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EDITORIAL

PROGRESS THROUGH PLANNING

It is a difficult and dangerous thing to drive an automobile while studying the road map. It is even more hazardous to drive while attempting to chart the map. What is considered as a dangerous practice in motoring appears to be quite acceptable in other areas of life. Individuals and churches often find themselves travelling, not knowing where they are going nor by what route they expect to arrive. They have no clear goal no chart or compass to guide them. Evidently there has been no definite advanced planning. The result is loss of initiative, discouragement, inefficiency and lack of measurable progress.

We are moving ahead fast. Calendar-wise we keep up with the rest of the world and celebrate Christmas and New Year when they do. However, progress is not measured by passage of time only. We do not record our advance in accomplishments by adding years. We cannot successfully complete without shifting our immediate goals and changing our methods. The farmer who ploughs with his sulky drawn by a team of horses may plough as many acres in the same period of time as he did twenty years ago, but his net profit resulting from his operation will be smaller. Financially he will lag behind those who have changed their farming methods and have studied market prices and consumer demands. The same principle applies in education, evangelism, missions and church work in general.

Must we as a Conference be content to make only minor adjustments to new circumstances as they are forced upon us, or can we gain sufficient foresight by reflecting on past experience and observing present trends to enable us to plan for more purposeful action. Can we develop a five-year, or ten-year plan in such areas as education, publication, missions and church expansion? By a plan I mean a proposed course of action, based on a relatively accurate interpretation of our needs and assessment of potential, leading to a pre-determined goal that lies within the range of possibility.

Past experience reminds us of a sad neglect of long-range planning. We are losing a race for capitalizing on opportunities. Many opportunities that challenge us today find us ill-prepared to accept them. The man we look for when opportunity calls is not easily found, and when we find him he is not exactly prepared for the task.

Many committee members remember so well how long and how diligently we looked for the qualified man to fill a responsible position. We have looked for editors, writers, managers, secretaries, evangelists, radio speakers, school administrators and others to step right into a position that was waiting for them. We are still searching for men to fill the gap. Of those who accepted, few,

if any, felt adequately prepared for the assignment. To my knowledge not one of them can say that he was purposefully groomed for the office he now holds. Having been recruited as partially untrained men, they must now depend heavily on an in-service training to help them face the demands with any amount of confidence. This lack of specialized training resulting from lack of planning often leads to frustration and discouragement. Experimenting by way of trial and error may result in numerous and costly errors which slow down progress, invite criticism and add to the discouragement.

I have seen how different parts of an automobile are made in different foundries and factories. But when these parts are put together on the assembly line, they fit and function properly. This is so because some engineers spent many hours to plan the automobile down to the minutes details and then issued an order with all necessary specifications to skilled tradesmen who were qualified for the task.

Our great task as a church is to carry on a program of world-wide evangelism. This is a great assignment which involves many people in different walks of life. In our effort to get our portion of the work done we have allotted specific tasks to committees and to individuals who operate in specific areas such as education, publication, evangelism, radio work, missions, welfare, and many others. But is there a carefully devised plan of operation that will provide for the right training in our schools, the publication of appropriate and most needed literature in our publication houses, the dispatching of qualified personnel to the right fields, and the proper distribution of our finances, so that all these parts will also fit into each other and provide for efficient operation? Is there any clear goal that will assist the various committees to measure their rate of progress?

I am more convinced than ever before that the age we live in calls for an over-all planned strategy that will give direction, co-ordinate our efforts, provide for adequately trained personnel and eliminate wasteful organization and duplication.

What can we reasonably hope to accomplish in India, Japan, Brazil, Columbia and other countries in five or ten years? Which country beckons us to make a major thrust? How many evangelists, radio ministers, teachers, doctors, nurses, linguists will we need in two, in five years and where will we place them? Who will they be? What kind of literature and in what quantity will we need to distribute in the next few years? Who will write and edit this material? For what volume of production must our publication establishment be geared? Can we confidently recruit and train men today for a position that they will be called to fill in two, three, or five years? Do we have an intelligent estimate of the number of pastors, writers, editors, radio evangelists, college professors, administrators, missionaries and mission executives we will be able to employ within the next few years? What demands will

such a program place on our educational facilities and staff? How will we meet the financial challenge of such a planned program?

It requires only a little observation and reflection to realize that we are not working at capacity. Our goals are not clearly defined, our organization needs re-thinking, our youth is not sufficiently challenged by an aggressive and co-ordinated program of action. We need leadership that can give positive direction and inspire us with hope for progress.

But who will devise this over-all strategy for us? Can we depend on the various committees now functioning to give us this much desired comprehensive plan for action? Can they do it without at least providing for joint meetings for consultation? Provision must be made for better communication and greater co-ordination of efforts if they are to serve in this capacity.

Or do we consider the task of planning for progress great enough to warrant the appointment of a planning commission? Such a commission could be charged with the responsibility and given the time and the means to make a careful evaluation of our present operations and future possibilities and recommend a course of action that would provide for a launching of a full-scale program that would utilize all our material and spiritual resources in one great effort at world-evangelization.

J. H. Quiring

ARTICLES

SHOULD THE MENNONITE BRETHERN CHURCH AGREE TO USE THE SAME VERSION OF THE BIBLE?

Repeatedly one hears complaints about the medley of English Bible versions used in our churches. As the members of a Sunday School class take their turn at reading a verse of the chapter to be studied we hear them reading Authorized Version, American Revised, Moffat, Goodspeed, Revised-Standard, Williams, Phillips, Berkley, New English, and what have you. Reading in turn from different versions is quite bearable, but when the pastor asks the congregation to join him in the reading of a Psalm, or perhaps even to read responsively, we are in trouble (not only because some forgot to bring a Bible, but because of the babel of versions).

This rich variety of versions disturbs some believers unduly. To be sure, an acute practical problem arises out of this diversity, but it is not of the kind that spells danger for the faith. Recently, when a dear lady discovered that her beloved Bible version might not be the best at every point, she said, rather poignantly, "Then I don't know what to believe anymore." Generally speaking, every

version is a serious attempt to render the original text in such a way that the message of Scripture be communicated to the reader, and we need not fear any version. But, obviously, some versions are more felicitous than others.

This brings me to the question, whether it would be advisable for the Mennonite Brethren Churches to agree to use a particular version of the English Bible in church life. Although I have been asked by others to write on this topic, the views expressed in this article are strictly my own. However, I should want to hope that the suggestions I have to offer would help to lead us out of the dilemma. But, before we make any suggestions on the choice of a version, we must say a few things on the need for Bible revision in general, and suggest a few norms by which the versions can be evaluated.

I. The Need for Revised Versions

A. Changes in Language.

The story of the English Bible reflects the history of the English language. The Bible in Latin came to England through the Roman mission in the sixth century. Some efforts were made to render it in Anglo-Saxon. After the tenth century we enter the Middle English period (brought about by the Norman Conquest, which caused radical changes in spoken English). John Wycliffe made a valiant effort to translate the Vulgate into Middle English.

