

central chapter of the book is entitled *Le Message du Verbe*, where the many threads of the biblical revelation in the Old Testament, historical, religious, legal, ethnographical, prophetic, sapiential and directly messianic, are brought into a unity in Christ. This chapter is suitably preceded by a study of the usual problems, linguistic, chronological, etc., briefly but adequately explained, with particular prominence given to the modern question of 'literary forms'. The later chapters deal effectively with questions of inspiration and inerrancy, and the meeting points of Scripture and archaeology, history and science. The relation of Scripture and Tradition is discussed in the section *La Bible et la Foi*; and a whole chapter is devoted to the senses of Scripture and its interpretation. The importance, though not the primacy, of symbolism is underlined, and attention is called to the present-day study of biblical theology. Good advice is given on the reading of the Bible; five ways are suggested: liturgical, discursive (as a book), meditative, doctrinal, and finally simply prayerful. These are not, of course, mutually exclusive, but should on the contrary be simultaneous.

The above remarks, taken together with the article, will show the value of this book. If the pedagogic sections are perhaps brief, they are sufficient to support the argument, and what is so stimulating throughout the work is the representation of the enormous and vital importance to the Christian world of a return to the holy Word of God.

There is no index, but since the 350 pages are divided into only ten chapters, each with many divisions which are all listed in the contents-page, with a full analysis at the beginning of each chapter, reference is not too difficult. A fourth edition, considerably extended, and including bibliographies and an analytical table, is about to appear. It seems also that an English translation is in preparation. I am indebted to the author for these last two welcome items of information.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

MAN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Walther Eichrodt (S.C.M. Press; 6s.)

ESSAI SUR LE MIDRASH D'HABACUC. By M. Delcor (Editions du Cerf; n.p.)

These two quite recent books, one by a Swiss Protestant, the other by a French Catholic, can be considered together. Eichrodt, here in a most readable translation, deals with that Old Testament view of man of which the influence has been so incalculably great. His book should be bought and studied. He finds, as the foundation, man's individual responsibility and unconditional obligation towards a transcendent God, which in Israel's case is reinforced by God's covenant with his chosen people. The Old Testament is seen as the record of the struggle

to maintain this relationship in opposition to a too exigent national ambition or a pursuit of natural goods, and in face of the problems of suffering and sin. The author displays an exhaustive knowledge of the text, a masterly power of synthesis, and a profound appreciation of the subject's importance. Perhaps, however, the Calvinist appears in over-emphasis on the absoluteness of the divine will; as also in a hint of contempt for Christian asceticism.

The Abbé Delcor's study of one of the newly discovered Dead Sea scrolls is introduced by the Dominican Père Abel of Jerusalem. The author has translated the text, so far as it survives, of this commentary on Habakkuk, and gives his conclusions about it. We must not expect new light on the prophecy itself; the commentator applies it to his own times—about 80 B.C., so Delcor believes—and to his own persecuted sect, probably the Pharisees. This Jewish Midrash, from the time between the Testaments, exemplifies the same struggle that Eichrodt finds in the Old Testament, a struggle between God's claims and, in this case, an ambitious and cruel high priest-king, Alexander Jannæus. There is a slip on page 16: 'de notre ere' for 'avant notre ere', as it is correctly given on page 50.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.

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