only want to emphasize that the climate within which Jewish and non-Jewish students now meet in the academic world is due largely to their labors. Their ultimate influence, slowly and gradually exerted as it may be, is incalculable.

Abraham Heschel was related to this world of emerging and influential Jewish scholarship. Already in Poland and Germany he had made a place for himself through his work on *The Prophets*, and he continued his scholarship in this country in English, and particularly in his Hebrew works on *Torah min ha-Shamaim*, which cry out for translation. And through his students, no less than his published work, his scholarly and humane inspiration spread. I emphasize this aspect of Abraham Heschel's contribution because in the long run the image of Judaism which will govern the pulpits and schools of this nation will be largely that created by scholars. The work of Abraham Heschel is to be honored in this context.

The greatest impact of his work was not in the strictly technical, textual aspects of Judaism. His field was more Haggadah than Halakah. Informed as he was in Talmud and Philosophy, and open as he was to recent technical scholarship, his experience had also created a certain distance from, and even dissatisfaction with, the kind of objective detachment which is so often, if wrongly, thought to characterize genuine academic pursuits. Abraham Heschel emphasized not



conceptual thinking in itself, but the situational thinking that is born of commitment and involvement: he emphasized understanding more than knowledge, wisdom more than information. This is why his direct influence on strictly philosophical discussion, unlike that of Buber perhaps, is not always noticeable: usually, though not always, he did not confront philosophy so much as he undercut it.

He had strong affinities with Reinhold Niebuhr, but his place in Jewish scholarship is, probably, best compared with that of Karl Barth in the world of Christian scholarship. When Barth published his commentary on Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* it was said that a bomb exploded in the playgrounds of theologians. Few technical experts endorsed all Barth's exegesis, but none could ignore it, because it so often shattered their neat, controllable categories. I recall advising students: If you want to grasp Paul, read C. H. Dodd; if you want to be grasped by him, read Karl Barth. So was it between Abraham Heschel and Judaism.

I speak for Christians and other non-Jews. To encounter him was to 'feel' the force and spirit of Judaism, the depth and grandeur of it. He led one, even thrust one, into the mysterious greatness of the Jewish tradition, not so much conceptually as emotionally and existentially. It was as an unmistakable Jewish presence that Abraham Heschel impinged upon this twentieth century, and that century found that presence disturbing and strange, but at the same time reassuring and challenging. He had the unusual capacity of evoking those prophetic figures that inhabit the Old Testament: his words echoed theirs. The paradoxes in which he lived, and especially the extreme vividness of his insights, recall that extremism of expression which he himself had discovered in the prophets of Israel.

To read his words and to meet him was to confront an incarnation of a living tradition, ancient and yet recreative, gentle and yet infinitely dynamic, fresh and lively, but gnarled and tried. It was through the very actuality of his own person, in word and deed and life, through an aura peculiarly his own, that Abraham Heschel impressed himself upon this century and this country as an authentic Jewish presence.

### 3. *A Witness to The Mystery*

And so, thirdly, I come to the mystery of his complexity

and to the way in which this led him to be open to non-Jews in a new, if not always radical, way, so that it is natural for non-Jews to join with Jews in tribute to him. Why is it, thus natural? I have spoken about the influence of the holocaust upon him to make him a very public protestor. The holocaust also had touched him in another way. Few had a deeper awareness of the depth and power of evil than Abraham Heschel. Here again the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr may have been at work. But he was too Jewish to believe in original sin, as Christians have understood it. The astounding optimism of Judaism never forsook him: he could hope against hope. But he did know the exceeding sinfulness of sin and understood well why Christians called it endemic or original. His was not the simplicity of innocence. Yet it was not the clarity and charity with which he recognized evil—the Ancient Human Wrong—that made him open to non-Jews.

Incredible as it seems to us, behind his experience of the holocaust there was a yet deeper one—that of the religious life of Hasidism in Poland. That life, in a sense, he never left. Its mark was on him to the end. Here is the paradox of Abraham Heschel: he was most Jewish and yet most universal. Those of us who knew him recognized that there was in him an ultimate loyalty to Israel which to outsiders seemed a kind of ultimate obduracy or intransigence. His fundamental, unshakable Jewishness was never in question, just as there was in his thinking a concentration on the Hebrew Scriptures which appeared to many excessive. So too no one knew better and suspected more than he the easy, subtle and insidious attraction of syncretism and assimilation. Polish Hasidic transplant in some sense he always remained. And yet this Polish Hasid in his inaugural address at Union Theological Seminary provided a basis for loyalty to other traditions than his own. In particular, rooted in his own faith, he recognized that despite its failures the Christian Faith had had a role in the redemption of all men.

How was this possible? It was possible because Abraham Heschel never lost the certainty given him in Hasidism. As he had entered the strange and sophisticated world of Western European culture and learning in Germany and later in America, he always carried with him the simplicity, wonder and richness of Hasidic faith. Above all, he never abandoned the depth of its certainty in the reality of the Living God in whose

image all men were created and are being made. Throughout his life he continued to make dazzlingly clear, and luminous, and alive the concept of the One God, belief in whom we have all owed to Israel for close on three millennia. In the certainty that beyond all mystery is God, beyond the darkness of our human pilgrimage, however horrendous, the Light of the Lord, Abraham Heschel discovered a ground for being open to recognize the common element, nay the common need, behind all the religious differences of men. He always insisted on the universal need of men for the Living God; and so it was that he was most human as he was most Jewish.

In the inaugural address to which I have already referred he pointed us to the essential challenge facing us all alike, Jews and Christians and, indeed, all men: the challenge to believe in the reality of God and His mercy. Can we, modern men, in an age when Western culture is witnessing a groundswell of atheism, finally recognize our existence not as the accidental outcome of a fortuitous concourse of atoms, but as grounded in the *pathos*—that was his favourite word—of God, who suffers with and for us? The answer to this question was the ultimate concern of Abraham Heschel, and it is a question, not simply Jewish, but human.

Abraham Heschel's acute awareness of this universal, human concern for the reality of God found a response far outside Judaism: his works became the devotional reading of myriads of non-Jews. Through his faith in the God beyond all mystery he ministered to our ultimate human need and, therefore, to us all. In his books and speeches, in which the cadences and rhythms and patterns of ancient synagogal prayers and sermons reverberate, his very prose is instinct with a poetry which strangely recalls us to primordial certainties. In all these he called into being the emotions which he described, and summoned not only Jews, but non-Jews also, to the depth of awe, wonder and mystery which life should evoke in all men.

At this depth, which cannot be adequately expressed in conceptual thinking "by our meddling intellects," as Shakespeare put it, but which can find expression haltingly in many languages, all men meet: in this depth all islands of religion are joined, however separated by alien seas. And the nature of this depth is that of the Divine—mysterious, yes, but also just and, above all, filled with pathos. As he said

at Union: "The supreme issue is today not the *halacha* for the Jew or the Church for the Christian—but the premise underlying both religions, namely, whether there is a *pathos*, a divine reality concerned with the destiny of man which mysteriously impinges upon history; the supreme issue is whether we are alive or dead to the challenge and the expectation of the Living God. The crisis engulfs us all. The misery and fear of alienation from God make Jew and Christian cry together."<sup>1</sup>

To gather up all this I shall quote Abraham Heschel's own words:

Wonder or radical amazement is the chief characteristic of the religious man's attitude toward history and nature. One attitude is alien to his spirit: taking things for granted, regarding events as a natural course of things. To find an approximate cause of a phenomenon is no answer to his ultimate wonder. He knows that there are laws that regulate the course of natural processes; he is aware of the regularity and pattern of things. However, such knowledge fails to mitigate his sense of perpetual surprise at the fact that there are facts at all. Looking at the world he would say, "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our eyes" (Psalms 118:23).<sup>2</sup>

The certainty that there is meaning beyond the mystery is the reason for ultimate rejoicing.<sup>3</sup>

When in response to Moses' request, the Lord appeared to tell him what He is, did He say: I am the all-wise, the perfect, and of infinite beauty? He did say: I am full of love and compassion. Where in the history of religion prior to the age of Moses was the Supreme Being celebrated for His being sensitive to the suffering of men?<sup>4</sup>

Conscience, Scholar, Witness such was Abraham Joshua Heschel. His place knoweth him no more: his beloved home, Morningside Heights, the Jewish Seminary, this city and this land—yea, the earth—is bereft. Above the entrance of the Jewish Seminary is carved the symbol of the Divine Presence, the Burning Bush which burnt and burns without being consumed. Abraham Joshua Heschel through the intensity of his devotion to the Presence was physically consumed earlier than he might have been had his witness burnt less. But he paid the

1. *USQR*, Vol. xxi, No. 1, 1965, p. 118.