However, language flows like a river, and by the fifteenth century the English language enters another period. Besides, the Reformation broke the grip of the Latin Vulgate; and the science of printing brings about a revolution in Bible publication. Tyndale lost his life in an effort to give Englishmen a Bible, translated from the original tongues. However, this is not the place to review the tortuous period which led to the publishing of the Authorized Version in 1611.

This particular version was so well done that it dominated the field for a few hundred years, although it, too, underwent numerous revisions, but it didn't keep pace with the changes in English. I have just turned to Mark 9 in my Authorized Version, and in my imagination I am reading to my fifteen year old boy: "No fuller(!) on earth can white them" (v. 3); "he wist not what to say" (v. 6); "they were sore (!) afraid" (v. 6); "save (!) Jesus only" (v. 8); "he charged (!) them" (v. 9). Good Elizabethan English, but rather meaningless jargon for one who is not versed in sixteenth century English. What does it mean to buy meat at the 'shambles'? Did the maid really carry John the Baptist's head on a 'charger'? Who are the 'quick' and the dead? What are 'bowels of mercy'?

This kind of language will never do, today. And so we must keep on revising the Bible as the language changes.

B. Better Knowledge of the Original Languages.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought to light ancient literatures which have revolutionized vocabulary studies in the Biblical field. I am thinking particularly of the papyri which made the older lexicons of Hellenistic Greek out of date. In the Old Testament Studies the exciting discoveries of Semitic literature in the Near East have illumined many a Hebrew word which translators in earlier times had merely guessed at.

Such new insights make older versions obsolete at many points and call for revision.

C. Better Textual Base.

The English versions up to the nineteenth century generally followed what is known as the Byzantine text, which is represented by thousands of late manuscripts. But as the science of textual criticism developed, and as exciting discoveries of new and older manuscripts were made, what was to be done with the thousands of variant readings in the original manuscripts, the ancient versions, and the Patristic quotations of Scripture? The revisors of the English Revised Version of 1881 decided to follow primarily the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. Although this helped to dethrone the Byzantine text, yet it was not the final answer, and the last fifty years have witnessed great progress in the effort to get the best textual base possible.

So then, the development of the English language, the increased knowledge of the Biblical languages, and the perfecting of the textual base, have made revisions of the English Bible imperative.

II. The Evaluation of a Version

How shall the Bible reader who is not acquainted with the Biblical languages evaluate a version? There is no simple answer to that question, but let me suggest a few guideposts.

A. Which Readers Did the Translator-Revisor Have in Mind?

This may appear to be an illegitimate question, for the Bible is for all people of all age groups and professions. True, but it can be adapted to a certain age group or a particular reading public. For example, the English version of Antony Purver, 1764, is in very florid language. Edward Harwood, 1768, translated so as to appeal to cultivated minds (a literary 'curio'!). The American, R. Dickinson, 1833, wanted to do the Bible in "sweetly flowing English." C. K. Williams, 1936, translated the New Testament into English, limiting his vocabulary to 1500 words, for he had English-speaking natives of India and Africa in mind (not to be confused with the American version of C. B. Williams). Ogden tried it with 850 words. Phillips began his translation work while he worked with teen-agers during the London Blitz. He attempted to get the

Biblical message into language that young people who had no church background could understand.

The translator is influenced by the readers he has in mind. Not that he adapts the original text, but he adapts his language to the readers.

B. Who Did the Translating?

It rarely happens that one man can translate all the books of the Bible equally well. If he spreads the translation over many years, his skill may increase greatly (or decrease, if he gets too old). Usually one man is not equally adept at translating Greek and Hebrew. James Moffat tried it (1913, 1926), but few dare.

Luther thought the reason why the Vulgate had weaknesses was because Jerome translated alone, and Jesus promised to be "in the midst" where two or three were gathered. Luther had many assistants. The committee that did the Authorized Version, 1611, was composed of at least 47 men, organized into six panels (three — Old Testament; two — New Testament; one — Apocrypha). The English Revised Version 1881-1885 was done by at least 65 participants (Anglican, Scottish Free Church, Church of Scotland, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and others — even one Unitarian). The American Revised (Standard) Version 1901, was also done by a committee as was the Twentieth Century New Testament, 1902. The R.S.V. was done by a large committee of scholars representing some 40 major Protestant denominations of America (Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Nazarenes, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, and numerous others). A similar arrangement holds for the New English Bible.

In such joint efforts particular denominational emphases are ruled out (as, for example, rendering **baptize** as 'immersion'). Also, sectarian or heretical tendencies are checked. The Jehovah's Witness would hardly get away with the rendering "and the word was **a god**" (New World Translation).

It would be very unwise for the Mennonite Brethren Church to choose to accept a 'private' translation of the Scriptures. Only the product of some joint effort could be considered.

C. What Principles Governed the Translators?

Some translations are to be 'literal', and these are usually in bad English, because matching Greek and Hebrew words with English equivalents results in nonsense. Other are free translations of the 'sense' of the original. This is more difficult but yields the best results. Some are in excellent English, but fall down in accuracy. Others are accurate, but the English is atrocious. Usually the translators tell us in the Preface what they intended to do (in case the reader should fail to notice their intention when he reads the version).

Also, it is important to know what textual base the version is based on. The Authorized Version, 1611, followed the Byzantine;

the English Revised, 1881, the text of Westcott and Hort; the Revised Standard Version is based on an 'eclectic' text. No one manuscript family is followed, but each variant is weighed in the light of the evidence (so far, no better approach is possible).

Then, too, the translators vary greatly on what they consider to be idiomatic English. Therefore, some choose to be very colloquial, others prefer a more stately style. But the style of the books of the Bible varies with the writer, and so to put the Bible into the English used in a university lecture room (where it is assumed that it is handled well — with disappointing exceptions) would hardly do justice to the language of the Bible. On the other hand, the translator is also out of bounds when he indulges in current colloquialisms. Nor is British and American English always the same English language.

If we decide on a version for public worship we would want to have one that is based on a good original text, that aims at giving the 'sense' of the original rather than being too original. It should be one which represents a golden mean between a literary masterpiece (which was certainly not the primary intent of the writers of the Bible) and a translation which is simply pedestrian in style.

III. The Choice of a Version.

Having said all this, we now face the question: Which version shall we choose? This would depend on the purpose we have in mind.

A. For Private Reading.

I would suggest that for private devotional reading of the Scriptures one might change the version occasionally. Familiarity of language can breed contempt. A change of version will make old truths bite deeper.

B. For Serious Study.

Whereas one might do better to use one version at a time when doing devotional reading, this practice will hardly do in serious study. One should possess and use a number of versions when studying a text, in order to capture nuances which a single version cannot give. This will also keep us from attaching too much significance to minor variations in the versions and be a safeguard against basing a doctrine on one translation. And, if one does not know the original, one should not say that one translation is more correct than the other. The most one can say, is: "I like this better than that." (And there's danger around the corner when you say this.)

