thorough account of what constitutes mysticism and mystical experience; scholars will appreciate a reconsideration of the largely ignored area of paranormal psychology and its effect on mystical experience. While some of the episodes described in the mystic's writings may be difficult to believe, this seems a necessary risk given Hollenback's reliance on autobiographical accounts. Furthermore, there is a tendency for Hollenback to draw too often from the experiences of Christian mystics. This work complements James's and Underhill's classic works, and in some instances surpasses them. *Mysticism: Experience, Response, and Empowerment* deserves a place on the bookshelf of every serious student of religious studies.

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With One Voice / B'Qol Echad: The Sermon on the Mount and Rabbinic Literature. **By Dennis Stoutenburg. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1996. ISBN 1-883255-051-4. Pp. ix+163.**

Some of the most familiar words in the New Testament are found in the Sermon on the Mount, yet Matthew 5-7 has proved persistently difficult for interpreters. Acknowledging this difficulty, Dennis Stoutenburg's *With One Voice* provides a fresh approach to Sermon on the Mount research.

Stoutenburg is a Canadian scholar who received his postgraduate education at the *Université de Strasbourg*. In recent years he has continued studies during several trips to Israel, and is currently professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Providence College, Manitoba. This varied background is apparent in the academic competence which he demonstrates in his analysis of both Jewish and Christian texts.

In the opening section, Stoutenburg summarizes attempts to employ rabbinic literature and a Judaic perspective "as an interpretive grid" for study of the Gospels (10-21), cautioning against the traditional "parallels approach" (4, 85-87). He finds that this approach has often failed to define legitimate "parallels," and also makes uncritical use of both rabbinic literature (25-27) and the Gospels (22-23).

Stoutenburg argues that, despite past failures (inappropriate use of rabbinic literature in the study of the New Testament), "there remains a treasure of valuable resources in [rabbinic literature] for the explanation of the thought life which presupposes the writings of the NT" (81). Yet, Stoutenburg presents this positive word about parallels carefully: his emphasis on legitimate methodology includes examples of what true parallels are not (81-87). For instance, he cautions that various similar concepts found in Judaism and the church following the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE)—especially in the area of individual and community prayer—may not in fact be highly significant. No matter how *apparently* synonymous, they "[do] not necessarily indicate any-

thing more than shared interest in a common problem in which the paths of resolution are humanly limited" (85).

A further contribution of Stoutenburg's is his development of the complexities of "layers" of the New Testament text. Before the church expanded to incorporate Gentiles, the *kerygma* had been addressed to Jews alone (87). As we have it, the New Testament reflects some distance from these Jewish roots because it very quickly branched out into the gentile world (88). The authors and editors of the Gospels, working decades after Jesus' ministry, included interpretation which developed through years of interaction with Gentiles (89). Further layers are found in the doctrinal formulations of early Christianity, occasionally visible in the manuscript tradition (e.g., 1 John 5:7-8).

The distance produced by these layers separating modern readers from the Jewish roots of the gospel message makes co-operation between Jewish and Christian scholarship necessary if Jesus and his message are to be understood. "Christians have much to say that offers reasonable explanations for the second and especially third layers of expression which clothe the gospels, but most of the second and all of the first layer of communication belongs to Judaism" (90).

With respect to the Sermon on the Mount, an approach to reading may be needed which employs the same "instincts" necessary for reading rabbinic literature, and it is suggested that one needs to be immersed in Judaic literature (72). Herein lies the point of the book: dialogue between Jewish and Christian scholars, and an ecumenical perspective are valuable keys for unlocking the mysteries of the Sermon on the Mount (5).

The need for this dialogue aside, Stoutenburg's discussion of "layers" leaves me with some questions. What about the original readers of Matthew's Gospel? Were they in any better a position to understand all of its "layers" than we are today? This would be especially germane if Matthew was not a product of Jewish, but of gentile Christianity (see Michael Pettem, "Matthew: Jewish Christian or Gentile Christian?," *ARC* 15 [1987]:30–37). Or, did Matthew intend his Gospel to be self-contained, expecting the Sermon on the Mount to be read and understood in the light of its wider context, perhaps with some knowledge of Scripture, and with the insight of the "insider's" perspective brought to the text by Christian readers? More to the point, will a new approach really shed any more light on the subject? As this short book only introduces a methodology, we will have to wait for an answer, pending a more thorough demonstration.

This said, Stoutenburg persuasively encourages the trend toward co-operation among Jewish and Christian scholars. To the extent that they do co-operate, it may also be said that biblical studies "is proceeding *with one voice*" (5). In his forward to the book, Etienne Trocme voices his hope that this small volume will be followed by larger works "that will be good illustrations of the benefits to be derived from this novel sort of Jewish-Christian scholarly co-operation!" May it be so.

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