2. *Between God and Man: From the Writings of Abraham J. Heschel*, selected and edited by Fritz A. Rothschild, Free Press, N.Y., 1959, p. 41.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

price of his obedience willingly in the knowledge that He whom he loved and served and in whom He now lives cannot be consumed.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel, born in Warsaw, 1907, a descendant of a long line of outstanding leaders of Hasidim, after his initial training in Jewish schools in Poland, entered the University of Berlin, and in 1937 followed Martin Buber as the leader of the Central Organization for Jewish Adult Education and the *Jüdische Lehrhaus* at Frankfurt on the Main. Compelled to leave Germany in 1938, he reached England and eventually in 1940 came to this country to be Professor of Philosophy and Rabbinics at the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. In 1945 he joined the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York as Professor of Jewish Ethics and Mysticism where he remained until his death in 1972. Rooted in Talmudic and Philosophical learning, he was probably the Jew who best interpreted Judaism to the non-Jewish world in our generation. Apart from his work in Hebrew and German he wrote extensively in English. His best known works are *The Earth is the Lord's: The Inner Life of the Jew in Eastern Europe*, New York, 1950; *Man is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion*, New York, 1951; *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*, New York, 1951; *Man's Quest for God: Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, New York, 1954; *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism*, New York, 1955.)



## More Unexpurgated Bibliography

Ed. Note: The following materials will fill in several of the more obvious lacunae in the "Spring" issue. Again there is no thought of "completeness" either of areas covered or within areas, nor has the Review Committee undertaken to exercise any general editorship over the materials here reproduced. The asterisk (\*) denotes a book available in paperback in America. Joseph B. Bethea is Director of Black Church Studies in The Divinity School. Martha M. Wilson is a Teaching Assistant in Library Bibliography and student in the Ph.D. program. Harriet V. Leonard is Reference Librarian for the Divinity School Library. H. James Lawrence has, since graduation in 1970, been doing creative work in recording and film-making, the excellence of which is reflected in his winning the CINE Golden Eagle for "best religious film." Readers who may be interested in possible rental or purchase of one or more of Jim's productions may obtain information and illustrated brochures by writing Counterpoint Films, 5823 Santa Monica Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90038—phone (213) 462-2243.

### Black Church Studies

JOSEPH B. BETHEA

This bibliography does not begin to cover all that is in print regarding the black church and the black religious experience. The purpose here is to suggest a few introductory titles for those who would begin to understand and appreciate the most important institution in the life and history of black people in America.

\*Banks, William. *The Black Church in the United States*. Moody Press, 1972. This volume deals with the origin, growth, contributions and outlook of the black church in the United States.

\*Cleage, Albert. *The Black Messiah*. Sheed and Ward, 1968. In 20 sermons the pastor of the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Detroit preaches Black Power Christianity. The black church can bring unity to the black man's life



and struggle. Cleage proclaims "the resurrection of a Black Church with its own Black Messiah."

- \*—*Black Christian Nationalism*. Morrow, 1972. Cleage suggests a theology and a program for black liberation, the task of the black church. This volume includes the Black Christian Nationalist Creed, the BCN Covenant, and papers presented by Rabbi Hilu Paris and Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan at the first BCN Convention, edited by George Bell.
- \*Cone, James. *Black Theology and Black Power*. Seabury Press, 1969. This material was first presented in a lecture series at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Professor Cone calls Black Power "the most important development in American life in this century," and relates the concept to Christianity, to the church, and to contemporary American theology.
- \*—*A Black Theology of Liberation*. Lippincott, 1970. One of the C. Eric Lincoln Series in Black Religion, this book contends that Christianity is a religion of liberation. Christian theology is Black theology. Lincoln says, "Cone is the first theologian to give formal and systematic expression to the meaning of black religion and to place it in the context of the Black Revolution."
- \*Dickson, Kwesi and Paul Ellingworth, eds. *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*. Orbis Books, 1969. This book contains the principal papers presented by eight African scholars at the 1966 consultation of African theologians. Their task was to determine if there was any correlation between the Biblical concept of God and the African concept of God. They affirm the God of Jesus Christ in African history and tradition.
- \*Frazier, E. Franklin. *The Negro Church in America*. Schocken, 1963. Subordinated and isolated in American society from the beginning, Negroes found social cohesion in the church, the dominant institution in the social organization of the Negro community. The removal of racial barriers may seem to alter this historical role; however, the church continues to be dominant among the Negro masses.
- Gardiner, James and J. Deotis Roberts, eds. *Quest for a Black Theology*. Pilgrim Press, 1971. Six black churchmen present their view in regard to the Black Church/Black

Theology phenomenon. Five of the essays were first presented in a conference sponsored by the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute and the Georgetown University Department of Theology.

Herzog, Frederick. *Liberation Theology*. Seabury Press, 1972.

This is the first serious acknowledgment of the challenge of black theology by a white theologian. Professor of Systematic Theology at Duke University Divinity School, Dr. Herzog casts his liberation theology in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ as given in the Fourth Gospel.

\*Hough, Joseph C. *Black Power and White Protestants*. Oxford University Press, 1968. Black Power is a sign of the new Negro Pluralism in America, grounded in history and not soon to pass away. While white Protestant churches are limited in their choices of a response, they do have a task, and a strategy is suggested.

Johnson, Joseph A. *The Soul of the Black Preacher*. Pilgrim Press, 1971. Sixteen sermons and lectures are presented by a great black churchman in his attempt to interpret Christian faith in its relationship to black history, black identity, and black liberation in America.

Johnston, Ruby F. *The Development of Negro Religion*. Philosophical Library, 1954.

\*Jones, Major J. *Black Awareness: A Theology of Hope*. Abingdon, 1971. Dr. Jones examines the meaning of the black experience—the white and black churches in their pre-Civil War and post-Civil War expressions. The meaning of the current black revolution is cast clearly within the Christian context of hope.

\*Kelsey, George D. *Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965. Racism is an idolatrous faith. The belief in racial superiority is held within organized Christianity and within Christian civic communities. Dr. Kelsey offers a Christian criticism of racism and describes the renewed individual in a racist society.

King, Martin Luther: *Where Do We Go From Here?* Harper and Row, 1967. This is an excellent statement of where we are in regard to poverty, racism, and militarism. We have the opportunity to work for community; otherwise, we shall continue in chaos.