C. For Memorization

I would feel that Scripture memory should be done from one version, and this should be the same version we decide to use in

public services. At the moment we face the acute problem that not all churches use the same Sunday School materials, and the children are learning Bible verses from different versions. (Some still use the 1611 version.) In any case, one should shun the colloquial, paraphrastic versions, when memorizing Scripture.

D. For Public Worship

At the moment there is no version, in my estimation, which would serve us better in public worship than the Revised Standard Version. In the first place, it is based on a good text. Certainly it is a great improvement over the text on which Authorized Version was based. Secondly, it is in good English. Some of the members of the revision committee were not Biblical scholars, but were specialists in English. What is good or bad English is often a matter of opinion, but the Revised Standard Version is not too colloquial, neither is it in a flowery style which only the literati can appreciate. This kind of language lends itself for pulpit use as well as for pew. As a matter of fact, the express purpose of the revisors was to prepare a version that could be used for public worship. This is not the design of private speech translations. Thirdly, it does not represent a radical break with Authorized Version which has been so popular in the past 450 years. The revisors aimed at retaining as much of the good of the Authorized Version as they could. Most modern speech translations are such a radical departure from the Authorized Version that the English speaking Christians who have an acquaintance with what to them has become Biblical terminology find it difficult to gain immediate appreciation of these newer versions. The New English Bible is a completely new translation, but Revised Standard Version is not.

There is no perfect version, and the Revised Standard Version is also being improved, but from the standpoint of accuracy, dignity, and general usability there is hardly a version in English that will match the Revised Standard Version.

In order to encourage congregational Bible reading — both in unison and responsively — the Hymn Book Committee that is preparing a new hymnary should consider very seriously the inclusion of a goodly number of Biblical passages in the appendix of the hymnal.

D. Ewert

WARUM HAT UNSERE PREDIGT NICHT MEHR ERFOLG?

Ein Dreifaches erfährt man in Bezug auf die Predigt, je älter man wird; 1) daß unserer Predigt eine sehr hohe Aufgabe gestellt ist; 2) daß auch die beste Leistung der Größe dieser Aufgabe gegenüber immer sehr unvollkommen bleibt; und 3) daß das Predigen eine Kunst ist, die einem immer schwerer erscheint, je länger man sie übt.

Wirft man nun einen Blick auf die eigene Predigtpraxis, so steigt sofort eine Frage auf. Wieviel von der Aufgabe, die der Predigt gestellt ist, wird durch mein Predigen gelöst? Wie viele Zuhörer sind durch unsere jahrelange Verkündigung des Wortes tatsächlich zu dem lebendigen, seligmachenden Glauben geführt worden? Und wenn die Antwort sehr niederschlagend ausfällt, drängt sich nicht die weitere Frage auf: wieweit liegt wohl an mir und meiner Predigtweise die Schuld?

In der ersten Dienstzeit hat man nicht selten eine hohe Meinung von der eignen Predigt, zumal wenn man einige Gaben hat, eine Frische besitzt, ein paar Zuhörer mehr hat als der Nachbar, und vielleicht über seine oratorischen Leistungen manches Lob empfängt. Wenn man aber älter wird, Jahr um Jahr predigt, und von einem wirklichen Glaubensleben bei den Zuhörern, selbst bei den ziemlich regelmäßigen, sich kaum etwas zeigen will, so kommt man nicht nur herunter von den hohen Pferden, sondern es tritt das Gegenteil ein. Man steht in Gefahr das Vertrauen zur Kraft der Predigt zu verlieren. Auch täusche ich mich wohl kaum, wenn ich behaupte, daß ein heimlicher Geist der Verzagtheit sich im Herzen von viel mehr eifrig arbeitenden Brüdern der Gegenwart eingenistet hat, als daß diese Verzagtheit ausgesprochen wird.

Nun gibt es ja Erklärungsgründe genug für den Nichterfolg der Predigt, die eine Entlastung für das Gewissen des Predigers sind, und vielen von diesen kann man die Berechtigung nicht bestreiten. Es ist zweifellos gewiß, daß die Schuld für den Nichterfolg nicht bloß bei den Predigern, sondern zum Teil auch bei den Hörern liegt, wie der Heiland im Gleichniss von mancherlei Acker unwiderleglich darstellt. Man müßte auch erkennen, daß mancher Erfolg unsichtbar ist. Und doch will das zarte Gewissen ins Selbstgericht gehen. "Herr, wir haben die ganze Nacht gearbeitet, und nichts gefangen."

I

Es fehlt, hinter unsern Zeugnissen, die Kraft Gottes. Das ist eine Tatsache, der nur blinder Optimismus widersprechen kann. Und warum fehlt sie? Hat etwa das Evangelium, das wir verkündigen, heute aufgehört "eine Kraft Gottes zur Seligkeit" zu sein? Von mancher Kanzel in unserm Lande predigt man ein "anderes Evangelium," ganz abgesehen davon, daß schon der Fluch, mit welchem Paulus die Predigt dieses "andern Evangeliums" belegt hat, von jedem Versuch dieser Art abschrecken müßte.

Oder ist das Menschenherz heute ein enderes als vor Jahren? Schrift, Geschichte und Erfahrung müssen uns in gleicher Weise überzeugen, daß dieselben Leidenschaften, die vor Jahrtausenden das Herz bewegten, auch heute noch in unsrer Brust wohnen und, daß der Mensch, wenn ihm geholfen werden soll, derselben Erlösungskräfte bedarf, die Gott vor alters dem gefallen Menschen-geschlechte dargereicht hat.

Also am Evangelium Christo liegt die Schuld für den Nichterfolg unserer Predigt nicht. Der Fehler liegt bei uns selbst.

Gerade für den Prediger ist die Gefahr so groß, daß er von seiner Kunst, seiner Beredsamkeit, seiner Gedankenfülle, seiner Auslegung des Wortes, mehr als von der Kraft Gottes, die Erfolge seiner Wirksamkeit erwartet. Ihm fehlt oft der Mut sich über diese Gefahr die Wahrheit zu sagen und den schönen Phrasenmantel, mit dem man das Ich behängt, abzulegen.

Gott verlangt ausgeleerte Gefäße, wenn Er den Reichtum seiner Herrlichkeit in uns ausgießen soll. Seine Kraft ist gebunden, so lange wir unserer eigenen Kraft vertrauen und unsere eigne Ehre suchen. "Wenn ich schwach bin, bin ich stark." Aber das Gegenteil ist auch zu beachten, "Wenn ich stark bin, bin ich schwach." Es sind das göttliche Paradoxen, die man mit Paulus göttliche "Torheiten" nennen kann, aber es sind doch Wahrheiten, Grundwahrheiten der Reichsgottesarbeit.

