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## Book Review. - Literatur

W. A. Maier

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

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**Book Review — Literatur**


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**Thirty Psalmists.** By Fleming James. G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 261 pages, 5½×8½. Price, \$2.75.

When Hermann Gunkel died a few years ago, his *Einleitung in die Psalmen* was left unfinished and was later completed by his friend Joachim Begrich. An essential feature of this Introduction, however, had been definitely established by Gunkel many years before his death. We refer to his division of the Psalter into classes, or types (*Gattungen*). Gunkel maintained that the Psalms were written to be sung ritualistically in connection with various acts of worship. He thus divides the Psalter into these groups, which we offer in their original terminology: 1. *Die Hymnen*; 2. *Lieder von Jahwes Thronbesteigung*; 3. *Die Klagelieder des Volkes*; 4. *Koenigpsalmen*; 5. *Die Klagelieder des einzelnen*; 6. *Dank-sagung des einzelnen*; 7. *Kleinere Gattungen*; 8. *Prophetische Psalmen*; 9. *Weisheitspoesie*. The individual psalms in the collection of 150 are then put into the pigeonholes of these categories, and each psalm is divided according to a formula that emphasizes introduction, body, and conclusion.

All this sounds abstract enough, for every question of classification is in itself an abstract conception; yet in the present volume the author, who admits that he has "made no independent research into the field" and "will content himself with passing on what Gunkel has to say," endeavors to use this system to study the personalities of the authors of individual psalms. Hence he has selected thirty psalmists, classified them according to Gunkel's *Gattungen*, and has discussed deductively their personalities.

The first psalm treated in this way is Ps. 8, which is classified as one of the "hymns in general." Now, the Massoretic Text ascribes this psalm to David, but Professor James, who teaches the Literature and Interpretation of the Old Testament at Berkeley Divinity School in conjunction with liberal interpreters of the Scriptures, has set this aside. The author is not David, but some uncommon man, moved by a moonlit sky. Because he uses the plural, the author of Ps. 8 "feels himself one with his brethren." Because he uses the second person in speaking to God rather than the third person in speaking of God, he is an unusual psalmist. He thinks for himself, this writer, who speaks of strength from the mouth of little children. Perhaps, Professor James concludes, the psalmist may be thinking of his own sleeping son whom he passed on his way out into the moonlight. The contemplation of the heavens awakens in him a feeling of man's insignificance; yet when he looks from sky to earth, he beholds man's unique power. Thus he is a humanist, since to him man is a little short of God. On the other hand, he is not a humanist, since he does not understand the significance of man's value. For these cumulative reasons the anonymous author of Ps. 8 is "a man of profound insight and great freshness of thought." Only one passing parenthetical clause refers to the quotation of the Eighth Psalm in Heb.

2:8, 9. Consequently the direct fulfilment of this psalm in Christ, the Savior, is not only side-tracked, but deliberately contradicted.

In twenty-nine other instances and in much the same higher-critical procedure the writer discusses other "authors" of the psalms and repeatedly the procedure is identical: the Davidic authorship is denied, the Messianic interpretation repudiated.

A question which forces itself upon the reader immediately is this: What has Gunkel's theory to do with these personality sketches? As far as we have been able to ascertain, the writer simply accepts Gunkel's classification for the grouping of the psalms which he discusses. It is only occasionally that reference is made to the deeper issues involved in Gunkel's theses.

The extent to which negative criticism has been directed against the Messianic interpretation is clearly illustrated in the discussion of Ps. 16, our Savior's great resurrection psalm. The closing verses of this psalm are twice quoted in the New Testament and consciously, deliberately, referred to Christ. Yet Professor James coolly asserts: "The Messianic part of this interpretation is accepted by no Protestant scholar of the present era." This attitude becomes the more significant when we realize that the material in this book was originally offered as the Bohlem Lectures for 1936 and that the author was chosen for this lectureship by the rector, the churchwarden, and the vestrymen of the (Episcopal) Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia. W. A. MAIER

**A Conservative Introduction to the New Testament.** By Samuel A. Cartledge, A. M., B. D., Ph. D., Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 198 pages, 5x7½. Price, \$1.50.