- \*Lecky, Robert S. and H. Elliott Wright, eds. *Black Manifesto: Religion, Racism, and Reparations*. Sheed and Ward, 1969. This work brings together comment on the reparation controversy begun when James Forman presented Black Manifesto demands to Riverside Church, New York.
- Lincoln, C. Eric. *My Face Is Black*. Beacon Press, 1964. This is a call to responsible America to take notice of the new black man in her midst.
- \*Mays, Benjamin. *The Negro's God*. Athenium Press, 1968. Dr. Mays describes the Negro's God, as reflected in the Negro's literature.
- \*Mbiti, John S. *African Religions and Philosophy*. Doubleday and Co., 1969. This is a general survey of the most important aspect of African life—religion. Dr. Mbiti describes and interprets the religious beliefs and practices of his native culture.
- \*Mitchell, Henry H. *Black Preaching*. Lippincott, 1970. Another in the C. Eric Lincoln Series in Black Religion, the volume deals with the best of the Black preaching tradition in the hope that this tradition may be learned and maintained.
- Nelson, Hart M., R. L. Yokley, and A. K. Nelson, eds. *The Black Church in America*. Basic Books, 1971. This volume gathers material from a number and variety of sources to convey "the centrality of the church to the black experience in America."
- Roberts, James D. *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology*. Westminster Press, 1969. Here is offered a black theology of liberation and a hope for black-white reconciliation based on an equity rooted in the Christian understanding of creation and redemption.
- Sleeper, C. F. *Black Power and Christian Responsibility*. Abingdon, 1969. After tracing the emergence of "Black Power," the author presents a strong case for Christian responsibility and strategy for a new period in race relations.
- \*Washington, Joseph R. *Black Religion*. Beacon Press, 1964. Negro religion was created, and has been sustained, by the forces of segregation and discrimination in the United States. White and Black Christians are challenged to

close the gap between creed and deed.

\*—*The Politics of God*. Beacon Press, 1967.

Wright, Nathan. *Black Power and Urban Unrest*. Hawthorn Books, 1967. Black Power is a creative necessity in the United States. The possibilities for black liberation and a great America are limitless if churches, government, corporations, and concerned individuals will discover their responsibilities and fulfill them.

## Women and the Church

MARTHA M. WILSON

Bainton, Roland. *Women of the Reformation in Germany and Italy*. Augsburg, 1971. (Sound recording also available.) Penetrating character sketches of more than fifteen women. Bainton has probed the primary sources and he brings his subjects to life.

\*Cooke, Joanne, ed. *The New Women: A Motive Anthology of Women's Liberation*. Fawcett World, 1971. Essays, poems, and illustrations reflecting the emerging consciousness of church women, mainly Protestant.

Daly, Mary. *The Church and the Second Sex*. Harper and Row, 1968. Roman Catholic perspective. A survey of the past and present issues that hinder women from full participation in the church. Professor Daly teaches at Boston College.

\*Doely, Sarah Bentley. *Women's Liberation and the Church*. Association Press, 1970. Essays by women with a variety of perspectives on the participation of women in the church and in theological education.

Gibson, Elsie. *When the Minister Is a Woman*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970. The results of a questionnaire sent to women ministers.

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THOMAS A. LANGFORD

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in an intense, suggestive style.

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HARRIET V. LEONARD

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## Mass Media

H. JAMES LAWRENCE

- \*DeFleur, Melvin L. *Theories of Mass Communication*. 2nd ed. David McKay, 1970. A good introduction.
- \*Lippman, Walter. *Public Opinion*. Free Press, 1965. Every minister should have some acquaintance with the study of persuasion, including propaganda techniques.
- Rivers, William L. and Wilbur Schramm. *Responsibility in Mass Communication*. rev. ed. Harper and Row, 1969. Excellent basic text.
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- The Quill* (the journal of Sigma Delta Chi) provides a good way to keep up with current ethical, social and political issues in mass communications.

## Report from the Dean

After one and one-half years in office, I want to report to our general alumni on the status of the Divinity School. First, I want to record my pleasure in becoming a part of the Divinity School and being more directly related to the ongoing life of the Church. I have enjoyed my associations with the students, faculty and alumni, and have been impressed by the qualities which I have found in all.

The morale of the school is high. There is a degree of excitement about the relationships which exist among us, about the ideas we debate, about the commitments we share, about the concerns for the gospel and the church which are common to us.

Our morale is enhanced by the high student enrollment at the present time. Last year we had almost three hundred applications and had an entering class of 114 persons. For the current year we have a slightly higher number of applications than last year, and so far our admissions are running ahead of last year. By next year we should have somewhere between 290 and 300 students in our basic degree program. This would constitute the largest enrollment the Divinity School has ever had. We are especially pleased with this interest at a time when many theological schools are experiencing difficulty in maintaining adequate enrollment.

One reason we can sustain the additional students is the new Divinity School addition which has been built. This is a handsome building, aesthetically pleasing, extremely functional, and approximately doubles our space. We dedicated our building last October 30 with an impressive ceremony. Many features of this new building contribute to the quality of our life. The student lounge provides us with our first opportunity for a place of common meeting and already this complex has contributed significantly to our sense of community. The basement floor of the new building is interconnected for electronic media. We can send or receive closed circuit TV or audio-visual materials in all of the rooms. There is also on that floor a continuing education suite including study carrels as well as a seminar room, a Christian Education laboratory, and a number of seminar classrooms. The entire

building including the Alumni Commons Room—which is perhaps the most beautiful room on the Duke campus—has added to the program of the Divinity School.

There are several new programs which I would like to mention. First, let me indicate that the underlying reason for creating these new programs was our sense of the need to train our students effectively in the practical professional dimensions of Christian ministry and to relate more significantly to the life of the churches. To accomplish these ends we have instituted a wide-ranging and significant Continuing Education program under the leadership of McMurry Richey. Mac Richey has created an almost continuous and very significant program on campus and away. The response has been excellent and you will be receiving more information about these programs. We encourage you to participate.

For the first time we have established a full-time Director of Field Education. E. Clifford Shoaf, of the North Carolina Conference, joined our staff this past summer and has already established a strong and growing program in Field Education. Clif is working with our students and with churches to make this an important part of our total educational effort. The prospects for this are among the brightest in our school.

A Black Church Studies program has been instituted. Joseph B. Bethea, a member of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, joined our staff and is building a program which will enhance the training of black students in the Divinity School and black ministers in the field, and will contribute to our common responsibility to one another. As we survey these three areas of developing activity we could not be more pleased with the leadership we have been able to secure or with the promise these programs possess.

No school stands still, it is either growing better or it is declining. We feel that we have increasing strength both with our continuing faculty and through the addition of new faculty. Our sustaining faculty are accomplished scholars and teachers who are enthusiastically participating in the concerns and life of the school. We are also enhanced by the appointment of such people as David C. Steinmetz in Reformation studies, Richard Gillespie in historical theology, and Roland E. Murphy and Lloyd R. Bailey in Old Testament, all of whom came to Duke as I moved into the deanship. Next year we expect to have Dr. Jill Raitt in historical studies. Dr. Raitt will be



joining us from the faculty of the University of California at Riverside and comes with an enviable record of scholarship and excellence in teaching. We had also expected to have Dr. Carleton Lee join us in black religious history and interpretation, but after accepting our invitation, he suddenly died. This is a loss to us all. New appointments in homiletics, Christian Education, and the history and interpretation of Black Religious Experience remain to be made. With each of these appointments we are seeking to bring the strongest available persons to contribute to our academic and professional program.

Arthur Kale retires this year. As our alumni know, Arthur Kale has made a contribution to the spirit and life of the school which is exceptional. We shall miss his presence and that of Ruth among us. His freshness is revealed by his accepting a teaching position in a seminary for next year in Hong Kong. We wish them well during their time away and look forward to their return to Durham.

A number of visiting faculty have enriched our program this year. Bishop Edwin R. Garrison of the North Central Jurisdiction has been with us this year to advise and supervise in connection with Field Education and the Rural Church Program. His spirit and wisdom have meant so much that we hope to have him with us again next year.

Carlyle Marney has been visiting professor of homiletics and will be with us again next year. His combination of honest confrontation and deep empathy has been appreciated by faculty and students. Wallace Alston, minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Durham, is teaching a course on homiletics and theology this spring term and has been warmly engaging.