Die Kraft Gottes ist mit dem Gebet verbunden. Wir müssen uns unsere Predigten mehr auf den Knien erbeten, als wir gewöhnlich zu tun pflegen. Das Gebet ist aber kein isoliertes Stück des geistlichen Lebens, sondern es steht im Zusammenhang mit der Gesamtstellung des Menschen zu Gott. Oft ist das Maß der Erkenntnis der eigenen Schwäche das Maß der Gebetsmacht. Not lehrt beten.

II.

Das Wort, das ich als Prediger der Gemeinde verkündige, muß in mir zu Leben geworden sein. Die Tür, die in das Leben des Textes führt, findet man auf den Knien. Paulus bittet um die Fürbitte der Brüder "daß Gott ihm die Tür des Wortes auftue, zu reden das Geheimnis Christi, wie ich soll reden."

Man hört heute Klagen über die Mängel der Predigt, und auch an Reformvorschlägen ist kein Mangel. Aber soweit ich sehe, bewegen sich die meisten dieser Ratschläge im Peripheriegebiet und wollen nur die Form der Predigt durch eine andere Form verbessern. Es wird kein Kranker gesund, indem man ihm ein schoenes Kleid antut.

Zu den Zentralreformen gehört vor allem, daß wir Prediger wirklich in der Schrift leben und uns darin ernstlich befeleißigen. Es wird mehr verlangt, als nur die Schrift zu studieren. Man muß Speise verdauen, sonst gibt sie keine Nahrung. Die bloße Kenntnis der Bestandteile der Speise nähren eben so wenig als die Bewunderung derselben. Die Kraft liegt in der innerlichen Aneignung dieser Lebenswahrheiten.

Die Predigt wird es immer verraten, daß der Prediger das Wort selber genossen hat. Er ist in das Heiligtum dieses Tempels getreten und dort begegnete er dem, der das Wort als Offenbarung sprach. Gott möge uns die Predigten verzeihen, wo wir ohne inneres Texterleben Gedanken über den Text aussprachen.

III.

Es gibt auch eine Tür zum Herzen des Zuhörers. Das Wort, das in uns Leben geworden ist, soll auch bei ihm Wohnplatz finden. Es paßt ein Schlüssel für jedes Herz; wir müssen ihn finden. Mancher mag sofort Einwendung machen, daß dieses Aufschließen Sache des heiligen Geistes sei. Dem ist wohl so; aber dieser Geist will uns in dieser Arbeit brauchen.

In dem Sendschreiben an den Engel der Gemeinde zu Philadelphia sagt der erhöhte Heiland: "Siehe, ich habe vor dir gegeben eine offene Tür." Paulus berichtet von seiner Missionsreise "wie Gott den Heiden die Tür des Glaubens aufgetan." Offene Türen werden gegeben, und sie zu geben ist das Majestätsrecht des Herrn. Aber sie werden gegeben, wenn sie erbeten werden.

Gewisse Brücken zum andern müßten vom Prediger beachtet werden. Diese Brücken müssen wir durch die Leitung des Geistes finden.

1. Die Brücke des Gefühls. Je älter und reifer man wird, desto mehr wird man's inne, daß die Predigten unter Donner und Blitz gewöhnlich die Herzen mehr verschließen, als sie öffnen; zu mal wenn fleischlicher Eifer die Zunge regiert und der Prediger kaum den Schulmantel abgelegt hat. "Der Gerechte strafe mich freundlich." Man kann selbst Liebe mit Bitterkeit und Eifer verkündigen.

Der Herr Jesus sah das Volk und seine Augen gingen über. Aus solchen Herzen wird am sichersten die Brücke geschlagen, auf der das verkündigte Wort seinen Weg in die Herzen der Hörer findet.

2. Die Brücke der Erkenntnis. Man muß die Menschenherzen wirklich kennen, in die wir den Samen des Wortes legen sollen. Man kann manche an sich ganz hübsche Predigten hören, in denen der Prediger dennoch lauter Luftstreiche macht. Er spricht über Zustände, die er nicht kennt. Er beschäftigt sich mit Leuten, die nicht das sind. Er widerlegt Professoren und Doktoren und verißt daß seine Zuhörer Bauern und Handwerker sind.

Wie kommt der gewöhnliche Prediger zu diesem Verständnis? Durch Schriftstudium, ehrliche Durchforschung des eigenen Herzens, und durch Umgang mit Menschen.

3. Die Brücke der Volkstümlichkeit. Manches wäre noch über die Volkstümlichkeit großer Männer Gottes zu sagen. Spurgeon, Moody und andere waren Männer, die unter dem Volk lebten und darum predigten sie so volkstümlich und packend. Eine Gefahr müßte der Prediger ins Auge fassen. Um volkstümlich zu predigen, muß man nicht künstlich die Sprache des allgemeinen Volks nachahmen, und versuchen trivial zu sein, sondern man muß mit dem Volk leben und dann ihm kernige Gedanken und Gestalten vorführen, von denen er sagt: 'Das ist Fleisch von unserm Fleisch.'

F. C. Peters

THE SWORD AND THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

The law of the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ is in many ways a "higher law" than the law of Moses. These higher ethical demands and attainments of the New Covenant are not, however, in absolute contrast to the Old, but are to be seen in the light of continuity and progress. Jesus did not abrogate the moral law summarized in the Ten Commandments, but brought new revelation to bear upon it, which heightened the internal aspects of the demand of the law and vastly extended its scope. Furthermore, the moral concessions granted to Israel by Moses, such as divorce and polygamy, were terminated by Christ; unquestionably, the norm of the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ was more stringent than that of the Old Covenant.

This article is directed to an aspect of ethics where it is difficult to see continuity — the manner in which the theocracy combatted evil both within the institution [capital punishment for striking a parent (Exodus 21:15); kidnapping a man (Exodus 21:19); profaning the Sabbath (Exodus 31:14); committing adultery and fornication (Leviticus 20:10ff) and blaspheming the name of the Lord (Leviticus) 24:16], and without the institution in the holy wars against the enemies of Israel. The officials of the theocracy were on many occasions instructed to wield the physical sword in the punishment of evil-doers and in the extermination of the enemy. In the New Testament the physical sword is not the sword of the church to be used in extending the Kingdom; nor do the keys of the kingdom entrusted to the church permit the imposition of the death penalty upon defecting members. The New Testament emphasis falls heavily upon an ethic of love, forgiveness and suffering for the sake of Christ.

The question is, how are we to understand this variation in the methods God has ordained to combat evil? How can the Sword and the keys of the kingdom be meaningfully related?

A Critical Analysis of Attempted Solutions

Those who do not recognize the authority and inspiration of Scriptures make short shrift of such a problem. The Israelites failed to understand God's commands; they thought God wanted them to exterminate the inhabitants of Jericho — but God had never really commanded them to do so, and similar explanations are given. We, however, want to address ourselves to three views presented by such as accept the authority and infallibility of the Old Testament Scriptures.