This book is what the title indicates, a conservative treatment of the isagogical material having to do with the New Testament. In the first place, a general introduction is submitted in which these topics are discussed: Principles of Interpretation; The Transmission of the Greek Text; The Canon of the New Testament; The Language of the New Testament; Pagan Religions in the Roman Empire. In the second part, which has the caption "Special Introduction," the individual books are studied, beginning with the synoptic gospels. There is inserted a valuable chapter on "The Life of Christ." The book is a really worth-while production, and we should like to recommend it to our pastors. In a day when continually books on Introduction are appearing that deny the divine character of our Bible, it is a matter for gratitude to see an isagogical work issued which does not hesitate to champion the inspiration of the Scriptures and the deity of Christ. It has its weaknesses, the chief one being that the author does not insist on acceptance of the infallibility of the Scriptures. He says (p. 191): "Many Conservatives believe in verbal inerrancy. They may be entirely correct, though many Conservatives do not believe in it. All Conservatives should realize that a belief in verbal inerrancy is not essential to a high view of inspiration." How he can hold that belief in verbal inspiration does not imply belief in the inerrancy of the Scriptures (cf. p. 193) is beyond us. Certainly it

means that the term is employed by him differently from the way in which it has been used in the past. While the introduction, both in its general section and in its treatment of the various books, is not so extensive and detailed as the works of Zahn and Moffatt, it is complete enough for ordinary purposes, and every pastor and Bible teacher will find that most of the questions which arise in his mind with respect to the origin of the books of the New Testament are here touched on. Naturally there are a number of historical details where one is inclined to disagree with the author, but that does not detract from the value of the work. The brief chronological table given in Appendix 1 has been worked out with great care and in its chief features has this reviewer's approval.

W. ARNDT

**Christian Workers' Commentary.** By James M. Gray, D.D. 447 pages, 6x8½. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. Price, \$3.00.

This is a commentary on the whole Bible. The author, the well-known dean of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, is a staunch defender of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, of Christ's deity, and of His vicarious atonement. Yet this commentary to a great extent nullifies his many testimonies to these fundamental doctrines of Christianity by the frequent instances of typical interpretations where not God but man's fancy speaks and which tend to undermine the absolute authority of, and one's veneration for, God's Word. He makes some far-going concessions to modern science. On Gen. 1:1 he writes: "Should science ultimately determine on millions of years as the period of the creation, there is nothing in this verse of the Bible it would contradict." (P.11.) Did not God say that He created the world in six days? Why not accept His Word?

But the gravest charge to be raised against this commentary is the millennialistic character of its interpretation which pervades the book to such an extent that it could very properly be called a dispensationalist workers' commentary. Already in the historical books the author finds opportunities to inject the millennialistic interpretation. In his comments on Gen. 3:14, 15 the author compares with this passage Is. 65:25 "and notices that even in the millennium, when the curse is removed from all other cattle, it will still remain on the serpent." (P.15.) In connection with Abraham's call, Gen. 12:1-9, we read: "So closely is Jehovah's purpose of redemption associated with the land as well as the people of Israel that, when they are separated from it, as we shall see, they are separated from Him, and the lapse of time in their history is not considered until they are returned to their land again. In a word, they can never dwell elsewhere and be His people or fulfil their calling." (Pp.23,24.) After the story of Joseph we read: "Typical and dispensational aspects of Joseph's history." And under Point 6 we are told: "Now comes the time of famine, which speaks of the period at the end of this age, a literal seven years as indicated by Dan. 9, when the Church shall have been translated to meet her Lord in the air and Israel will be preparing through trial to recognize and receive her rejected Lord." (P.40.) Deut. 28-30 speaks chiefly of the trials coming upon Israel in the days preceding the millennium and its restoration to the land of

Israel, its conversion and prosperity during the millennium. Throughout the historical books similar references to the millennium are forced upon the text. Ps. 2:9, 10, 24 is interpreted in the chiliastic sense, and on page 222 we read the note that beginning with Ps. 25 "the more difficult psalms, some of the more popular and those distinctively Messianic and millennialistic, may be treated more at length, but others must be passed over." He finds millennialistic prophecies or references in Pss. 40, 45-47, 72, 93-100, 102, 147-150. And in the "Introduction to the Prophetic Scriptures" we read:

"Written prophecy therefore had a twofold mission, one for the immediate present and the other for the remote future. The written messages revolve around three points: (1) the temporal and spiritual blessings which God would give Israel and Judah if faithful; (2) the judgments that would fall upon them if unfaithful; (3) the renewed grace to them when they should become penitent.

"There is variety in the detail with which the prophets write, but their points of agreement are as follows: (1) A day of retribution is coming on Judah and Israel, the end of which will bring repentance and prepare the way for the Messianic kingdom. While these judgments will affect Israel and Judah chiefly, yet they will fall also on the Gentile nations of the whole earth. (2) The tribes of Israel and Judah will be regathered to their own land, and a remnant purified by discipline will form the nucleus of the restored nation, where God will again dwell in temporal and spiritual blessing. (3) This restored nation will be the germ of the Messianic kingdom extending over the whole earth.

