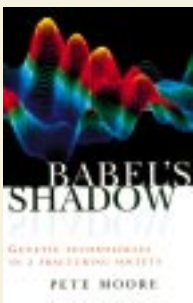


BOOKS

Babel's Shadow - Genetic Technologies in a Fracturing Society



Pete Moore
Oxford 2000
£18.00 pp 256 HB
ISBN 0 7459 4423 X

If you want to update yourself with molecular biology and the implications of the human

genome project, then this is the book for you. Pete Moore's name may be familiar as series editor of the *CMF Files*. He has a gift for making complicated technology easy to understand. The early chapters, which describe molecular technology, are a model of his lucidity. The following chapters contain discussions on the medical applications of this technology, personhood, personality and the role of personal responsibility as the genetic bases for personality traits are discovered. Cloning, insurance, employment and forensic issues are all tackled, and a balanced view on the implications for each are given.

The author's Christian viewpoint is frequently expressed. He uses a metaphor of a new tower of Babel, with 'technology man' saying: 'Come let us build ourselves an industry... so that we may make a name for ourselves, build future generations to our own specifications and not be afflicted by any disease or illness'.

He stresses our need to be aware of pressure from different sources: parents for flawless babies, professionals to deliver these and health economists to reduce the number of individuals suffering from expensive, chronic disability. He argues that the possibility of altering genes must not distract us from our responsibility to alter society, and that market forces must not be allowed to control these new developments. He states that genetic technology has potential for good but only if we are prepared to use it in a spirit of humility and concern for our neighbour. Pete Moore believes that we are unable to assess the inflated claims often made unless we have some basic understanding

of the new technology. Reading this book is the first stage to making a contribution in this vital area.

Caroline Berry, Emeritus Consultant Geneticist, London

Running for Revival



Ruth McGavin
Christian Focus Publications 1999
£6.99 Pb 350pp
ISBN 1 85 792 522 X

This biography of Harry (Henry Brash) Bonsall is written by his daughter who

once lived with her ophthalmologist husband Murray in Afghanistan. It is recommended by George Verwer, International Director of *Operation Mobilisation* and has a foreword by Brother Andrew.

Harry, born in Preston UK in 1905 into a godly family tree, emigrated to Canada with his parents in 1913. He started preaching as a child. He stood up against modernism and was present at the start of the Student Christian Fundamentalist Society in 1925 which became the Canadian Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Toronto in 1928. This had links with the British IVF (now UCCF) and Douglas Johnson, CMF's first General Secretary, was responsible for sending Howard Guinness to work with them.

After years of training, ministry often in remote prairies, rather strange illnesses and being confined to bed for three years (where he learned to pray) Harry was led back to the UK in 1935 with a vision to start Bible Colleges to prepare for a revival which would happen after at least 50 years. He taught in several Bible Colleges, was held back by war and experienced opposition both from Spiritualists and from staff and students. Eventually the Birmingham Bible Institute materialised. He remained there over 35 years until he had handed on the responsibility to others and was called home at the age of 85 still longing to see the revival come. The marathon race is still being run.

Harry is unconventional, shy but a leader and a visionary who needed others

to make the system work. He was greatly supported by his mother Gettie and later his wife Dosie. His proposal of marriage to her in 1949 was abrupt and providential in its timing. The accumulation of the property that became the Bible Institute resulted from steps of faith that caused his friend and accountant at one stage to threaten resignation. But at the end of his life his advice to others was to take the Red Sea Route, depending on God for an impossible sea crossing, rather than to take a clear-cut land route. He and Dosie made students and others a part of their extended family. He prayed for them and with them. It was not always clear when he was talking to them and when to God. He wrote theological books that were both academic and inspirational. There are many hilarious stories about him but behind them was a disciplined spiritual life, a commitment to a single vision and a teaching ministry based on the twin pillars of the Spirit and the Word.

David Clegg is CMF Overseas Support Secretary

Health Care Beyond 2000 - Reconciliation and Integrity Through Christ. Proceedings of the ICMDA 11th World Congress



ICMDA 2000
£7.00 Pb 296pp
ISBN 0 620 26176 5

World Congresses have been held by the International Christian Medical and Dental Fellowship (ICMDA) every 3-4 years since 1963. The last Congress was held in Durban, South Africa in 1998 and attended by over 1,000 doctors from 60 countries. 100 students from 20 countries met at the Student Conference in Pietermaritzburg before joining the main conference. The proceedings of this Congress have been published in this book and are stimulating and highly relevant to medicine in the 21st century. Biblical principles are examined, relevant



applications made, and moving testimonies of Christian experience are given from different cultural backgrounds.