We welcome the fresh approaches of these persons and are pleased to have them with us.

We have worked hard to relate to the life of the churches. We have had groups of ministers, lay persons, and alumni visit the campus to talk with us about the education of persons for ministry today. Our Board of Visitors has met with us as well as cabinets and bishops, persons from rural churches, and laymen and ministers for urban and suburban churches. We have discussed at length, learned from them, and have instituted some results of the conversations into our plans. Growing out of some of these discussions has been a group



of persons who call themselves the Duke Divinity School Fellowship and who are banding together to help us raise student financial aid resources for the increased enrollment.

Our library remains one of the strongest in the nation; the quality of our graduate program was recognized last year when the American Council of Learned Societies study placed us among the seven most distinguished institutions in the country; we intend to maintain academic excellence but we also share a concern to develop a balance between academic excellence and professional training. If we can achieve this balance we will have made a distinctive contribution to theological education.

I am pleased to report these aspects of our activity, but there is an importance to all of this which goes beyond the enumeration of facts or the indication of qualities. Overarching our efforts is a keen sense of the significance of Christian faith for our time and a joy in being called to the ministry of the gospel.

Thomas A. Langford  
Dean

## Book Reviews

*Liberation Theology: Liberation in the Light of the Fourth Gospel.* Frederick Herzog. Seabury Press. 1972. 272 pp. \$6.95.

In the course of providing a fresh translation of the text of the Fourth Gospel and a running theological commentary, Dr. Herzog presents what may perhaps be seen as a radical left-wing theological stance in an updated adaptation of ecclesiastical and theological critique along the lines established by Marx and Feuerbach. In order not unnecessarily to water-down the evocative vividness of Herzog's style I shall make major employment of his own language.

As Herzog seems to see it, the organizational structures of Western society, including the church as an institution, have become so pervasively oppressive as to eliminate the internal possibility of genuine humanity—to say nothing of genuine Christianity. “‘In this society one cannot be a decent human being’ (Ernst Bloch). In this church one cannot be a decent Christian. These are two premises on which I must begin my theology.” (1) Prevailing scholarly opinion of the theology of the Fourth Gospel would perhaps not regard it as a promising starting point for a thoroughgoing critique of church and society. But this opinion is simply mistaken. “Contrary to the myth that the Fourth Gospel is mystical and withdrawn, it is a theology of protest, of *protestari*, of affirming truth as counterattack upon the forces of oppression that have established themselves in church and society” (21).

Herzog uses the Fourth Gospel to focus the needed critique for the contemporary American scene in his translation of Jn.3:3: “Jesus answered, ‘Believe me, no man can see the kingdom of God unless he becomes black’ ” (61). Nicodemus represents the contrary ethos. “Nicodemus is still reasoning on grounds of wanting to retain white superiority, private selfhood” (62). The issue is more than symbolic, for Herzog sees his own book as “a groping toward the truth the black knows just because he is black” (ix). “The black self over against the white self is the compassionate self . . . It is the corporate self in which the ‘I’ shares . . . God cannot unite with the WASP, the white middle-class self.” (15, 86)

Accordingly one will expect to find the soul (or lack thereof) of white middle-class “Christianity” and its professional representatives in the sorry plight of radical blindness to the one and only central issue: the “privatizing” distortion of selfhood produced by the oppressive socio-economic structures of capitalism. “White theology today also [like the Samaritan woman] responds by discussing religion, religious language, metaphysics, or new ways of worship, . . . etc., while the real issue is to realize how much man distorts his self, how screwed up he is in wrong economic patterns, profit-making, and the whole capitalist scheme of who man is” (74).

White American churchmen have evaded the task of self-understanding throughout their entire history. “White theologians have never taken a good look at themselves in the mirror since Puritan days” (136). Their com-

plicity in the oppressive capitalist structures makes their ignorance culpable. "Organization churchmen want organized mystification about God, so men can remain sufficiently confused . . . . While the Word of freedom is present to them, they wall themselves off against it . . . . Because they cling to their world of pseudo-value, of illusory status, white churchmen cannot know God." (89, 130)

Their knowledge of women is also corrupted. "For white churchmen, the ones to be blamed [for "the consequences of fornication"] are mostly the ignorant females—of the other color" (119).

Under such circumstances it should come as no surprise that "the whole structure of Christian theology will have to be rethought" (viii). There must be a new starting point. "Theology today must begin with an identification with the wretched of the earth, the *marginales*, the marginal figures of life who are still struggling for personhood and dignity" (2-3). For there is "one thing needful: the stilling of man's hunger for freedom" (76).

The oppression to be overcome is in part intellectual. "The worry about the metaphysical keeps men from coming to grips with the physical, the suffering, the injustice, the unceasing oppression" (31). But even this intellectual oppression is socially entrenched, for organization churchmen "seek to develop a mystifying Christological metaphysics" in suppression of Jesus' own "supplanting of religion in nonecclesiastical liberation" (90).

The time has come when "we must battle through the great questions in bare manhood, radically choosing freedom, no longer protected by the apron strings of religion" (43). "Religions are basically very much

alike. They are man's way of making a profit from his sense of transcendence, sanctioning the status quo of exploitation with the divine . . . . Jesus does not bring a new religion, but the experience of corporate selfhood" (147).

The Christian theologian today is accordingly free, indeed obligated, to rethink the whole structure of Christology. "The Word became flesh—this is shorthand for: the order of natural necessity has been broken, freedom has entered the human scene" (36). This alteration in man's understanding of the transcendent freedom of selfhood also alters man's future prospect. "Freedom . . . is now understood as the possibility to act on grounds of transcendent freedom, hoping for the prevailingness of man in the universe and his ultimate control of necessity . . . . There is no metaphysical and historical status quo that could not be transcended in the increase of freedom . . . . Mankind is more and more opened up for liberation, being offered ever new space for freedom. Nothing could be more ultimate." (37, 41, 210)

After expressing his "one caveat" against Kierkegaard's seeing "the hub of the matter in God existing as man," Herzog can accordingly transpose the famous passage in the *Philosophical Fragments* concerning the essential task of the generation contemporary with Jesus to read: "Had the earliest witnesses taught no more than this liberation, it would have been more than enough." (51-2) For not only "salvation history" but "all of human history seems meaningful only as liberation history, that is, to the extent that it helps man better to understand the dynamics of history as converging upon the liberation of man" (48). This understanding of the dynamics of

the historical process itself enables those with true vision to acknowledge freedom as the unconcealment of man's true destiny. "Some do acknowledge God . . . . They acknowledge unconcealment. That is, they are directly involved in hammering out their destiny." (34)

Jesus' unique role in focusing our understanding of the dynamics of history lies in his special power of focusing the unconcealment of transcendent freedom. "It was the unique impact of unconcealment, its special commissioning of this man, that enabled him to do his work (John 5:30). Transcendent freedom urges this man on to embody it in historical freedom. The open man breaks down the wall between transcendent freedom and historical freedom in living completely out of the power of man's true self . . . . the open man understands himself as the Son of true reality . . . . Men are judged by their relationship to freedom." (84)

Thus in the light of Jesus' corporate selfhood, free manhood is to be understood in terms of transcendence, and transcendence in terms of free manhood. Jesus "lives completely out of the 'beyond' which is the innermost 'within' of man, the openness in which he stands" (69). "To be a man is not only 'to do God,' but also 'to do the resurrection.' Manhood is not to cast itself upon the absolute outside itself, but to acknowledge in itself every dimension of transcendence and future that religion otherwise objectifies as being outside of man." (153)

If this "rethinking of Christian theology" is to be applied to "the whole structure," there will need to be, as in the case of Feuerbach, some further redefinitions of major theological notions, of which we may note

a few examples.