1. G. F. Hershberger in *War, Peace and Nonresistance*, presents a Christian pacifist interpretation as follows. The Old Covenant represents an imperfect covenant because of the imperfection of fallen man. The moral law, as found in the Ten Commandments,

is God's abiding high standard of morality, but the civil and ceremonial laws are imperfect and temporary. The civil law is of a lower standard than the moral law and represents a concession on the part of God to the low moral state and immaturity of the people of that age. This concession terminated with the inauguration of the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. The ceremonial law was also imperfect in that it was anticipatory of Christ. In Christ's covenant human conduct would be restored to the high standard of the moral law.

The method of bloodshed and war in the Old Testament according to Hershberger, was therefore a concession of God and not a method in keeping with his highest will. If the children of Israel had been obedient to God's will, wars and bloodshed would no doubt have been avoided. The sixth commandment of the moral law is God's highest will for all man. Any commandment to kill, inflict the death penalty or engage in warfare is a concession of God because of the hardness of man's hearts — it is a concession which permits the violation of his moral standard. The Genesis 9:5-6, passage is not a commandment for the people of God, but a statement which expresses the normal way in which God's disciplinary action manifests itself in *sinful* society. God's moral law forbids killing under any circumstance. But sinful society does not operate on this principle; when a man kills another it takes the life of the murderer. It is an action of human vengeance, which demands that men suffer the consequence of their sin, and is a violation of the fundamental moral law of God. Even an official of the state, acting in his legal capacity, violates God's moral law when he executes a murderer. The Old Covenant permitted such a lower level of vengeance and retaliation as a concession to the sinfulness and the spiritual immaturity of Israel.

The author regards the wars of Israel as falling into the same category; they were contrary to the original intention of God. God intended to remove the Canaanites by supernatural means without the armed intervention of Israel, just as he destroyed the hosts of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. It was the low spiritual and moral level of the life of Israel which prevented them from realizing the land of Canaan by peaceful means. The commands of God to war and kill, as for instance, the command to slay the Amalekites, were "permissive commands" given to a sinful, lean-souled people who had chosen to live on a lower 'sub-Christian' level. The use of the sword in combatting evil within the theocracy and against its enemies is placed into the same category as the concession with regard to polygamy and divorce.

This construction which seeks to explain the difference in the ethic of the Old and the New Covenant is hardly tenable. There is no indication in Scripture that the civil and ceremonial laws were in contradiction to the moral law. There is every indication that, although the ceremonial and civil laws were temporary and antic-

ipatory in large measure, they never-the-less rested squarely upon the moral law. They were a rudimentary form of making the moral law more explicit; in a concrete and external way they revealed the nature of God and pointed the way to redemption and a sanctified life. In the wisdom of God they were best suited as an early form of the self-disclosure of God. They were patterned after the archetype in heaven and were a type of the New Covenant. They were therefore a part of God's organic revelation. The pedagogical principle must be applied to the theocratic form of revelation. The externalism and concreteness which characterized it were the appropriate God-given means of restoring fallen man in a gradual manner; in a vivid way they exposed the sinfulness of man, revealed the holiness of God and pointed to the righteousness of the coming Messiah as the only way of salvation and holiness.

The sin of Israel was not that it conformed to the 'so-called' lower standard of the civil and ceremonial laws but that it failed to live up to them. The ethic God desired of them had been made explicit in these laws. In this regard, the penal sanctions of the Old Covenant cannot be placed into the same category as polygamy and divorce; these latter practices were tolerated in the Old Covenant but they were not commanded. The Old Testament provision for divorce in Deuteronomy 24:1-4, must not be interpreted as legitimating divorce. It was not sanctioned or approved as an inherent right but was an abnormality which was tolerated because of the hardness of heart of the people. The penal sanctions of the Old Covenant, including the death penalties and the wars against the enemies of God's people, were expressly commanded under the threat of God's wrath. There is no suggestion in Scripture that the stoning of the man who profaned the Sabbath, the wholesale slaughter of the people of Jericho, or the stoning of Achan were not in keeping with God's highest demands. To have done less would have invoked the anger and wrath of God; it would have been idolatry. The highest ethic to which God called the Israelite was not violated by his use of the sword in carrying out the commands of God. It is only on this basis that a proper relationship of the Old and New Covenant ethics can be constructed. Hershberger's view does not solve the problem.

V. Adrian
(To be continued)

"Give me, amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magical restorative power of sleep. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations . . . of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book". —W. E. Songster.

A SERMON

"FOR ONE BRIEF SHINING MOMENT"

2 Kings 2:1—14.

Very soon after the death of John F. Kennedy, a close friend of the Kennedy family, Theodor White, visited Mrs. Kennedy again. White already knew much about the former President and his family, as his book **The Making of the President** testified. On this occasion, however, he came to appreciate in an altogether new way the high idealism that pulsed through Mr. Kennedy's life and career — an idealism so potent that it left unforgettable memories with his wife. White reported, concerning this particular visit, that "there was a thought . . . that was always with her." This thought was linked, in Mrs. Kennedy's mind, to a few lines of song — a song that was a favourite with Mr. Kennedy and that he often listened to, at close of day, during his brief but busy political career. The fragment of song was: "Don't let it be forgot that once there was a spot, for one brief shining moment, that was known as Camelot." "Mrs. Kennedy", White reported, "wanted to make sure that the point was clear, and went on to say, 'There'll be great presidents again — and the Johnsons are wonderful, they've been wonderful to me — but there'll never be another Camelot again!'"

There was once a "brief shining moment" in Elisha's life, a moment and an experience which he was privileged to share with his master, Elijah, a moment the spiritual splendor and significance of which he never forgot throughout his prophetic ministry. It was, as the narrative of our text makes plain, a breathless moment for Elisha, in the march of time, which elicited an urgent request from him and mediated a glorious vision to him. The brief account in 2 Kings 2:9-14 is itself a fragment of solemn and majestic prose but the spiritual truths which it embodies "outshineth all." Let us reflect upon these truths for a little while.

Who is there that has not hurt some other human being, if not with such a mortal stroke as that which Cain gave to Abel, yet in some way that has left some part of that other one's happiness and well-being lying dead? It may have been through hot passion: through lust that has defiled another life, through sudden anger that has lashed out against some supposed offense, through violence of word or act that satisfied revenge. It may have been through a colder cruelty: a sneer, a contemptuous look, a sinister disparagement that struck home like a poisoned arrow . . . Or suppose that we never deliberately intended evil: are there no hurts we have given just because we were too stupid to understand?"

A. The record of this "shining moment" in Elisha's life reveals, first of all, **that there was present in his heart a deeply earnest desire, a desire that could and would not be stiller until its fulfillment was promised him.** The yearning of his heart was for a personal infilling of that Spirit which had mightily empowered Elijah during his long and difficult ministry in Israel. Indeed, Elisha yearned for a double portion of that Spirit, not in order that his own prophetic career might eclipse that of his predecessor, but because he knew that he was, by nature, a lesser man than Elijah and so would require a greater measure of God's grace and power.