"As His own chosen nation, through whom He will reveal Himself to the nations the Jews hold through all time an official position and have a sacred character, and in the day of their restoration and of the judgment of the nations the great question will be, How far have the other nations regarded them as His people and so treated them?" (P. 239.)

**Question:** Does not Christ say that the great question on that Day will be, Have you accepted Me as your Savior? Lack of space forbids our quoting even a few of the references to dispensationalism which the author discovers in the New Testament. We ask our readers to warn against this commentary. It is a dangerous book. **TH. LAETSCH**

**A Brief Life of St. Paul.** With a chart and six maps. By Benjamin L. Olmstead, Litt. D., editor of *Arnold's Practical Commentary*. Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Ind. 80 pages, 4¼×6¼. Price, 35 cts.

This is an excellent little manual on the life of the greatest of the apostles. Since the print is small, there is more contained in this booklet than the mere mention of the number of pages would lead one to assume. The presentation is admirably compact, avoiding what is superfluous, but including, generally speaking, what is essential and illuminating. The book is "intended as a reference and study book for Sunday-school teachers and for any who are interested in the life of Paul, but especially as a text for service-training courses." Besides the characteristics mentioned, the careful division of the material into chapters with proper captions and the questions which are appended at the end of every larger section tend to make the work helpful and valuable. From the point of view of scholarship the production is quite satisfactory. Evidently the author engaged in extensive studies before he began to write. Now and then this reviewer did not agree with the author's chronology

or the sequence which he assigned to the Pauline epistles. One notes with joy that the doctrine of justification by faith is mentioned several times. The author does not say whether to him the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. As far as we can see, he does not question the correctness of any statement of Scripture. The work evidently is conceived as a historical and not as a doctrinal study.

W. ARNDT

**Die Offenbarung Gottes.** Von D. Friedrich Büchsel, Professor der Theologie in Kofnod. Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 1938. 131 Seiten 6x9. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 3.60; gebunden: RM. 5.

D. Büchsel will nichts davon wissen, daß die christliche Gotteserkenntnis und die Theologie ausschließlich und allein aus dem Wort der Heiligen Schrift fließt. Er erklärt: „Die Offenbarung Gottes auf sein Wort zu beschränken, ist falsch und ergibt leicht eine dogmatische Verkürzung des Offenbarungsgedankens, die das Wort Gottes schließlich in eine Lehre verwandelt und die Autorität des Wortes Gottes nicht ausreichend begründen kann.“ (S. 3.) „Dieser Vorgang der Schriftwerdung des Wortes Gottes ist an sich weder zu bedauern noch zu beurteilen, aber die Gefahren, die er zur Folge hatte, sind allbekannt.“ (S. 67. 62.) Dieser Gefahr der dogmatischen Verkürzung, der Festsetzung einer festen, gewissen Lehre, auf der man bestehen muß, kann einigermaßen durch Abweisung der Verbalinspiration gewehrt werden. D. Büchsel bedauert es, daß „die Lehre“ von der Verbalinspiration, das heißt, die Behauptung „Die Schrift stammt nicht nur ihrem Gehalt, sondern auch, und gerade, ihrem Wortlaute nach aus dem Geiste Gottes“ aufgegeben ist. „Rein, die Inspiration ist Entfaltung der menschlichen Selbsttätigkeit, so daß sie, an Gott hingegeben, zur Leistungsfähigkeit in seinem Dienste gelangt. Die Apostel und ihre Schüler haben auch als Zeugen der Offenbarung Gottes nicht einfach aufgehört, feilsame Menschen zu sein. Irrtümer sind bei ihnen nicht einfach ausgeschlossen. Sie werden von uns zurechtgestellt. Der Gedanke der Inspiration von Worten muß aufgegeben werden. Inspiriert sind die Personen.“ (S. 112 ff.) Und diese vom Heiligen Geist inspirierten Personen müssen es sich gefallen lassen, daß Personen, die nicht vom Heiligen Geist inspiriert sind, an ihnen Kritik üben. „Der historisch Geschulte wird die Überlieferung der Gemeinde nicht ohne Kritik lesen. Er wird in den Evangelien Unstimmigkeiten, unzuverlässige Berichte, legendäre Stücke und Ähnliches mehr feststellen. Er wird die Grenzen dessen, was wir wirklich beziehungsweise sicher über ihn wissen, herausarbeiten.“ (S. 77.) Und was hat nun der Kofnoder Professor aus dem Bericht der „inspirierten Personen“ betreffs des Werkes und der Person Jesu herausgearbeitet? Über die stellvertretende Genugtuung hat er nichts gefunden. Was er gefunden hat, ist dieses: „Jesus mußte zur Überwindung der hierin [daß fanatische Machthaber den Boten Gottes verfolgten bis zur Tötung unter Qualen] erscheinenden Menschheitsünde die Tiefe des Gottesgehorsams vorleben und vorleiden und so sein heiliges, in der vollen Gotteskindschaft stehendes Selbst restlos in den Dienst Gottes und der Menschheit stellen, das heißt, als ‚Opferlamm für die vielen‘ an Gott hingeben.“ (S. 106.) Über die Person Jesu wird unter anderm dies gesagt: „Das Wichtigste ist, daß das Verhältnis des Sohnes zum Vater durchaus persönlich ist, so daß die Vorstellung von einer beiden gemeinsamen göttlichen Natur oder eben solchen Eigenschaften nur Verwirrung anrichtet.“ (S. 103.)