"Israel's history" may be defined as "an invitation to faith in the liberative possibilities of human existence" (32-3).

The "Eucharist" may be defined as "the symbol of the new liberation-history: the freedom of man acknowledging unconcealment" (98). "Transcendent freedom became incarnate in a man in order that a man could identify with what he truly is: the being that is open to freedom. This is what the crude language about the eating of the body and the drinking of the blood symbolizes." (105)

"Christian missions" may be defined as "the surrender of the private middle-class self" (147).

"Resurrection" may be defined as an "image" of the "prevailing freedom" of man. "Jesus faces death. In choosing death freely he prevails over it . . . . The healing [of the official's son, Jn. 4: 46-54] epitomizes the rule of man's true self over death . . . . we are also asked to become involved in the power of prevailing freedom—remembered by the disciples under the image of the resurrection . . . . Jesus liberates man from the question of the after-life and future resurrection, to concern for unoppressed life . . . . Resurrection takes place *now* as freedom from oppression or it will never take place." (79, 248, 156)

"Sin" may be defined as "man's self-negation or denial of freedom" (49).

True "worship" may be defined as "participation in man's corporate self" (75).

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However, the book also presents us with another candidate for the identity of "the real Fred Herzog":

"His sheep are all those wretched of the earth who do

not claim that they can liberate themselves" (146). "To 'think black' means to be able to think from the perspective of the underdog . . . . To think from the perspective of the oppressed, however, is not as yet to think theologially. 'Thinking black' ('thinking Indian') has to be radically tied to the originating event of the Christian faith in order to be theological. In fact, ultimately we can 'think black' only if we are bound to the originating event." (15)

"It goes without saying that we cannot fully grasp what this doing of God, resurrection, and death, meant for Jesus. And we are not asked to imitate him. An *imitatio Christi* is not called for when we speak of who man is becoming. Jesus was the Son of God—something we cannot say of ourselves . . . . There is the invitation to the *innovatio Christi*: finding Jesus relevant for us in new ways heretofore untried, in thinking black, in becoming one with the oppressed." (173) "Becoming black through Jesus does not mean now to have a handle to identify him with any contemporary figure, group, or power. 'Then if anyone says to you, "Lo, here is the Christ!" or "There he is!" do not believe it . . . .' (Mt. 24:23-26). The blackness or redness of the man reborn is always related to *Jesus'* blackness or redness . . . . It is not *our* identification, but *his* identification with the wretched of the earth that counts and brings the great change among men. Therefore it is always called a rebirth *through the Spirit*." (65)

"Man wants freedom, and yet does not want it. It is not just a matter of being timid, although many of us are. It is a matter of sin—our inability to overcome our self-contradiction." (213) "The real Christological and an-

thropological issue is how transcendent freedom and human freedom can be fused" (139). "What liberates us is the breakthrough of a reality that is not brutal, but tender, struggling for the survival of the least among men where we are too insensitive even to look" (217). "But he was pointing to the unconcealed reality of every man, the prevailing 'pull' from the ground of freedom that beckons man toward a new direction of destiny . . . . Man, however, cannot be real besides or beyond the reality which God provides for every man in equal measure. And this reaches beyond death. Jesus' reality as a man relies on no other status than the one he has before God. It is exactly this reality in which his freedom is grounded as a freedom over death." (130) "God himself waiting on suffering man in Jesus, liberating man for true life. God is the ultimate subject of trust." (136) "We have referred to *agape* . . . as costly love, waiting on man . . . Its mystery is that for the first time we are radically *being loved* . . . . Because of this love, *we are* . . . . I am being loved, therefore *we are*, *amor, ergo sumus*." (176)

"We do not achieve liberation. We have to face up to the tragic dimension of human life. 'The tragedy of man is that he can conceive perfection, but he cannot achieve it' (Reinhold Niebuhr)." (225-6) "The discovery of the presence of God where the pain is, is impressed on us by the biblical story" (259). "Suffering love is nothing new. What is new about the love of the cross is that God embodies himself as crucified eros . . . . It does not depend upon an appreciative response to be real. But it does invite a response." (185) ". . . the grasp of the heart of creation: liberation through



audacious suffering with the oppressed" (213).

"He identifies with the wretchedness of all men (Jn. 1:29). Even so, sin does not make of all men 'wretched of the earth.' To be a victim of oppression is one thing, to be possessed by evil, another. Sin makes of all men not the oppressed, but the possessed." (48-9) "God identified with the oppressed all the more effectively to convict the possessed" (236). "And from the Gospel perspective our disease is not repression so much as possession, subservience to forces we cannot control" (231).

"'I have overcome the world' (Jn. 16:33). The overcoming here is not a matter of victory, but of resistance, of becoming immune to the world's power, to its totalitarian demands. The free man [Jesus] has had the strength to withstand the onslaught of evil." (214) "Here stands liberated man—to be crucified . . . . He is liberated man because evil has no power over him. 'Look here, the man!' . . . Even if he does not have much space for freedom left, he is free—because God is still his space for freedom." (237) "Man's whole dilemma is his belief that liberation is a goal still to be achieved—and to be achieved by himself—while liberation in principle has already occurred. 'It is complete.' The cross is the moment when liberation is consummated in history . . . . As the Paschal Lamb, Jesus suffered the beating and ridicule inflicted upon him. He did not strike back. Thus evil was defeated. Man's liberation, however, does not begin on the cross. It begins with Jesus' first act of obedience. The cross seals it." (241)

"He suffers . . . sorely tempted to succumb to the onslaught of evil. And yet he carries out his work without surrender to the

power of evil . . . . This man is liberated because evil holds no power over him. Having rejected to act on its terms, he stands outside its influence and is not possessed by it. . . . While he himself has become an oppressed, he radically refuses to become possessed." (242) "The trust . . . is not some vague 'faith in faith.' . . . It is readiness to face the neighbor eternally, friend and foe, and together with him, God. As the cross says that *evil* has no power over the free man, the resurrection affirms that *death* has no power over the free man. Jesus is thus the liberated man in the ongoing resistance against the forces that seek to destroy human life." (248)

" . . . man will commune with God *through Jesus*, 'something concrete and human; it is the vision of the living God, not of the idea of God' (Unamuno). Jesus is not sacrificed to the Christ. Jesus does not vanish. The Christ is Jesus. . . . When we grasp that God does not let man perish in the shackles of death we note the radical summons for all oppression to be shaken off. . . . We always decide in the light of who we believe we are. The free man is willing to live together with his neighbor beyond death, to face him forever. Only in being willing to live together with a definite neighbor forever does a man learn why Jesus is the resurrection. . . . Only in being willing to live with the black and to face him forever will the WASP understand the resurrection. . . . 'Hell, that's other people,' says Sartre. Eternity, that's life together, says the Fourth Gospel. Resurrection is a summons: be ready to do battle together with your neighbor for unoppressed life. . . . If the eschatological is not felt in concrete persons any future fulfillment is pointless. The removal of the eschatological into the future perpetuates con-



cealment of men from themselves and leads to new self-alienation." (158-9) "Tied to the person of Jesus, [the resurrection] pointed to prevailing life in history as well as beyond history" (249). "There can be no meaningful final eschatology without its anticipations in Jesus Christ, and there can be no meaningful embodied [or "realized"] eschatology without the prospect of the final consummation" (256).

"His death unites all men in the corporate self (Jn. 12:32f.) bringing forth life. All men are drawn into this death, since it is here that costly love emerges as universal bond uniting all men in freedom. In this liberation human life prevails." (167) ". . . becoming a person is an endless process. We are not the *imago dei*, not yet. At best we are an *imago futuri*. We do not as yet know what we will be. In the constant struggle with becoming the 'sharing' self of which Jesus was the firstfruits we begin to sense what it means to be a man—a person." (172) "Men are to experience liberation living together with the free man forever. Also the neighbor will be there. And we will have room to glorify God forever." (187)

The foregoing passages, and others like them, speak, eloquently, for themselves. In my judgment this kind of theology represents the heart of classical Christian theology, right theology, truly "liberation" theology, needed theology. (This judgment, even if fitting, does not involve the assumption that this need is widely acknowledged or the conclusion that this kind of theology will be immediately and widely appropriated.)