The purity and persistence of Elisha's desire for a full measure of God's Spirit is evident throughout the record in 2 Kings 2. We perceive, for example, that Elijah, knowing his departure was at hand, wanted very much to be left alone. He had taken leave of Elisha already, and undoubtedly desired that his ascension, however it might transpire, remain an altogether private experience. Therefore, he bade Elisha tarry so that he might go on alone to the "place of ascension." But Elisha was not to be restrained and, despite Elisha's repeated appeals, he continued with Elijah as he journeyed from one place to another. This persistence of Elisha was not vulgar curiosity nor unholy stubbornness but, as Elijah himself gradually realized (2:9a), an outward manifestation of the profound yearning in his heart.

Again, the curt reply of Elisha to the query of the "sons of the prophets," in every place testifies to the intensity of his desire, for his reply was not simply an expression of peevish or petulant impulses but evidence of earnestness of soul. While these fledgling prophets were excited, after the manner of schoolboys, about the external drama of the present moment, Elisha was deeply aware of a great spiritual need that had to be met before his master could leave him.

Elijah was certainly right in calling the matter of Elisha's request a "hard thing" (2:10). To strongly desire and earnestly pray for a fuller measure of God's Spirit is always a hard thing — a hard thing not because God is Himself limited but because the native recalcitrance of man's heart necessarily limits God's actions. And because this is so, the Christian believer who would be used of God must, now as then, experience travail of soul until his desire for spiritual power becomes as pure and persistent as that of Elisha.

While the nature of Elisha's desire, as revealed in this "shining moment" of experience, is indicated in chapter two, the full history of that desire is not. The first stirrings of that desire undoubtedly go back to another experience — to the call extended by God, when Elijah beckoned him from his place behind "twelve yoke of oxen" (1 Kings 19:19-21). And those initial stirrings were increased and intensified, we may be sure, as Elisha "went after Elijah and ministered to him" during his last years as the fearless "troubler of Israel." Elisha, it is clear, saw something in the min-

istry of his master during these years of close association, that so impressed him with both the need for, and the possibilities of the Spirit of God in human life that a truly noble desire and intention gradually filled out the secret chambers of his heart. And when the "shining moment" of crucial decision for Elisha came, upon the threshold of Elijah's departure, he could give sincere utterance to that developed desire and receive the emphatic assurance that it would be satisfied.

It is, of course, a wonderful tribute to Elijah's integrity that he made this overwhelming impression upon a younger man who came to know him intimately and, we may believe, observed him closely. Not all servants of God, we are aware, have impressed others, who were invited or even urged to follow "in their train," nearly as positively. Indeed, the reluctance of younger men in evangelical churches generally to take up the "prophetic ministry" which is needed in our own day may in part be attributed to the spiritual timidity and impotence of certain leaders in these same churches.

Yet our time is not without its own Elijah's, as the very recent biographies of "prophetic preachers" like W. E. Sangster of London, A. W. Tozer of Harrisburg, Pa., Clarence Macartney of Philadelphia, and Walter A. Maier of St. Louis — to mention only four — so eloquently testify.

The dominant impression which A. W. Tozer, for example, left with those who knew him best is well summarized in the recent words of Dr. Wm. Culbertson, President of Moody Bible Institute: "His ministry to me, both as between ourselves and in his public service, is a treasure which I shall remember. The Lord gave Dr. Tozer many gifts. As God's servant, he was faithful in the human side of the development of the talents God gave. Best of all, **he knew the presence and power of the Spirit of God.**"

The church of our time, we know, is plagued by a certain listlessness, on the one hand, and by a certain cynicism, on the other — cynicism, especially, about the present possibility and pertinence of spiritual heroism such as characterized Christian disciples of other times and other places. It is itself deperately in need of "shining moments" of spiritual encounter with God and of the influence which such moments, in the lives of a few, can radiate forth to the many. Let us therefore not be intimidated by what a majority of Christians are saying or doing today, but be among those who **want** and who **have** the transforming experience of Elisha.

B. But the record of this "shining moment" in Elisha's life reveals, in the second place, **that he received a vision.** And this vision was something more than the splendidly romantic vision borne in upon the soul of a John F. Kennedy or other idealists like him. It was a vision of the reality of a great God and of a high and holy purpose for him as Elijah's successor.

Elijah, of course, could not know in advance whether God would permit Elisha to see his ascension, but with trembling faith he uttered the words: "... if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so." (2:10). And in response to the desire of Elisha and to the faith of Elijah, God granted Elisha a vision of the "chariot of fire" which carried his master into heaven, but having seen this, he saw no more! We may wonder what precise significance this vision held for Elisha. That the vision did mean much to him is evident from a consideration of his poignant cry at the moment, "My father, my father! the chariots of Israel and its horsemen" (2:12), as well as from a consideration of his later ministry.

The "chariots and horses of fire" that bore Elijah into the heavens must have symbolized something for Elisha which he, immediately and without question, linked with the ministry of his master. They must have symbolized the powerful and purging ministry of one who was certainly a messenger of heaven — a charioteer of the God who is Himself a "consuming fire." And the fact that Elisha was permitted to see this vision was assurance for him that Elijah's God would be his God too, and would enable him also to drive through the gloom of apostate Israel in a "chariot of fire."

Elisha tested the validity of this vision of God's presence and purpose immediately by taking up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and striking the Jordan with it. "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" he asked, and instantly the waters of the Jordan were parted, and he went over. And Elisha could no longer doubt the reality of that which had been revealed to him in this "shining moment" of spiritual experience. Others, too, sensed that Elisha had gained something which they themselves lacked. Of the "sons of the prophets" we read that they, upon seeing Elisha, exclaimed, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha" (2:15), and bowed to the ground before him. However, they themselves were soon more interested in finding Elijah's body (2:16-18) than in the continuing significance of Elisha's experience.

And the recollection of this vision remained with Elisha throughout his ministry. It served, oftentimes, to remind him and others, during times of danger and times of doubt, of the redemptive purpose which God would continue to pursue in the midst of Israel. We have a most striking illustration of the continuing power of this vision of Elisha in 2 Kings 6:15-17. Here we have the account of the servant's fear in the presence of the Syrian army and of Elisha's prayer for him: "O Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see." The answer to that prayer is recorded in verse 17: "So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

Others who benefited, directly or indirectly, from Elisha's vision in that "shining moment" of decisive experience beside the Jordan

River are expressly mentioned in 2 Kings: the woman of Shunam (4:9); Benhadad, king of Syria (8:7-8); Jehoshaphat, king of Israel (3:12); the little maid of Naaman in Syria (5:3). And we may be sure that this brief list does not begin to suggest anything like the full extent of Elisha's influence.

