

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Reconciliation—A Study of Biblical Families in Conflict*, by MICHAEL S. MOORE. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1994. 185 pp.

This book is a rare collection of pastoral gleanings by a first-rate OT scholar. Writing from a conviction that Scripture is the primary medium for the healing power of Christ, Moore brings that word to bear on a most basic human wound, the conflicts that spoil our relationships. In the process he reminds us that the OT is much more than a record of our spiritual ancestry; it is a source of great insight into contemporary problems.

The book is divided into twelve chapters built around episodes from the lives of Abigail, Abraham, David, Miriam, Jacob, Esther, Samson, Hannah, Saul, Naomi, and Joseph. Each chapter begins with an illustration of conflict drawn from the author's years in ministry and then focuses on an exposition of the chosen biblical story. It is here that the author's skill as a preacher comes to the fore. He succeeds in humanizing his ancient subjects and thereby facilitates our identification with them. It is this holistic reading of Scripture that brings one close enough to the text to hear some of its softer utterances.

The exposition section of each chapter is followed by an application of the principles extracted by the author in order to point the way toward the resolution of contemporary conflicts. From Abigail's successful mediation to Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers, there is much practical guidance here to help us become the peacemakers we were called to be.

Each chapter concludes with a series of questions designed to stimulate further reflection or discussion. This feature combines with the subject matter to make this book especially suited for small group study.

Dr. Moore would be the first to admit that there is room for disagreement on some of his interpretations and applications, but he offers a consistently fresh, engaging, and sensitive look into stories which many of us have stopped hearing. I join Dr. Thomas Olbricht, who wrote the foreword, in applauding Moore's inimitable efforts to bring the Word of God to bear upon the

problems that trouble us so deeply these days. *Reconciliation* has the potential to bless many lives as we strive for *shalom* in this overlap of ages.

Tempe, AZ

ASHBY L. CAMP

*Jesus under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus*. Edited by M. J. WILKINS AND J. P. MORELAND. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1995. 243 pp. \$16.99.

During the past decade a group of about seventy scholars (most of whom are products of America's elite graduate programs in religion) have met in an informal seminar that has as its basic rationale the demolition of conservative Christianity. Known as the *Jesus Seminar*, the group regularly makes the headlines through press releases at Christmas and Easter featuring announcements of some new research result designed to outrage conservative believers.

The purpose of this seminar is threefold. First, it wishes to advance the proposition that the Jesus of the canonical gospel tradition is a myth; second, most of the things attributed to Jesus in the gospels (miracles/ resurrection) never happened; third, the canon of Scripture underscores intolerance and violence in our society and should be changed.

This book represents a considered response to the *Jesus Seminar* by wellknown evangelical scholars. After the introduction, which challenges a research paradigm based on philosophical naturalism, eight essays directly engage aspects of the *Jesus Seminar's* agenda. The title 'Jesus under Fire' may be a bit misleading. Both the partisans of the *Jesus Seminar* and the conservative evangelicals claim to honor and have great respect for Jesus. Yet as the result of the use of very different research paradigms, they have arrived at historical reconstructions of Jesus that are totally incompatible.

Ironically, this in itself poses a severe problem for the conservative evangelicals. The contributors are all respected academicians in mostly evangelical institutions. These scholars have done their fair share of encouraging believers to engage in cautious historical critical assessment of Jesus' life. This in spite of strong opposition from many evangelicals who continue to claim that such an enterprise is an unwelcome challenge to faith. The work of the *Jesus Seminar* will make the task of these



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