

BOOK REVIEWS

The Context of Scripture. Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002. Vol. 1: *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, xxviii + 599 pp., \$129.00; Vol. 2: *Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World*, xxvi + 438 pp., \$131.00; Vol. 3: *Archival Documents from the Biblical World*, liv + 406 pp., \$129.00.

William Hallo's monumental work, *The Context of Scripture* (COS), is the logical successor to James Pritchard's equally ambitious (for its time) *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (ANET), which has served as the standard for English readers since 1950 (3rd ed., 1969). Their aims are very similar. ANET's goal was "to make available to students of the ancient Near East—serious students of the Old Testament, we believe, are necessarily such—the most important extrabiblical texts in translations which represent the best understanding which present-day scholarship has achieved" (p. xix). COS's purpose is "to assemble the existing renderings [of ancient Near Eastern texts], update them where necessary, and indicate their relevance for biblical scholarship" (1:xxv).

Beyond this, COS's aims are more ambitious and nuanced, even if a bit confused in their expression. They are to bring together a "combination of an intertextual and a contextual approach to biblical literature [that] holds out the promise that this millennial corpus will continue to yield new meanings on all levels: the meaning that it holds for ourselves in our contemporary context[;] the meanings it has held for readers, worshippers, artists and others in the two millennia and more since the close of the canon; the meaning that it held for its own authors and the audiences of their times; and finally the meanings that it held when it was part of an earlier literary corpus. It is to the clarification of that oldest level of meaning that *The Context of Scripture* is dedicated" (1:xxviii). (The ambiguity in this statement lies in the antecedent for "it" in the first sentence: grammatically, it most naturally should be "this millennial corpus," but in the context of the statement, it appears to be "biblical literature.")

COS's expanded goals reflect a half-century's worth of discussion on the place of ancient Near Eastern texts in the study of the Bible (and also the reverse question). No longer are biblical and ancient Near Eastern texts simply to be lined up and "compared," on a one-to-one basis, as many did in the first part of the 20th century. Now, scholars of a "contextual" approach—of whom Hallo is the leading spokesman—speak of understanding the Bible's context in both a vertical and a horizontal dimension, and Hallo highlights this as one of the major differences between COS and ANET (1:xxv–xxvi). The horizontal dimension is roughly the synchronic one—i.e. the geographical, historical, religious, political, and literary setting in which a given text was created and disseminated (1:xxv)—whereas the vertical dimension is roughly the diachronic (or "intertextual") one—i.e. "a vertical axis between the earlier texts that helped inspire it and later texts that reacted to it" (1:xxvi). This diachronic dimension functions on the text-critical level (where there are multiple copies and editions of the same text) as well as for purposes of comparison of different texts that are related genre-wise.

ANET accounted very well for the horizontal dimension, but not as self-consciously as COS for the vertical one. Thus, for example (to illustrate the text-critical principle), in ANET, Theophile J. Meek's translation of Hammurapi's law code is done from the

Louvre stela, supplemented in a few cases by one tablet from Nippur, and large gaps nevertheless remain in the resulting text, whereas in *COS*, Martha Roth's translation takes into account some 50 different versions, and almost no gaps remain. In addition (to illustrate the genre principle), *COS* comments much more in its introductions about relations among the various law codes from different time periods—Lipit-Ishtar, Eshnunna, Hammurapi, Middle Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and others—than does *ANET*.

The geographical breadth of coverage in *ANET* and *COS* is similar. Each volume in *COS* covers Egyptian, Hittite, West Semitic, Akkadian, and Sumerian texts, in that order. In *ANET*, the first organizing principle was genre, not geography, but its geographical reach was roughly the same.

COS is a larger project than *ANET*, containing more texts and a greater number and variety of contributors. *ANET* began with 11 contributors in 1950 and grew to all of 18 by 1969. By contrast, *COS* includes a total of 63 contributors, 37 in volume 1, 33 in volume 2 (22 of these new), and 17 in volume 3 (4 new). Several of *COS*'s contributors are recognized evangelicals—including the project's associate editor, K. Lawson Younger, Jr., whose role was more akin to a co-editor—whereas no evangelicals were represented in *ANET*. *ANET*'s three editions came to a total of 735 folio-sized pages, while *COS*'s three volumes come to 1,551 equally large-sized pages. Both works contain the standard apparatus for aid in reading, such as introductions for each text by the translators, bibliographies, explanatory notes, scriptural cross-references, and extensive indexes of Scripture and topics, although *COS*'s indexes are significantly more extensive. Another difference between the two projects is that *ANET*'s translations were all done specifically for that work, whereas *COS* uses some translations that have appeared previously in addition to its original translations.

