

- Summer Institute of Linguistics), selections in Aguaruna from the Gospels, Acts and 1 Thessalonians.
1962. *All Your Needs* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society), K.J.V. selections.
1962. *Confidence* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society), K.J.V. selections.
1962. *Grace and Truth* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society), K.J.V. selections.
1965. *Priorité*, 'Priority' (Bangkok: Churches of Christ in Thailand), Selections from Matthew and Luke.

*Note:* abbreviations include:

A.B.S.	American Bible Society.
A.S.V.	American Standard Version.
B.F.B.S.	British and Foreign Bible Society.
K.J.V.	King James Version.
R.S.V.	Revised Standard Version.
R.V.	English Revised Version.
R.V.R.	Revised Reina Valera Version.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Parables of Jesus**, Revised Edition, by Joachim Jeremias, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, pp. 248; \$2.95

Every serious student of the New Testament is certainly already acquainted with Jeremias' *Parables*, available in English translation since 1954. This new English edition in paperback, based on the 6th German edition (1962), has been thoroughly revised and considerably enlarged. Exegesis of the individual parables is treated more fully, and the author has included discussion of the parables of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas.

Although all translators will not be equally convinced by the critical efforts of Jeremias to recover the historical setting and the original meaning of each parable on the ministry of Jesus, all of us must be grateful for the light that is thrown upon the use of the parables in the early church and for the careful exegetical method which is the heart of this work. For the translator, both the critical analysis of the historical situation (part two of the book) and the presentation of the message of the parables (part three), provide rich insights which will sharpen his understanding of the Biblical text and serve to improve the character of his own translation. In the text itself, and in the abundant footnotes, he will find guidance for the solution of textual problems, indications of the probable Aramaic form underlying the Greek text, careful exegetical commentary, and a clear reconstruction of the theological import of the parables.

Perhaps the clearest way to show the value of the book for the translator is to sketch the kind of help provided for the understanding of a single parable. Taking, for example, the parable of the Prodigal Son, or as Jeremias

prefers to call it, the parable of the Father's Love, one finds a clear presentation of the historical situation to which the parable was addressed. The Synoptic source involved is indicated, and the non-allegorical character of the parable is made evident. The fact that the parable ends without an application is shown to be significant, and the main purpose of the parable in the vindication of the proclamation of the Gospel to the despised and the outcast is demonstrated. That the parable is not to be understood allegorically may be seen in the statement of the Prodigal, 'I have sinned against heaven (i.e. God) and against thee'. The legal situation of the day which made it possible for the Prodigal to receive his inheritance is clearly explained on the basis of Rabbinic materials.

The statement that the Prodigal 'gathered all together' is shown to mean that he turned all the property into cash. The unexpected change of subject in verse 15 is explained as a Semitism. The problems raised by verse 16 are answered by the suggestion that the text should be translated, 'And he would have been only too glad to fill his belly with the carob-beans with which the swine were fed (but he was too disgusted to do so), and no one gave him (anything to eat)'.

That the Prodigal 'came back to himself' is shown to be a Semitic way of expressing his repentance, and 'rising, I will go' is the equivalent of 'I will go at once'. There are also significant details which help in understanding the actions of the father in welcoming the Prodigal home. Furthermore, the book points out the integral relationship between the two parts of the parable and shows how the action of the elder brother is to be interpreted in the historical setting. In addition to all of these and other details of exegesis, the author provides us with a clear over-all picture and helps to generate within us that sympathetic identification which is so necessary for good translation.

This book ought to be studied carefully and left in a handy place on the translator's desk. It will certainly be one of the first books for which he reaches when his task brings him to one of the parables.

HEBER F. PEACOCK

**Invitation to the New Testament, A Guide to its Main Witnesses, by W. D. Davies, Darton, Longman and Todd, Ltd., 540 pages; 50s.**

Professor Davies has written a non-technical guide to the Gospels and to Paul which has been stimulated by his teenage daughter's criticisms and questions. She must have a very acute mind, and a considerable amount of perseverance if she has read all the 540 pages.

The going, however, would have been far from heavy. The usual 'introduction' material is attractively and straightforwardly presented, from a good, middle-of-the-road point of view which this reviewer finds much to his mind. Quotations are helpfully given in full. References to the world of New Testament times are interesting and relevant. Modern parallels and poetical quotations are always illuminating. Striking phrases remain with one, such as 'Paul's theology . . . wrought . . . in the maelstrom of a missionary life' (pp. 233-4).