The book contains the full text of plenary talks. Ten talks from the main conference include, 'Integrity in Medical Decision Making', 'Uniting Faith and Medicine', and 'The Role of the Christian doctor and dentist in preventing the Demoralisation of Healthcare'. Similar themes are continued in the student sessions, with talks on 'The Myth of Moral Neutrality', 'Christian World View' and 'African World View'. The abstracts of 43 thought-provoking parallel sessions are also given. These are more focussed on specific issues such as AIDS, abortion, medical mission and the family.

With at least 59 contributors from all over the world, a wide range of issues are covered in a helpful and challenging way from an international perspective. I wholeheartedly recommend this book.

Stephen Browne is a General Practitioner in Birmingham

Comfort and Care in Final Illness



*June Kolf
Sheldon Press 2000
£6.99 Pb 128pp
ISBN 0 85969 833 5*

June Kolf has had a great deal of experience of caring for terminally ill people. She was a

hospice volunteer and bereavement counsellor in California, and has been involved in caring for dying relatives. Out of this experience she has compiled a helpful guide to comfort and caring for people who have reached an incurable stage of illness.

The book is divided into a section for the patient and another for the carer. Mrs Kolf covers physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of the patient's experience; the carer's role, communication issues, making final arrangements and death itself. There is a good section on spiritual care. The writer speaks naturally of the benefits many find from prayer, the importance of forgiveness

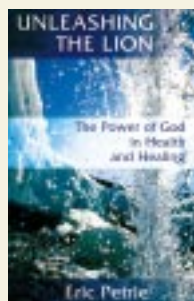
and forgiving, and of peace with God. Her writing is practical and readable. She concludes with lists of helpful addresses and of appropriate further reading.

Originally written for an American readership, the book has been well adapted for British readers although there are still some Americanisms (What is the 'proverbial dropping of the second shoe'? - p9) Some of the references to home-hospice and hospice volunteers are truer of the American scene than of the British. She seems not to know that UK hospices do not charge fees (unlike America - p19).

Mrs Kolf provides excellent ideas and up-to-date suggestions (see her comments on the cordless phone and e-mail - p40) and much comes from her own memories of caring. I found the directive nature of her advice rather irritating after a while. 'Do not fight your pain, but do not suffer in silence either. Let your carer ... know you hurt.... Strive to get the greatest relief... Experiment under your doctor's direction to find the best treatment...' (p10) is an example of much of her style. Nevertheless, I think this book will prove helpful for many carers and for people who are facing their final illness.

Anthony Smith is a Hospice Doctor in Canterbury

Unleashing the Lion - The Power of God in Health and Healing



*Eric Petrie
SPCK 2000
£14.99 Pb 217pp
ISBN 0 281 05324 3*

This is a perplexing book. It provides analysis of some of Christ's healings and challenging

anecdotes. It gives a humbling review of the history of medicine and a useful history of Christian healing. It contains a passionate discussion on the problem of suffering. It also warns against abuses by the church, such as raising expectations falsely, applying rituals without consent, and accusing those unable to be healed of

having insufficient faith. Sentence by sentence, the writing is a pleasure to read.

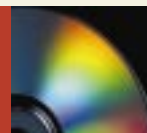
Overall, though, the book has no sense of direction and could leave a novice confused. My biggest concern is the approach to Scripture. The book states, for example: 'We do not have any direct, unbiased, first-hand accounts of anything that Jesus said or did', and, 'The Gospel writers were concerned with the meaning of Jesus' life, not the facts'. Furthermore, it says, 'They were ... propagandists, publishing underground radical pamphlets', and even, 'Luke may possibly have put a speech into the mouth of Paul in Athens'.

The most disturbing theological error occurs when the author claims that we, in the face of our own suffering, see God as guilty and need to forgive him for what he has done. I can accept that we may feel this way and may have a subjective, emotional need to forgive God. But the author does not make it clear that it is our limited understanding which is at fault, and that there cannot possibly be any objective need to forgive God. In not making this clear, I think the author is very seriously wrong.

This is not a book for those wondering about receiving Christian healing as it will probably put them off. It is not a book for beginners in the field. It is a book for the experienced who want a challenge. It will not 'comfort the afflicted' but I guarantee it will rather 'afflict the comfortable'!

Andrew Fergusson is Chairman of Acorn Christian Foundation

**The CMF Website
on CD-ROM
£3 (Special Offer)**



The CMF website is now available on CD-ROM: over 30 back issues of *Nucleus* and 10 issues of *Triple Helix* together with ten years of CMF government submissions on ethics, the full set of *CMF Files*, a year's supply of daily devotions, the *Confident Christianity* evangelism training course, 'Cyberdoc' web reviews, a quarterly newsround of issues in medical ethics and much more. Most queries can be answered within two or three mouse-clicks from the homepage. To order see the insert.