COS uses four criteria for inclusion, all things being equal: (1) newer texts, whether newly discovered or newly reedited; (2) complete texts; (3) well-preserved texts; and (4) texts shown to be relevant to biblical studies. In practice, the preference for newer texts means many texts from *ANET* are missing, although all of the most famous "standards" are included, such as the great creation or flood myths, the important law codes (Eshnunna, Lipit-Ishtar, Hammurapi, and others), the tale of Sinuhe, the Baal myths, the Assyrian royal annals (Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, Sennacherib, and others), the Babylonian Chronicle, the Babylonian Theodicy, and many more. Two disappointments for me nevertheless were (1) the inclusion in *COS* only of Tablet 11 of the Gilgamesh Epic—vs. all 12 tablets of the epic in *ANET*—rendering a contextual understanding of the Babylonian flood story more difficult; and (2) the omission in *COS* of the administrative documents listing the provisions given to Jehoiachin in Babylonian captivity (see *ANET* 308), seemingly minor texts but with important connections to 2 Kgs 25:27–30.

How is *COS* organized? Volume 1 contains what Hallo calls "canonical compositions," a term that has confused some reviewers. By this, he does not mean "holy" or "religious" texts like the Bible, but rather works belonging to the Mesopotamian or Hittite "canon," i.e., those compositions intended for long-term preservation, studied, copied, and preserved in the scribal schools (2.xxi). (The term is used today in such phrases as "the Shakespearean canon" or "the Western canon," i.e. a standard, bounded corpus of works that is preserved and studied. Likewise, scholars of Mesopotamia often refer to the "Ashurbanipal canon" to refer to the great collections of works this king assembled in the library at Nineveh.)

Under the five geographical headings mentioned above, the canonical compositions in volume 1 are further classified in terms of their "focus": divine, royal, and individual. Under "Divine Focus" are found cosmologies, myths, hymns, prayers, rituals, incantations, divinations, lamentations, even certain songs and love poems. Under "Royal Focus" are grouped historiographical texts, biographies and autobiographies, epics, royal hymns, oracles, and certain instructions. Under "Individual Focus" are found narra-

tives, “prophecies,” instructions and school texts, love poems, proverbs and other wisdom texts, even disputations, fables, and humor. Needless to say, not every one of these categories is attested in every geographical area.

The monumental inscriptions in volume 2 consist of everything from great building inscriptions and royal annals, which are relatively lengthy, to short seal impressions and inscriptions on bowls, ivories, etc. Some of the categories overlap those in volume 1, particularly some of the Hittite inscriptions. For example, in this volume, the “Bilingual Edict of Ḫattušili I (2.15)” and “The Ten Year Annals of Great King Muršili of Ḫatti (2.16),” both monumental texts, are very similar in genre to the “historiographical” texts in vol. 1, the “Deeds of Šuppiluliuma (1.74)” or “Šuppiluliuma II’s two inscriptions telling of “The Hittite Conquest of Cyprus (1.75).”

The archival inscriptions in volume 3 consist mostly of letters, contracts, court cases, and other legal documents. Volume 3 also contains two extensive and helpful indexes for the entire work: (1) Scripture (18 pp.) and (2) names and topics (44 pp.). The latter consists mostly of names (divine, royal, geographical, ethnic, personal, including many biblical names), but it also (unlike *ANET*) includes some topics (e.g. conditional law, creation, more than a dozen festivals, magic, marriage and marriage customs, scribes, and soul), and more specific items (e.g. asherah, *atef*-crown, bison, *haltikku*-wool, irrigation canal, juniper, plow, and yoke). Another helpful feature not found in *ANET* is the “Register of Contributors” (3.405–6), where one can see at a glance exactly which texts each contributor has translated.

In addition to the short prefaces in each volume and the short introductions to each text, *COS* also contains seven useful essays on the “contextual” approach, one each in volumes 1 and 2 and five in volume 3, three by Hallo and one each by James K. Hoffmeier, Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., K. Lawson Younger, Jr., and David B. Weisberg.