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Even the reader who can identify strongly, as I can, with

one or the other of the two theological "identities" which have been presented here will, however, recognize that there may be some questions about the relationship between "the two."

Many basic terms in the vocabulary of this book are frequently used in assertions and denials as though they indicated clear and distinct, dichotomously separated categories of reality to which definite predicates are to be ascribed and excluded universally and without qualification: "white," "black," "the WASP," "the wretched," "organization churchmen" (sometimes simply "churchmen"), "society," "the church," "metaphysics," "American theologians," etc., etc.

It is quite important to note that some of the quoted (and unquoted) assertions and denials which might seem to cry out for some relativizing empirical qualification if they are to exhibit experientially defensible applicability, are indeed qualified elsewhere by Herzog himself in other passages quoted (and unquoted). Accordingly I am inclined to think that one of the things Herzog is intending to do is to sketch out in evocative fashion what might perhaps be called a kind of "phenomenological typology": here are some labels for such-and-such types of personhood, attitudes, situations, relationships, etc.; insofar as the shoe fits, wear it! Be sensitized to the experiential relevance of these possibilities and actualities—however relatively and ambiguously exhibited in individual instances!

The use of vividly evocative, emphatically communicative language is not necessarily a vice. But then neither is the capacity to say what one means and mean what one says. It is relatively easy for the linguistic alternatives "is/is not," "must/must not," "can/cannot" to begin to slip

out of responsible control especially when frequently coupled with such terms as "either/or," "all," "totally," "none," "always," "never," "only," "just," "simply," "nothing but," "evidently," etc. The logic of assertion is not necessarily ill-served by the art of qualification.

While there are many passages where Dr. Herzog has employed this "art" and employed it well, I must confess to the judgment that the chief lack which prevents this book from being a really great book on the whole is the failure to be systematically clear and consistent in the employment of (often intended but often unstated) qualifications. I say this with all the more regret because of my own conviction that the core theology at work here is "great" theology, often brilliantly and movingly presented. I strongly urge the reader to buy the book and live with it for a while.

I have indeed sharpened the "two identities" impression in order to sharpen some of the issues. But the grounds of that impression are in, and scattered throughout, the book itself, though (oddly) concentrated chiefly in roughly the first 156 pages. However, in fairness to Fred Herzog and for the benefit of those who may not in fact read the book I shall say, flatly, that the book does *not* give the over-all impression of two "equally competing" images or identities. The book on the whole makes it adequately clear that "the real Fred Herzog" is neither a left-wing radical in the sense of Feuerbach nor a left-wing radical in the sense of revolutionary Marxism.

On the latter point—while Herzog is committed to the enterprise of "political theology," he indicates in an important passage near the end of the book

some important qualifications and limitations upon the legitimate scope of this enterprise as he envisions it: "political theology is emerging as a new interpretive focus, a center around which a new theological understanding is gradually being developed. By interpretive focus we do not mean . . . that issues of a political nature would become dominant *in principle*. And we certainly do not mean by interpretive focus *the* hermeneutical norm that would determine the actual *content* of the developing theology. . . . The worst thing that could now happen would be that political theology were understood as invitation to developing a Christian ideology for this or that political task. . . . Ideology continues exploitation because it does not let us see the neighbor as he is." (260-1)

\* \* \* \* \*

The book raises—at least for me—some further problems or questions of internal interpretation, several of which I shall try to indicate briefly.

"The issue of grasping Jesus as the Christ on the primal level is not at all a problem of the modern world view, but of man's persistent corruption of his self" (142). "The issue is simple: will the shape of this selfhood compel us to change our own? . . . We shape the world according to how we view our self." (94) Is the disjunction between self-view as an issue and world-view as an issue so neat? Is the "shaping" relation simply a one-way street? One might wonder whether Herzog's view of the options of "private self" versus "corporate self" must not in fact presuppose, at least tacitly, some kind of phenomenological self-world "correlation."

Moreover, the meaning of these two opposed options may

need some further clarification. Is "corporate selfhood" a particular mode or quality of individual selfhood? Or is it a term for a society itself when characterized by certain qualities, such as "openness"? Jesus is spoken of as a corporate self par excellence. But "the church" can also be called "a corporate self" (14). Even if the term is intended to function both ways some further clarification of its meaning and status would be helpful.

And what about that arch-evil "the private self"? Is individual selfhood as such bad? Presumably this is not Herzog's intention (despite castigation of "the private 'I'"). One wonders whether what Herzog wishes to berate is not, after all, something which has been traditionally chastized under such terms as "inordinate self-love," "selfishness," "would-be autonomous pride," "egocentricity," "self-idolatry," etc., etc. But if so, one wonders why he does not avail himself of established vocabulary in at least an ancillary way and what is to be gained from exclusive focus upon so ambiguous a term as "private selfhood"?

Perhaps the answer is that in our contemporary cultural context the term "private" helps to focus issues in terms of opposition to "public." This may well be the key to Herzog's primary intention here. But if so, I must ask whether this antithesis does not represent an oversimplification which may turn out to be increasingly pernicious in the future.

From the standpoint of 19th-century Marxist analysis it may have been a useful oversimplification to see "private" as evil and "public" as good. "Privatism" doubtless continues in many ways to be an evil. But Herzog seems to have a strange blind spot at the point of being able to see what

has for some considerable time now been in process of becoming increasingly disturbing to many observers ("left" as well as "right"!): namely, the dangers and potential evils of intensifying cultural pressures toward multiform "public-ness."

Surely a great deal more needs to be said on these issues— if one is going to raise them as central—than that for contemporary American society "the acme of achievement is reached when man is most private" (92). When Herzog writes, "We are still utterly private selves" (86), I want to know more about what is "private" and who is this "we"? Much more. Otherwise I do not see how one can go very far very helpfully with an enterprise of "political theology."

A further complex of internal questions focuses—in this book like many another—around the issue of the knowability of the "historical Jesus." Herzog himself calls attention to the issue early in the book: "We must get our field of vision focused on the basic originating history of the Christian faith" (17). The issue would indeed seem to be focused by a book which proposes to take as its basic access to that "originating history" the Fourth Gospel. I at least do not find this issue much clarified by the explanation that this "choice of the Fourth Gospel as basis of our reflection is mainly due to the fact that it is the most reasoned out of all the Gospels" (17). Just so. And just that—one might think—sharpens the problem, rather than answering it.

Moreover, if one must "grasp Jesus' *inmost being*" (49) so that "the shape of this *selfhood*" may "compel us to change our own" (94); and if "the externally observable flesh alone does not liberate" (106), where are we left when we are

told (without explanation or further ado) that "we never can get at more of Jesus than this *Gestalt*, the shape of his *public activity*" (106-7)? (Some italics mine.)

There are also some questions as to the function ascribed to Jesus. Whereas some passages might seem to claim "too little" for him, others may claim "too much." Thus we read: "True acknowledgment of God is possible only through trust in the one who first acknowledged God's unconcealment fully. . . .

To be freed is always a question of being enabled to identify with the *marginales*, the people on the borders of society, through the power of the one who started it. . . . Those who try to help others to liberate themselves

apart from the free man do not show real concern." (34, 64, 146)

What are humanists, Jews or "even Christians" supposed to make of this? If it is to be claimed that Jesus first *started* compassionate identification with the needy and that *only through him* do "true acknowledgement of God" or even the showing of "real concern" become possible, where does this leave—just for example—the Hebrew prophets? Is this, after all, "universal unconcealment" or is it Marcion? Or can it somehow be both?