The relevance of Elisha's experience for us ought to be clear. A compelling desire for spiritual power and an abiding vision of God's purpose for individual life do not come to many Christians. They do not come to many Christians because they fail to experience "shining moments" of crucial encounter with God early in life. And in such cases, the potential heroism of an Elijah or Elisha is gradually lost or else displaced by "false heroisms" that really are inspired by the ambitions and aspirations, "of this present world." And yet our old world is in dire need of God-inspired heroism. All other heroisms only dazzle for a moment, at best; they cannot satisfy and fortify the souls of men for life here and hereafter. Let us therefore ask God to grant us that "shining moment" of experience with Him which we personally need.

Herbert Giesbrecht.

BOOK REVIEW

Missionary, Go Home

By James Scherer, Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 188 pp.

Obviously Scherer is not afraid to tackle problems. He courageously analyses some of the most controversial issues of Missionary strategy and dares to offer solutions as he sees them. Without hesitation he exposes the ill-chosen bedfellows of colonialism and missions; he unseats the missionary from the saddle of his traditional role and carves out a new course of action; he attacks the church-centred approach in missions and concentrates the missionary offensive more on preaching to nations, leaving the national believer to form a church in keeping with his own cultural context; he places missionary responsibility on "every church member" and gives the salaried mis-

sionary a leadership position, which will not exclude the other missionary, but will rather create an organizational framework in which all the missionary potential of the church can be harnessed. He thus brings missionary strategy alongside other rapidly expanding contemporary movements, i.e. communism, etc. Scherer denounces denominationalism at home and particularly abroad, where it brings much confusion to the younger churches. He laments that institutional missions has been used as a means to an end and thus has been justly eyed with suspicion by nationals as a Christian form of deception, imposing a conviction upon people when

they are in distress and where necessity demanded assent when little personal volition was involved. These and other problems Scherer deals with using considerable scriptural and historical material to support his view and so endeavors to build a strong case for his position.

Scherer, as a younger man, with some missionary experience abroad, particularly in Japan, steers clear from re-emphasizing traditional views. In reading the 188 page book one cannot help but sense youthful exuberance coupled with keen intellectual powers, and an eagerness to lift missionary strategy out of the rut and get the program off the ground, moving from the defensive to the offensive. Obstacles do not appear as a hindrance to Scherer, but as a challenge. In such an approach it is obvious that along with much that is good, desirable, and expedient some implications are overlooked which, if not detected, would result in serious weakness should the projected strategy be implemented.

We will take time to raise a few points of caution:

1. To say that in apostolic times there was no missionary program apart from the church as it later developed sounds to me as though certain biblical incidents have been overlooked. The most obvious of these is where the Holy Ghost spoke to the Church requesting that Paul and Barnabas be separated for a work which would reach beyond the church constituency and in which, although the whole church did not participate as a body, they did show a continual interest. Periodically Paul and Barnabas even returned and reported to the churches on the results of their labours (Acts 14:25-28). The churches also sent mes-

engers to bring assistance and material supply to these missionaries (Phil. 4:14-18). One also wonders what Mr. Scherer would do with Gal. 2:9-10? Here the apostles simply agreed on separate mission programs; Paul and Barnabas would work among the heathen and the rest among the circumcision. It is true however, that during the course of history the church did fail in its missionary outreach and then, apart from the established churches, God raised up groups (Moravians, Pietists, mission societies, etc.) and also individual men (W. Carey, H. Taylor, R. Morrison, C. T. Studd, D. Livingstone, etc.) to do the work apart from the church. But this is not the apostolic image as Mr. Scherer seems to imply.

2. The Gospel message includes the introduction of a church fellowship to the new believers. Even though Scherer correctly points out that "mission boards" and "missionaries", as known today, were not part of church expansion in the early centuries (for expansion was more spontaneous), there was no missionary program independent from the church. Divorcement between church and missions, as pictured by Scherer, came with the emerging of the state church and missions was thought of more in geographic and ethnic terms. Certain groups in a given geographic area had not been challenged with the Lordship of Christ. Thus the Church stayed at home and sent agents to evangelize beyond its immediate domain. Scherer would argue that the agent of the church in such a foreign land had only a preaching responsibility and not a church building obligation. Dr. Scherer would say: the church came "as the by-product of preaching" and was out of order as part of the mis-

sionary program. Scherer goes on to contend that this was Paul's method, also that he "prescribed no model constitution to his congregations." Such a position I find difficult to understand. True, neither Christ nor Paul prescribed any stereotype form of church government or organization. But this they did because the church, as presented in Scripture, is ideally suited to every cultural context and Scripture has only given us the super-cultural qualities of a church: namely, it is a church of believers, a fellowship of brethren, and a community of saints. Stereotype church structures have been carried abroad by denominations, but this does not eliminate the biblical concept of the church from the missionary program. Granted, the gospel is to be preached to all nations, as Scherer says, but the church is part of the Gospel, and it too needs to be brought to every nation as an institution ideally suited for the strengthening of the believer in his given cultural context. If the church building responsibility was not part of the missionary thrust the character of the New Testament letters, Pauline and others, would be of an entirely different content. The subject material of these Epistles, and the fact that several letters were written to the same congregation, as well as Paul's repeated visits to some of the churches and his concern for proper leadership in them, make it obvious, missions must not consider its work done until the people believe and the believers enjoy a church fellowship where they feel at home.

3. Missions does not demand Ecumenicity. Scherer uses the threadbare arguments that many others have employed to promote Ecumenicity. To Scherer, every denomina-

tion is a symptom of spiritual division which only hampers missionary progress and therefore must actively and progressively move toward ecumenicity. It appears that Scherer does not recognize any possibilities of fellowship across denominational lines or across the borders of organizational structure. In reading the book one gets the impression that fellowship flourishes only within an organization. The many interdenominational mission societies would tell a different story. A denominationally heterogeneous composition has often stimulated and cross-fertilized missionary agencies, to accomplish tasks which single denominations did not dare to tackle. World Radio Missionary Fellowship, and Missionary Aviation Fellowship are excellent examples. It is also to be noted that such movements which have resulted in church unions have had to agree on a common theological denominator without an edge and a sharp message. Scherer proposes ecumenicity as an answer to 3 half-filled churches in close proximity of each other, implying that it would be better to have one full church. Ecumenicity for such reason would only result in one half empty church instead of several. The population explosion calls for a filling of all churches and the closing of none. Denominationalism has however missed its calling when co-existence results in rivalry instead of healthy competition; or when the attention shifted from the desirable goal, i.e. reaching men for Christ, to the desire of thriving at the expense of each others. We lament with Scherer that denominations have often fought one with another instead of supplementing each other. For the missionary outreach the comity ar-

rangement has been one of the best methods up to date. But let us not expect that one universal denomination will give us the answer. No democracy with a single party-system will thrive for a long time. It will drift to dictatorship. Monodenominationalism will have the same effect, it will result in lack of vitality and progress.

Invariably, denominations have certain blind spots to which other denominations will call attention. Paul used the example of the Corinthians to stimulate the Macedonians and Achaians (II Cor. 9:1-4). Likewise one denomination may stimulate another. Therefore, we

should not eliminate denominational structure but rather learn to fellowship across organizational borders, thus showing that we, although different, still love one another so that the world can see that we are His.