The translations in *COS* are mostly smooth, “NIV-style” renditions. Certainly some of the “KJV” feel of *ANET* is done away with (e.g. “man” now replaces the archaic “seignior” for *awilu(m)* in the laws of Hammurapi, although losing something of the essence of *awilu* in the process). Originally, Hallo desired to use this project as a test of translation theory, whereby there would be “a 1:1 relation in which each word (and only that word) is rendered by an English equivalent,” not only within one language but for every language (1.xxvi). Not surprisingly, this extreme formal-equivalence approach was unattainable, a fact Hallo himself admits in the end (3.xiii).

How can *COS* be used? Essentially in the same ways that *ANET* has been. *COS* is obviously more up to date, so we find accessible translations of all the important discoveries in recent decades, including the Kuntillet Ajrud inscriptions containing the references to “Yahweh of Teman and his asherah,” the Jerusalem pomegranate, containing a likely reference to “the temple of Yahweh,” the Tel Dan stele, containing the reference to “the house of David,” the Ketef Hinnom amulets, containing the Aaronic blessing, the Deir Alla plaster inscriptions, containing references to Balaam, and many more, both well-publicized and more obscure. A welcome expansion in *COS* is the relatively larger corpus of Hittite texts included compared to *ANET*. The publisher intends to release *COS* on CD-ROM, as it did with *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (according to Younger in a personal communication), which will allow for greatly expanded uses. It is to be hoped that Brill—as Pritchard did—will also release one or two smaller paperback versions that are more suited to classroom work than the large, three-volume set.

What is the value of *COS*? In a word: enormous. Assembling this work in a little over a decade was a monumental task for Hallo and Younger, and they deserve much credit for the superior line-up of scholars, the fine choices of texts, and the excellent overall presentation of the work. There is much here to be explored, savored, and used. Given the fast-paced world of archaeological discovery and the advances in publishing,

COS may not enjoy undisputed sway in biblical studies for close to 50 years the way ANET did, but it undoubtedly will do so for several decades. This treasure trove of texts is a true gift to the scholarly world, and we who study these texts—both biblical and extrabiblical—owe Brill, the editors, and their teams of contributors a great debt of thanks.

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Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch. Edited by T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, 954 pp., \$34.95.

With the publication of the *Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch* (DOTP), IVP has released the fifth “black dictionary,” and the first of five projected for the OT (future volumes include *Historical Books*, *Wisdom and Poetry*, *Prophets*, and *Old Testament Backgrounds*). The 158 articles were written by 86 contributors (18 from UK, 4 from Canada, 54 from the US, 3 from Australia, and 7 from other countries). Along with cross-references the Scripture and Subject indexes (pp. 922–41, 942–53) are invaluable for efficient use. In addition most entries conclude with a substantive bibliography, more valuable for the scholar than pastor.

In many ways, the DOTP marks the coming of age for pentateuchal studies in evangelicalism, assessing its past and plotting a future. Even forty years ago source criticism would have dominated a dictionary on the Pentateuch, peppered the articles with “conservative” and “liberal” language, and likely would have been unable to muster an adequate pool of scholars. That said, it is encouraging to see some scholars working with an evangelical majority who would not have done so traditionally. The DOTP reveals the state of pentateuchal studies as more articulate in historiographical and literary complexities, and pursuing a greater creativity and breadth of ideas. Moreover, the DOTP demonstrates that collaboration from various backgrounds can address key problems for mutual benefit.

As with previous “black dictionaries,” the DOTP has solicited articles from experts in their given field: R. Averbeck (Sacrifices and Offerings), M. Chavalas (Archaeology), J. Hartley (Atonement, Day of), R. Hess (Language of the Pentateuch), K. Kitchen (Egypt, Egyptians), V. Matthews (Social-Scientific Approaches), G. McConville (Deuteronomy, Book of), J. McKeown (Blessings and Curses, Land), E. Merrill (Chronology), and A. Millard (Writing), to name but a few. Not to detract from the 86 contributors, it is nonetheless puzzling to find no entries from such scholars as B. Waltke, E. Yamauchi, J. Hoffmeier, A. Ross, W. Kaiser, W. Dumbrell, V. Hamilton, J. Sailhamer, G. Goldsworthy, D. Tsumura, D. Block, M. Futado, and G. Wenham.