In my own judgment one of the strongest points of the book lies in its implications for the so-called "theodicy question": its concretely experiential stress upon empathetic identification with suffering, grounded in the conviction of God's own "presence where the pain is," as the hard but necessary path toward the perfecting of man toward what he is not yet—the *imago dei* as shown forth fully only in Jesus. But I find perplexing—doubly perplexing in view of Herzog's frequent jibes

against the evils of "metaphysics"—such a passage as the following: "It is enough to experience evil as a constant threat to life and to realize that it is not part of unconcealed reality. . . .

The personification of illusion does not belong to the good world. It has no origin, no created reality." (128) Whatever may be intended, this sounds more like Christian Science than like "the discovery of the presence of God when the pain is," which is indeed "impressed upon us by the biblical story" (259).

A cluster of issues running throughout the book may be focused in the question: "Where?" Where is God? Where is the Spirit? Where is liberation? Where is the church?

One point is made lucidly—and I would add in view of the contemporary cultural context, "courageously"—clear: Herzog is not hooked on the "secularity" kick. "Obviously we are secularized. But this does not justify our turning away from the Word within the church to secularity in order to take our cue from secularity. Secularity indeed needs to be dealt with. Not, however, in joining it, but in resisting it. . . . Jesus Christ had to begin with the presupposition of the presence of the Word in the church—against the faithlessness of those who were obligated to acknowledge this presence. In trust in the continuing presence of this Word, he fulfilled his work. Secularity as Christian secularity is simply unwillingness to acknowledge the presence of the Word in the covenant community and to live by it." (177-8)

Herzog acknowledges that "ultimately it is not in our power to say where the liberation church is" (202). "The liberation church is not a matter of being realized here and there in beautifully visible groups. As soon as we



begin to point to the holy few . . . we have surrendered our theological integrity. . . . All the while the church is there in all its weaknesses and limitations, an earthen vessel indeed. We are not called to dissociate ourselves from it, to form a better church, but to point within it to God's liberation." (222) This witness within the church is inseparable from "the posture we must not lose sight of in our effort of being the church: the witness to what goes on as God's work beyond the church and in spite of the church. This posture dare not be organized as a separate church." (222-3)

Yet such a passage as the following seems representative of a pervasive assumption of the book: "God is not found where we might expect him, in the temple, in the sanctuary, or in the pious conventicle, but where the pain is" (238). This assumption expresses perhaps both the chief strength and the chief weakness of the main substance of the book. It is surely true that "the discovery of the presence of God where the pain is, is impressed upon us by the biblical story" (259). Indeed if this is not impressed upon us by the biblical story, probably any other impressions become irrelevant. In an age in which, despite horrendous conditions and events, there seems to be a growing de-sensitization of sensibility to the tragic, Patripassianism needs, as perhaps never before, to be emphasized as central to the biblical understanding of God's relation to human life and destiny.

But are pain, suffering, and oppression the exclusive "privileges" (!) of those who in an obvious, empirical, observable, socio-economic-political sense are "the wretched," "the outcast," "the black," "the *marginales*," etc.? Is even the worst stereotyped example (a person, remember!) of the "privatized

WASP oppressor" immune from tragic suffering? Or is God in no way present in his pain?

If it is indeed true, as Herzog suggests in several places, that "possession" is the more profoundly sick, distorting negative source of "oppression"; that the "tragic" dimensions of the human plight are mysteriously connected with the more radical and universal plight of "sin," will God's presence to "the sinner" be any less important than God's presence to "the sufferer"? Is not our common condition, despite all difference, one of "both" suffering and sin?

And what entitles anyone to pronounce, in a general way and without qualification, that God "is not found" in "temple" or "sanctuary"? Never? In anyway? To anyone? Under any circumstance?

And, finally in this connection, is there not some considerable danger of distortion in such a relatively exclusive emphasis upon "negative" mediation of relation to God as to de-sensitize us to the possibility of God's presence in the "positive"?

I can only commend Herzog for opposing cheap, play-time versions of "theology of celebration" which seem to exhibit little sensitivity to suffering and tragedy, slight engagement to help the cries of horrendous need, and no acknowledgment of sin or of the priority of a transcendently victorious God. But I must say that, in my judgment, Herzog, perhaps partly in the effort to avoid shallow or even idolatrous notions of "cheap grace," has not succeeded—at least not steadily and on the whole—in appropriating another of Bonhoeffer's warnings: the danger of the hypnotizing effect of so focusing upon the conflicted boundary situations at the suffering edges of life as to risk loss of sensitivity to God at the "center" of life.



Herzog is, naturally, not unaware of the issue. "Obviously just as Bonhoeffer wanted us to talk about God at the center of life and not at the periphery, so we too must talk about God at the center of our political and social life and not just at the periphery" (236). Perhaps so we must. But, in the first place, this book does very little of that and, in the second place, it is surely a rather severe delimitation of "the center of life" to restrict this to the sphere of the "political and social."

Herzog's theology centers in God's empowerment of our becoming in interpersonal relations. Appropriately, he sees interpersonal becoming as itself focused in crises which put our developing freedom "to the test" in demand for decision. Again appropriately, he emphasizes the catalytic function of negativity, suffering, privation and evil as occasions for our possible resistance through which God may work toward our final liberation. Largely missing, however, seems to be the recognition that the "peirasmoi" or trials-of-temptation critical for our becoming toward the fulfillment of "corporate selfhood" may also be "oppositely" occasioned by situations—individual and communal—of exaltation, abundance and goodness. (The temptations following Jesus' ecstatic baptismal experience have different, but not necessarily less, significance for our own self-understanding and theology than do the temptations of Gethsemane and the cross.) The role of the "positive" as well as the role of the "negative" may function as crisis for personal becoming. In this respect also, too exclusive a preoccupation with the empirically "negative" may tend toward an imbalanced theology.

I shall mention one more issue for the possible attention of the

reader who gives *Liberation Theology* the attention it deserves by buying and studying it. Herzog makes a considerable point of rejecting the notion of God's "revelation" in favor of the notion of God's "unconcealment." As you work through the book you may want to look for the significance of this shift.

—Charles K. Robinson

*Moses, The Servant of Yahweh.*  
Dewey M. Beegle. Eerdmans.  
1972. 368 pp. \$7.95.

Our readers are probably aware of the two extreme positions on Moses: *one*, that he lived, did everything related of him in the Pentateuch, and finally wrote the entire five books of the Pentateuch, including the account of his own death at the end of Deuteronomy; *two*, that since some of the stories about Moses in the Pentateuch are obviously legendary, then all are legendary, and no such person ever lived at all. We can designate the first position as fundamentalist and the second as hypercritical.

Professor Beegle, of Wesley Theological Seminary, wishes to find a happy medium between these two extremes in such a way that religious faith will not be questioned while at the same time a modern scientific point of view is retained. In general, he reflects the attitudes of his former teacher, the late W. F. Albright of Johns Hopkins University; and like his mentor, he leans somewhat toward the conservative side.

Chapter 1 is a brief survey of Pentateuchal criticism. The author accepts much of it, including the documentary theory of J, E, D, and P, while at the same time lambasting Wellhausen and ex-

alting the value of archaeology after the usual fashion of the Albright school. The chapter ends with an affirmation of the historicity of Moses and the determination of the author to present him as objectively as possible in spite of manifold difficulties.

Chapter 2, "The Hebrews in Egypt," considers these "Hebrews" as a part of the larger group or series of groups called elsewhere Hapiru, Habiru, or Apiru. Some were Israelites, though not all (Exodus 12:38). Some Israelites remained in Palestine, joining later when the twelve-tribe confederation or amphictyony was formed. Those who came to Egypt entered about 1700 B.C., during the time of the Hyksos. Their descendants left shortly after 1300, during the reign of Ramses II. This again is in accord with the Albright school. Others would make the stay in Egypt shorter, with different times of entry and exit.