Lh. Engelder

**Lectures on the Religious Thought of Soeren Kierkegaard.** By Eduard Geismar, professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen. Introduction by David Swenson, professor of philosophy at the University of Minnesota. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. 49 and 97 pages, 8½×5½. Price, \$2.00.

There are many points of similarity between the Barthian "theology of crisis" and Kierkegaard's "dialectic theology." As the Barthian school is attacking the subjectivism of liberal theology and the divine-immanence theory of Modernism by emphasizing the absolute difference between God and man, so Kierkegaard, a century earlier, attacked the Hegelian principle of "thesis, antithesis, synthesis," which seemingly had stifled the spiritual life of the Danish Church and which in Kierkegaard's opinion had been advocated by Bishops Mynster and Martensen. The phenomenal rise of Barthianism has awakened a wide-spread interest in the philosophy and theology of Kierkegaard, who during his short life (1813—1855) had created so much furor in Denmark and from whom Barth and his followers have received much of their inspiration. While the German theological world has access to a large number of studies on Kierkegaard, notably those of Walter Ruttenbeck and Emil Hirsch, relatively little material is available in English. Dr. Swenson has rendered the American theological world a valuable service in publishing Dr. Geismar's five lectures on Kierkegaard, delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1936, and by a lengthy preface on Kierkegaard's "unique power in bringing home a moral challenge" has made the present study a fine introductory volume to Kierkegaard's religio-philosophical thinking. — Of course, the reading is not easy, which is due largely to the brevity and sketchiness unavoidable in a series of lectures on such a difficult subject. But Dr. Geismar has succeeded well in giving the reader an insight into the pessimistic, desperately lonely, and melancholy mind of Kierkegaard, which seems to border on a manic-depressive psychosis. By tracing the life of Denmark's great philosopher (especially the "curse" resting upon his father and the unfortunate and unwarranted love affair with Regine Olsen), Dr. Geismar introduces the reader to Kierkegaard's Socratean method and especially to his concept of ethics, which may be denominated "existential individualism." This is typical of the lonely man who believes that the "moment of crisis" must be faced alone and that one dare not be influenced in his self-analysis by the relative *mores* adopted by society. Dr. Geismar clearly points out that Kierkegaard emphasized the qualitative and absolute difference between God and man and that man's way to God and to Christianity goes through a crucial decision, through humiliation and suffering. The last two chapters deal with Kierkegaard's concept of Christianity and with his bitter attack upon the Danish State Church. F. E. MAYER

**Die Christusbotschaft.** Predigten von Adolf Köberle, Professor und Doktor der Theologie. Dörffling & Franke, Leipzig. 150 Seiten. Preis, kartoniert: M. 4.50.

Was uns besonders beim Lesen dieser Predigten auffiel, ist dies, daß die Sehne von der *satisfactio vicaria* nicht klar zum Ausdruck kommt. Allerdings