The absence of some leading lights notwithstanding, it would still be hard to find a better collection of articles on pentateuchal topics (see Index, p. 954). There are the expected names (e.g. “Adam,” “Moses”), places, (e.g. “Cities of Refuge”), critical issues (e.g. “Exodus, Date of”), theological discussions (e.g. “Sin, Guilt”), and general topics (e.g. “Travel and Transportation”). Many may find the discussion of various methodologies (e.g. “Literary/Narrative Criticism,” “Social-Scientific Approaches,” etc.) enlightening if not a ballast given the stigma (enigma?) of pentateuchal scholarship and the often dense skin of historical-critical issues that limits some in pentateuchal studies and causes others to despair altogether (see “Source Criticism” [pp. 798–805], “Pentateuchal Criticism, History of” [pp. 622–31], etc.). Since critical study of the Pentateuch, even within evangelicalism, has too often allowed a dichotomy to exist between

exegesis and exposition, the article on "Preaching the Pentateuch" (pp. 637–43) stands out as long overdue. The Pentateuch forms the inner rings of a canonical tree that cannot be ignored, and could be the easiest corpus to preach poorly. McMickle seems correct in noting the difficulty preachers face trying to explain ancient customs and culture, a situation exacerbated within an age of rationalism (p. 637). His assertion that "God did not merely identify with the oppressed. God also called those newly liberated people into a relationship of accountability . . ." (p. 641) is also a timely reminder in an era of liberation theologies and advocacy criticisms. There is a growing need to creatively communicate the transcendent "oughtness" of these earliest of texts to a church cynical of the academy. The DOPT may be a catalyst for a new generation of pentateuchal exposition.

While many may find a topic addressed that is not, it seems that the Article Index (p. 954) could have dedicated *full entries* for such significant topics in the Pentateuch as: "ark," "barrenness," "Bethel," "birthright," "Canaan," "Dead Sea Scrolls," "Hebrew(s)," "historiography," "Jordan River," "Kadesh-barnea," "memory," "mythology," "Negev," "Passover," "plagues," "rebellion," "sacred space," "Septuagint," "Sinai," "tribe(s)," "wells," "worship," etc. As it stands, "barrenness," "birth," "birthright," "memory," "rebellion," "tribe," and "wells," are not even found in the Subject Index. In my opinion, entries on the function of the "birthright" (e.g. patriarchal narratives), the continued contribution of Septuagint research (e.g. E. Ulrich Jr., "The Septuagintal Manuscripts from Qumran: A Reappraisal of Their Value," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* [ed. G. Brooke and B. Lindars; SBLSCS 33; Scholars, 1992]), the thematic significance of water and "wells" (e.g. W. Propp, *Exodus 1–18* [AB] 579–81, 609–13), or the theological significance of "memory" would be far more helpful in a dictionary on the Pentateuch than an article on the "Daughters of Zelophehad" (p. 912), which might be better addressed under inheritance laws. When such topics are relegated to a Subject Index (if at all), the usefulness of the DOPT is diminished.

Only a sampling and brief critique of some entries is possible. The article on "Joseph" (pp. 469–77) is excellent. Genesis commentaries are often weakest in their discussions of chaps. 37–50, ironically, where the narrator shows up most. Longacre's discussion of the "Joseph Clans" (pp. 476–77) is fresh, particularly the function of Shechem as a pre-conquest possession of Israel (cf. John 4:5–6).

Oswalt's "Theology of the Pentateuch" (pp. 845–59) is stimulating in both traditional and more recent emphases (e.g. "The Gender of God," pp. 848–49). Commenting on God as "Father" in light of Exodus 33 (Moses' intercession), Oswalt writes, "The land without the presence of God would be worthless. . . . The people's primary need was not for deliverance from bondage or for possession of a land; it was for a face-to-face relationship with the personal, fatherly God" (p. 854). I was chiefly struck with Oswalt's discussion of God's transcendence as defining for Israel's faith (pp. 846–48). The statement, "Sin is not merely an offense against God's will; it is much more an offense against the order of creation . . ." (p. 855) offers a corrective to much in evangelical theology that has divorced redemption from creation and in so doing has reduced theology to issues of salvation, minimizing the *cosmic* effects of sin and trivializing God's transcendence.