Chapter 3 gets down to the subject of the book, namely Moses. The story of the birth, the placing of the baby in a basket of bulrushes along the Nile, and the subsequent rescue of the child is first told in the traditional manner, then its difficulties are faced. Names of the parents, the sister, and the princess are lacking. Exodus 2:1-2 implies that Moses was the first child, yet in verse 4 he has an older sister. In Exodus 7:7 Aaron is three years older than Moses. More significant perhaps is the fact that a similar story about Sargon I of Agade, who reigned in Mesopotamia a thousand years before Moses, was widely known in the ancient Near East. Beegle leaves it to the reader to take a stand. It may be said that the story is legendary, like that of Sargon, or that the parents of Moses knew the Sargon story and decided to try the same method in an attempt to save their own child.

With respect to the name Moses (Mosheh in Hebrew) Beegle is more positively critical in questioning the popular etymology based on the Hebrew verb *mashah*, "to draw out," and favoring the idea that Mosheh is an Egyptian theophorous name like Thutmose, with the name of the Egyptian deity (Thut = Thoth) suppressed. The story of the murder of the Egyptian and consequent flight to Midian is too realistic to be doubted. The sojourn in Midian is compared to the foreign exile of Sinuhe, an Egyptian court attendant, who lived about 600 years before Moses, though the parallel is not very exact. No clear-cut result emerges from the rather lengthy discussion of the contradictions between the J and E traditions of the burning-bush incident.

Chapter 4 has to do with the call and commission of Moses, the origin and meaning of the name Yahweh, and the return of Moses to Egypt to undertake leadership in the deliverance of his people. Like most of the later prophets, Moses was reluctant to serve in so difficult an undertaking. Upon yielding, he asked the name by which the Deity should be presented to the people and was told "Yahweh," meaning "He who creates," according to Beegle. Exodus 6:3 says that this name was thus revealed to an Israelite for the first time. Beegle agrees, in spite of the fact that the very same name occurs many times in the so-called J document beginning as far back as Genesis 4:26. The claim is that the J tradition retrojected the name into the earlier narratives (Beegle says "projected the name back"! ). Here our author goes out on a limb and few will agree with him. It might have been better to withhold judgment, as was done with the circumcision scene in Exodus 4:24-26: "one of the most difficult passages in the whole Bible."

Chapter 5 deals mostly with the plagues. The preliminary snake-handling tricks performed by both Aaron and the court magicians furnish authentic local color for ancient Egypt, where the serpent was a sacred animal; but the story as it stands "is rather fanciful, and it is difficult . . . to know what actually did happen," says Beegle, with good reason. The first nine plagues are discussed in this chapter and all of them are rationalized on the basis of the annual flooding of the Nile and its aftermath. Beegle says: "The stories came into being because the plagues actually occurred." Some good evidence is presented, but the reviewer feels that the rationalization has been overdone in this instance and that ancient writers should be allowed to tell their miracle stories in their own way without trying in every case to make them conform to modern ideas of cause and effect.

Chapter 6 includes the tenth plague, the smiting of the first-born; Beegle is not quite so sure about this: "Perhaps some infection related to the anthrax of the previous plagues was responsible." Most of the chapter is taken up with the preparations for departure. Beegle is inclined to accept the original connection of the festival of unleavened bread with passover, against Noth and de Vaux, who cogently argue that unleavened bread is an agricultural festival that could have been acquired only after the entrance into Canaan. Having made this concession to tradition, our author turns critic again. He estimates that the figure of Exodus 12:37 ("600,000 men on foot") would amount to a total of approximately two million persons. Since taking such a number through the desert would be a logistical impossibility, Beegle proposes the modest number of

about 16,000, remarking with good humor and good sense that "the power of Yahweh is not enhanced by contending for an impossibility."

Only a few points in the second half of the book can be mentioned. The fugitives crossed the Reed Sea, not the Red Sea, as some translations have it. This was "a fresh-water swamp," somewhere along the route of the present-day Suez Canal. Thus it is easy to explain how the group on foot got through, but the Egyptian chariotry and cavalry did not. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were one and the same thing: "a brazier of burning wood carried on a long pole." This device was used later by the Persians and the Arabs. By day the cloud of smoke would be more visible and by night the flame would come into view.

After crossing the Reed Sea, the fugitives turned southward and headed toward the traditional Mt. Sinai or Horeb, called today Jebel Musa ("Mountain of Moses"). Objections to the traditional site on the grounds that Exodus 19:18 describes a volcano are waved aside. Admittedly, there are no volcanic mountains in the Sinaitic peninsula, but "a terrific thunderstorm with lightning streaking up the top of the mountain would easily account for the description in the J tradition." Manna is a natural product from a variety of plants; but it is seasonal in its occurrence, hence the claim that it was supplied continually and for a long period of time (Joshua 5:12) is traditional and not historical. With regard to the question of the origin of the god Yahweh, whose name was revealed to Moses from the burning bush, Beegle inclines to the Kenite hypothesis as set forth by H. H. Rowley, but holds back from complete acceptance of this theory that Yahweh was originally

the god of the Kenite clan, to which Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, belonged.

The discussion of the law-giving and covenantal experiences at Mt. Sinai takes up the two longest chapters in the book. Beegle is well aware of the complex and difficult nature of the textual and theological problems involved. He realizes that the four documentary strands, J, E, D, and P are all present in a chaotic mixture. He also knows of the probable influence of the Hittite suzerainty treaties on the literary form of at least some of this documentary material. Perhaps we can simplify this long discussion by saying that Beegle believes that the law which Moses gave was a primitive form of the Ten Commandments and that a covenantal experience which took place in connection with the lawgiving left an indelible impression on the Israelites for all future generations. On the theological side, Beegle uses the term "practical monotheism" in conformity with the Albright school; the reviewer prefers the term "monolatry" for loyalty to one god (Yahweh in this case) while not denying the existence of other gods. Genuine monotheism (affirming that there is only one God) was surely a later development.

In conclusion, a few more points made by the author may be added. The drastic elimination of the opponents of Moses by earthquake and by fire (Numbers 16) represents two different traditions, here combined. They are not to be taken literally. The number forty in the Biblical tradition is often used as "an approximation for one generation." Hence the actual time consumed in the trek from Egypt to Canaan was probably something like twenty-five years rather than forty. Beegle rejects theories

of two exoduses such as those of Rowley and M. Newman, but is willing to consider more than one attack on the land of Canaan. In this respect, for a change, he finds himself more in agreement with M. Noth, whom he often criticizes severely for being too skeptical. With regard to the story of the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:4-9, Beegle accepts the story but rules out bronze as a possible material. The "bronze" came in when this story was confused with II Kings 18:4; "bronze" was added to the story in Numbers and "Moses" was added in Kings.

This book is not easy to read and review because the author has gone into such great detail. Yet this very thoroughness gives the work a special value that few books can claim. Another value of the book is that the reader is provoked to disagree with some of the author's decisions on historicity and hence determines to make his own decisions. The reviewer, being a little more to the left, feels that the author historicizes and rationalizes a little too easily, yet at the same time admiration must be expressed for what has been accomplished.

On the plus side technically may be mentioned the fine color photograph of the Sinaitic peninsula and environs inside the front cover. This photograph was made from the Gemini 11 spacecraft. Inside the back cover is a very useful map. The General Index and the Index of Biblical Passages are also to be commended. On the minus side is inadequate documentation. Since there is no bibliography at the end, all documentation must appear in footnotes, of which there are some but not enough for proper identification of all the references in the text.

—W. F. Stinespring