sagt der Verfasser an der einen oder andern Stelle, daß Christus der Welt Sünde getragen hat, S. 8; doch meistens redet er nicht so klar. So sagt er z. B. in seiner Karfreitagspredigt: „Um die Last der Weltschuld zu bezahlen, um die Mächtherrschaft der Finsternis zu brechen, dazu war mehr not, dazu bedurfte es einer besseren Bezahlung als Silber und Gold. Dazu hat sich Christus selbst einsehen müssen mit der Hingabe seines Leibes und Blutes. Wie ein unschuldigcs Lamm, frei von Flecken und Sünden, ist er diesen Todesweg still, geduldig und gehorsam gegangen und hat durch die unsagbare Reinheit seines Opfers uns herausgerissen aus der Schuld und Knechtschaft der Sünde.“ (S. 137.) Man fragt sich, ob der Verfasser mit den Worten, „durch die unsagbare Reinheit seines Opfers“ die stellvertretende Genugtuung zum Ausdruck bringen will oder nicht. Ein anderes Beispiel: „Besteht aber nach der Überzeugung der Bibel das Wesen der Sünde in der ichsüchtigen Absonderung vom Nächsten, dann kann das Wesen der Erlösung überhaupt in gar nichts anderem bestehen, als daß Gott diese Zertrennung überwindet und uns wieder zusammenbringt zu einer Bruderschaft, zu einer Gemeinschaft der Heiligen und Gläubigen, zu einem Gottesvolk, zu einem Christusvolk. Dazu ist Jesus auf Erden gekommen, dazu hat er sein Leben aufgeopfert, daß wir eine große Gemeinde der Verheiligten würden, die mit Gott und untereinander wieder Frieden haben.“ (S. 96.) Oder: „Gott hat in Jesus Christus die Schuld der Menschheit nicht nur bis zum Äußersten aufgedeckt und gerichtet. Gott hat uns in Jesus Christus, in seiner Geburt, in seinem Sterben und Auferstehen, ein überwältigendes, geschichtlich besiegeltes Zeugnis und Unterpfand seiner grenzenlos erbarrenden Liebe geschenkt. Diese Liebe ist so groß, daß es keine Schuld der Welt gibt, die in diesem Meer nicht könnte versenkt werden.“ (S. 28. 29.) Gewiß findet man sonst in den Predigten manche Schriftwahrheiten schön dargelegt, doch darf man das nicht unbetont lassen noch sich darüber unklar ausdrücken, was im Zentrum der christlichen Lehre steht, nämlich die stellvertretende Genugtuung Christi.

J. D. C. Friß

**A Practical Guide in Teaching the Tool Subjects of the Elementary Grades.** By Carl F. Vogel. R. G. Adams and Co., Columbus, O. 1937. 407 pages, 6×9½. Price, \$2.50.

**Education as Guidance.** By John M. Brewer. The Macmillan Company. 1937. 668 pages, 5×8. Price, \$2.75.

We are bringing these two books to the attention of our readers, particularly to those pastors who themselves teach school or are keeping in touch with the latest developments in the field of pedagogy, because these two books contain information of an unusually practical kind. The author of the first book is professor of education in Capital University at Columbus. He presents his material in three parts, or divisions: Analysis and Organization of the Subject-matter; Analysis and Organization of the Teaching-learning Process; Illustrative Lesson Plans. The second part of the book alone is worth the price of the entire volume. Even the teacher of religion will find a wealth of suggestions here, especially with regard to lesson plans and the unit system of teaching. The reviewer hopes that many pastors will purchase this book, especially since its price, in view of the mass of material offered, is very low.—The last remark applies also to the second book, by an associate professor of education in Harvard University. He presents a viewpoint which may



seem very unusual to many who have taught for many years, and he offers his discussion in a very challenging way. One may sometimes be inclined to disagree with certain points made, and our own parish-schools and confirmation classes will naturally be able to do very much more than the author suggests in his chapter on "Religious Guidance"; but the point is that the reader is constantly stimulated to think about definite teaching situations. We have marked paragraphs and individual sentences in many parts of the book and intend to profit from their application to particular situations. The suggestions on "Teaching How to Study" and "Criteria for Student Activities" are, in our opinion, especially rich in practical points. The book may well find its place into the libraries of pastors who desire to make every effort in teaching count toward a definite objective.

P. E. KREZMANN

**Old Testament History.** By Rev. Arthur W. Klinck, Ph. D. 110 pages, 5×7½. Price, 25 cts. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

**Instructors Guide for Old Testament History.** By W. O. Kraeft. Loose-leaf. 52 pages, 8½×11. Price, \$1.00.

Our Publishing House should be congratulated for having brought out these two new means for the better instruction of our Sunday-school teachers. Dr. Klinck's book of instruction is similar in size, arrangement, and disposition of material to Dr. Arndt's fine manual of instruction in the Christian Fundamentals, which was reviewed some time ago in these columns; and Professor Kraeft has followed the same sound principles of efficient teaching in arranging his instructors guide for this new *Old Testament History* as in his previous guides. All we can say for these new publications is that they ought to be examined by our pastors and teachers with a view to introducing them in their Sunday-school teachers' training classes. Sound in doctrine, clear and scholarly in their presentation, and modern in pedagogical technique, they fully satisfy the present need for such helps. May God's blessings rest upon them for much fruit to His glory!

J. THEODORE MUELLER

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