Inevitably a book of this nature cannot escape criticism. The present reviewer would like to register concern in three areas.

1. The work appears to be clearly biased in favor of the tradition. This bias emerges at the outset when Jeremias restricts redactional elements to those that exhibit a specifically Lukan use of language. Surely Luke's own use of language is influenced by the tradition: We need to reckon with the possibility of Lukan ideas expressed in traditional language, especially, in view of the frequently repeated judgment that Luke was capable of a great flexibility of style and adapted his style to suit the different phases of his account. A bias in favor of the tradition is also evident in particular arguments. To give an example, on pp. 17 -18 Jeremias maintains that the reference to Judea in 1:5 is traditional. The information adduced shows that (1) where the broader meaning of Judea is used inaccurately—historically anachronistically—we are dealing with Lukan redaction; and (2) where the narrower sense is used correctly, Luke is reproducing the tradition. Neither of these observations supports an attribution to tradition of the use in 1:5 of Judea in the broader sense and correctly. Indeed, apart from other considerations it would be more reasonable to regard Luke as responsible for all the uses of Judea in the broader sense, including that in 1:5.

2. The work drives an unfortunate wedge between tradition and redaction. This suggests a return to an earlier understanding of redaction criticism that maintained that an evangelist was only to be heard in the material that was exclusively his own production. Such an approach ignores Luke's declared intention (1:1-4) of being a servant of the tradition and runs the danger of leaving us, as can be the case with the use of the criterion of dissimilarity, with only the eccentricities of our figure (and even these not properly understood, since loosed from the controls of the wider tradition).

3. The methodological tidiness of Jeremias' approach may be more attractive than realistic. The nonuse of literary-critical hypotheses provides an appearance of objectivity, but it may also be considered as a failure to take into account an important part of the evidence for identifying tradition and redaction in Luke. Similarly, Jeremias' separation between Luke's thought and language and the restriction of his concern to the latter may deprive him of an important tool for identifying Lukan redaction. A certain circularity of procedure, while it is not methodologically tidy, may provide for the most balanced and comprehensive assessment of the evidence. Given the parameters set for the study it is not surprising that Jeremias concludes that the changes that Luke introduces are essentially stylistic.

Despite these limitations, Jeremias' study provides us with an extremely useful reference tool for all who find themselves involved with questions of Lukan language and redaction.

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More than ten years ago Martyn wrote a little book called History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel. The book enjoyed wide influence among Johannine scholars and was recently published in a revised edition. In that book Martyn argued that small units of material can be identified as referring to the historical Jesus (at the einmalig level) but that most of it uses the story of Jesus to describe the conflict between Church and synagogue in some major city of the empire toward the end of the first century. Others of course had been saying this in general terms for years, but Martyn sought to establish the point on a literary basis, taking as his starting point the miracle of John 9.

This present book brings together three essays by the same author, all of them published elsewhere. Only the second essay has been substantially rewritten. The first essay argues that the fourth evangelist used a source with an Elijah Christology but that the evangelist changed the source to provide a Christology of eternal preexistence. He is therefore respon-
sible “for the disappearance from subsequent Christian thought of the identification of Jesus as the eschatological Elijah” (p. 53). In the second chapter Martyn attempts, on the basis of studying several chapters of the Pseudo-Clementines (a translation of which is found in the appendix), to reconstruct something of the history of the persecution in the Johannine community and to delineate the accompanying traditions. In the final essay Martyn outlines what he takes to be some of the main turning points in the history of the Johannine community.

Martyn writes with rare grace and clarity. His work is always provocative. Yet it must be said with regret that Martyn is a gifted scholar whose speculative hypotheses reveal more about his fertile imagination than about the texts on which he comments. He is able, for instance, to assign with remarkable confidence this snippet or that to the early period, middle period or late period of the Johannine community’s history as he reconstructs it and to build new speculations on the shoulders of his earlier speculations. Detailed challenge is not possible here, but it is remarkable that no Christian has ever read John’s gospel this way before. Perhaps the Holy Scriptures are an esoteric group of secret writings after all, badly in need of a twentieth-century key even to begin to understand them.

D.A.C.


Vanderlip has been writing in the area of Johannine studies for some years. Now he has written a brief commentary on the gospel of John. In ten graceful chapters he surveys the fourth gospel paragraph by paragraph, delineating the major themes with an eye open to modern application. Pitched at the level of layman or pastor, this little book deserves wide circulation.

No doubt the brevity of this commentary disqualifies the book when it comes to a close study of a host of historical and theological questions. Vanderlip tends to weave his way with literary agility around such questions, focusing exclusively on the major themes. But that is not necessarily a fault. If he does not comment with precision on many interesting trees, he does give us a very useful outline of the forest.

D.A.C.


Here is another gem from the pen of Coleman, who offers 14 meditations on the “songs” of the book of Revelation. With each one he combines simple but telling exposition, thoughtful illustration and analogy, frequent allusion to the Church’s hymns, and a warm heart. This is devotional literature at its best. The book deserves to become a classic and will certainly refresh many a saint. Songs of Heaven will restore the joy of the Lord to you and tune your heart and mind to sing with the choirs of the King.

D.A.C.