P. Williams's article on textual criticism (pp. 834–41) would be enriched by a discussion of critical editions of the Hebrew Bible still in process (e.g. *HUB*, *HOTTP*, *Biblia Hebraica*) as well as noting the significance of the Aleppo Codex (A, ca. AD 925) and the recent publication of a non-critical Hebrew Bible based on it (*Jerusalem Crown: The Bible of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem* [Jerusalem: N. Ben-Zvi Printing Enterprises, 2000]).

S. Andrews's discussion of "Melchizedek" (pp. 562–64) was balanced, acknowledging the Versions and key points in the history of interpretation. I would merely add that Melchizedek's gift of bread and wine marks Abram's victory celebration (cf. 4Q434a;

11Q14 for similar meal benedictions), while *El Elyon* (14:19, 20) is honored for the fact of military victory—his gift. Abram adds *YHWH* to *El Elyon* (14:22) as a theological claim only when the dialogue switches to the king of Sodom. Both Abram and Melchizedek acknowledge “the Creator of heaven and earth” (vv. 19, 22) but Abram has a higher revelation than Melchizedek and as *YHWH*’s servant is the only one able to effectively broker peace in the land. These details point to the rhetorical use of *YHWH* in the narrative moving beyond the text-critical issue of “*YHWH*” and requiring “interpolation” to be defined carefully for Gen 14:17–20 (see Tov, *Textual Criticism* [2d ed.] 281–84).

The otherwise helpful article on “Genesis” (pp. 350–59) by L. Turner omits the seminal work of D. Clines in his discussion of structure (p. 356), the role of Genesis 1–11 (p. 357) and the implications of promise and blessing (p. 357), key issues for Clines’s contribution. Anyone wanting interaction with Clines is led to “Covenant” (p. 145), “Literary/Narrative Criticism” (pp. 538–40), and “Literary Structure of the Pentateuch” (p. 546).

To me, the article on “Hermeneutics” (pp. 387–401) was disappointing. Functioning more as a “history of approaches,” J. Goldingay begins with the “Christological” and ends with the “Postmodern,” himself advocating “experience” and personal “awareness” as primary in the interpretative process (see “Conclusion,” p. 400).

Such critique in no way detracts from the broader value of the volume. The DOTP updates, informs, and synthesizes on critical, methodological, and theological issues. It seems that pentateuchal studies today revolve around three general approaches to the text: epigenetic-historical, thematic-theological, and linguistic-ideological. While each is visible, there is an increasing mix of these approaches. B. Arnold reminds us, “A Christian approach to the biblical text will be a holistic view, which means it will never appropriate only that portion which can be squeezed into a predetermined naturalistic system” (“Pentateuchal Criticism, History of,” p. 630). The DOTP is an excellent text for various OT graduate classes. Both pastor and scholar will find it a worthy purchase, though some articles may be beyond some pastors. Regardless of one’s theological orientation, the DOTP will have to be consulted.

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Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages. Edited by John Kaltner and Steven L. McKenzie. Resources for Biblical Study 42. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002, xiii + 241 pp., \$29.95 paper.

Notwithstanding a few critical issues of concern to evangelicals, *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages* will certainly be regarded as a most welcome supplementary textbook by Biblical Hebrew teachers and students alike. The stated purpose is to provide “a general orientation to the languages of importance for the study of the Hebrew Bible for readers who have not had detailed exposure to those languages” (p. vii). Ostensibly, the book targets students just beginning their academic career in the Hebrew Bible. Kaltner and McKenzie do admit that a familiarity with Biblical Hebrew is presupposed; but in reality, this is not a text to offer first-year students as recommended reading. The orthographical, morphological, and syntactical features presented for each language in *Beyond Babel* is more suitable to what I have elsewhere called Level Three proficiency: students possessing a working knowledge of basic Hebrew grammatical principles with an ability to recognize forms, roots, parts of speech,

and syntactical relationships (cf. "Some Knowledge of Hebrew Possible to All," *Faith & Mission* 13 [1995] 108).

The languages or language groups examined in *Beyond Babel* (Akkadian; Ammonite, Edomite, and Moabite; Arabic; Aramaic; Egyptian; Hebrew [Biblical, Epigraphic, and Post Biblical]; Hittite; Phoenician; and Ugaritic) are considered by Kaltner and McKenzie to be the most significant "for purposes of comparative grammar and lexicography or for comparative history and literature, or both" (p. vii). Sumerian, Syriac, and Greek are not included. The editors suggest Syriac and Greek might hopefully be included in a companion volume on the NT. Unfortunately, Sumerian, on the other hand, might make the cut only if the volume goes into a second edition.