An overemphasis on the above mentioned points aside, we welcome Scherer's daring approach and agree that there are many justifiable reasons why foreign governments and nationals would say "Missionary, Go Home!" Where, as Scherer points out, missionary motivation has not been singular and biblical, we as a church at home may even respond: "Missionary, Come Home!"

J. J. Toews

Jesus Christ and History

By George E. Ladd: Intervarsity Press, Chicago (1963).

Since World War II there has been a real revival of interest in the question as to the meaning of history, and more specifically, in the problem of the relation of biblical eschatology to history. Two factors have contributed to this renewed interest in the subject: on the one hand there has been a genuine desire on the part of theologians to discover or re-discover a philosophy of history which is grounded in God's revelation; on the other hand, the catastrophic events of this century have made a re-examination of this question not only relevant, but crucial. Several theologians and Christian historians have made notable contributions to a better understanding of the relation of eschatology to history. Among others we might mention the books of Oscar Cullmann (*Christ and Time*, 1949), Herbert Butterfield (*Christianity and History*, 1951), Donald S. Master (*The Christian Idea of History*, 1962).

In his introductory chapter on the "Philosophy of History", Dr. Ladd clearly states his aim in the writing of this treatise: "The purpose of this little book is to set forth the biblical view of God and history and to expound the role of the second coming of Christ in this biblical perspective" (p. 7). The need for this perspective is shown by a brief survey of traditional as well as contemporary "philosophies of history," which are either deficient or irrelevant to the question as encountered by man in our modern age. This applies to the classical (cyclical) view of history as taught by Plato and Aristotle, as well as to the idealism of Hegel and the materialism of Marx. Unfortunately, some eminent theologians do not provide an acceptable alternative. Bultmann, by his distinction between objective history (*Historie*) and existential history (*Geschichte*) has rendered the question as to any meaning in history irrelevant. According to Bultmann, the entire ques-

tion of the meaning of history must be asked in existential terms. Neither a study of the facts of Divine Revelation nor a study of the facts of world history will provide any directives for a proper conception of the nature and goal of history.

In the subsequent discussions, Dr. Ladd argues for the centrality of the second coming of Christ in any truly Christian view of history. The "realized eschatology" of C. H. Dodd and the "prophetic realism" of John Wick Bowmann both fail to do justice to the biblical view of the Kingdom of God — a view which conceives of the kingdom as being both historical and supra-historical.

Ladd's criticisms are not confined to the views of liberal theologians. He voices the opinion that conservative scholars have often added to the confusion with regard to eschatology by being frequently "more concerned with the order of events that will attend the return of the Lord than with the fact itself and its role in the biblical view of History", p. 12).

In chapter three (Biblical Pre-suppositions), Dr. Ladd lists several basic prerequisites for any Christian *Weitanschaung* (world-view). Without a biblical view of Revelation, of nature, of man, of history, and of evil, one cannot develop a Christian view of history. Of special significance is Dr. Ladd's strong emphasis on the fact that the Hebrew-Christian faith is primarily an historical faith. This implies not only an historical dimension of our faith with reference to the past — a faith rooted in the great redemptive acts of God in history; it also implies a consummation of God's purposes within history and at the end of history. "The goal of redemption", Ladd asserts, "is historical and concerns men,

not only as individuals but as a social group" (p. 20) Although the above statement is made with reference to God's people in the Old Testament, this concern for God's people in history is not surrendered in the New Testament. In Matthew 24 our Lord's concern is with history, and with the fate of his people in their historical experience.

This idea is further elaborated in Ladd's description of the unfolding of the biblical perspective. The kingdom of God is a kingdom in history. It is a kingdom, however, not produced by history, but by God. The great redemptive drama of salvation is an historical play with two acts: Christ's first coming to effect man's redemption, Christ's second coming to perfect man's redemption. Both the day of salvation and the day of judgment, are acts "within history."

In the last two chapters, Ladd states a principle which in my view is basic to a proper biblical eschatology as well as to Christian philosophy of history. According to Ladd, the second coming of Christ will be a disclosure of his *present lordship*. The second coming "represents the manifestation and extension of His present reign over the world" (p. 49).

Dr. George E. Ladd is professor of Biblical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. He is well-known for his scholarly and evangelical works in the field of eschatology, i.e. *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom* (1954), *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (1959), and *The Blessed Hope* (1960). This treatise on *Jesus Christ and History* is limited in purpose and scope. Many readers no doubt would have appreciated an interpretation of the implications of this approach to the life and work of the church in the present historical situation.

J. A. Toews

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 Waterloo University College
- ENGEL, JOHN F. Lodi, California (3)
 Briercrest Bible Institute
 State Teachers College, Minot, N.D.
- FRIESEN, DEANNA MARIE Winkler, Manitoba (2)
 Winnipeg Bible Institute
 School of Nursing, Winnipeg, R.N.
- GEDDERT, DAVID Chilliwack, British Columbia (2)
 Coaldale Bible School
 Chilliwack Bible School
 Briercrest Bible Institute
 Waterloo University College
- JANZEN, NELLIE A. Coaldale, Alberta (3)
 School of Nursing, Lethbridge, R.N.
 Waterloo University College
- KLASSEN, KATHRYN Clearbrook, British Columbia (2)
 M.B. Bible Institute, Clearbrook
 Waterloo University College
- PENNER, MARILYN Winnipeg, Manitoba (2)
 Manitoba Teachers College
 University of Manitoba
- PENNER, MILDRED Winnipeg, Manitoba (2)
 Teachers College, University of Manitoba
 University of Manitoba
- RAPSKE, ALMA Winnipeg, Manitoba (2½)
 School of Nursing, Winnipeg, R.N.
 Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills
 Christian Training Institute, Edmonton
- REIMER, ALVIN H. Winnipeg, Manitoba (4)
 Winkler Bible School
 Waterloo University College
- SCHROEDER, GLORIA JEAN Inman, Kansas (2)
 Kansas State University
 Tabor College, B.A.
- SEYMOUR, MARGARET Cheshire, England (2½)
 School of Nursing, England, R.N.
 University of North Dakota
- SIEMENS, KATIE Gem, Alberta (India) (3)
 Coaldale Bible School
 Tabor College, B.A.
- STOBBE, MARTHA MARY Winnipeg, Manitoba (2)
 Briercrest Bible Institute
- STOESZ, HELEN WILMA Hague, Saskatchewan (3)
 Waterloo University College
- SUKKAU, ESTHER Winnipeg, Manitoba (3½)
 School of Nursing, Winnipeg, R.N.
- THIESSEN, HENRY ALBERT St. Catharines, Ontario (3)
 Hamilton Teachers College
 McMaster University
 Waterloo University College

SACRED MUSIC DIPLOMA

- REIMER, ALVIN H. (see B.R.E.) Winnipeg, Manitoba (4)

* The numbers in brackets represent years of residence at M.B.B.C.