The chapters are written by scholars with proven track records of publishing in each language. John Huehnergard was tapped to write the first chapter, an introduction to the comparative study of Near Eastern languages in general, including issues relating to the Semitic language family, scripts and transliteration, historical linguistics, and common features. For the rest of the book Kaltner and McKenzie lay out a three-part format. Each chapter is to provide an overview of the language, its significance for the study of the Bible, and a review of the ancient sources of the language and its literature as well as the appropriate modern resources employed in its study.

As is sometimes true in a book of collected essays, the work is of unequal value. Peggy Day's study of Ugaritic contains far too few lexical examples or textual comparisons for this important Semitic language. She passes over the verbal system with not one citation of a relevant Ugaritic example. One of her concerns appears to be refuting a "probiblical bias" that presumes "sexuality and reproduction to be the interpretive keys to understanding female deities" (p. 233). In addition, the lack of footnotes does not help the reader interested in verifying her conclusions or in further study.

Donald B. Redford's chapter on Egyptian provides a well documented study, as full as possible within the limited confines of the work (pp. 109–37). His eight-page bibliography is the most extensive in the entire book. A good bit of technical jargon surfaces in this chapter. Students are advised to keep a linguistic dictionary handy while working through Redford's treatment. For evangelicals, Redford's outright rejection of the historicity of the exodus is disappointing but not surprising. Redford maintains the story of the exodus holds only "dim memories" of the expulsion of the Hyksos. These memories were then expanded and fictionalized by the biblical writers in the 7th–6th centuries BCE (p. 119).

On the other hand, Huehnergard's introduction, Marcus's study of Akkadian, Kaltner's treatment of Arabic, and Hackett's chapter on biblical and epigraphic Hebrew are of great value, leaving the reader with a desire for each to be longer. The competent studies in the rest of the book make it all the more worth its price. Hoffner's look at Hittite includes a valuable comparison of Hittite compositions and relevant biblical texts. Jo Ann Hackett's discussion of the changes that took place during the long history of Hebrew pronunciation will help the beginning student to understand why the place names Gaza and Gomorrah both begin with an ϑ in Hebrew but a γ in Greek.

A minor frustration concerns the book's use of transliteration. In these days of computer-generated copy it seems a pity the actual scripts could not be used alongside translations. A combination would actually help the student learn by seeing the actual script and then its transliteration. Surprisingly, Kaltner's study of Arabic does the best job in this regard. Perhaps this will be left to the second edition. At any rate, *Beyond Babel* should become required reading for all biblical Hebrew teachers.

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A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew. By Duane A. Garrett. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002, vii + 395 pp., n.p.

Duane Garrett has made a fine contribution to the realm of teaching Hebrew grammar. He arranges 62 relatively brief lessons or sections (anywhere between 1–9 pages each) under six headings: the alphabets and phonetics of Hebrew; nouns, adjectives, prepositions, and the basics of verbs; the Hebrew verb system in summary; the Qal stem in detail; the derived stems in detail; and additional details and introduction to advanced issues. The volume concludes with several appendices that provide a listing of Hebrew-English vocabulary, a smaller English-Hebrew vocabulary, a list of proper names, a glossary, answer key, and several paradigms.

The bulk of each lesson or section introduces the student to another set of new grammatical issues followed by a vocabulary list, exercises, and a brief chapter summary that provides hints for memorization. Numerous helpful charts are interspersed throughout the volume. Garrett introduces his readers to the verbal system initially in section 6 and then more fully in sections 8 and 9, compared to lesson 12 in the grammars by Kelley (p. 80) and Pratico and Van Pelt (p. 121). Consequently, students using this volume read at the clause level relatively soon after starting their venture into learning the Hebrew language.

Garrett's volume is distinctive in that he introduces his readers to basic concepts of Hebrew poetry, Hebrew text linguistics, strategies for reading biblical law, proverbial and prophetic literature, and textual criticism. Another feature that students will enjoy is the PDF file located on the publisher's website that provides a companion workbook containing all the exercises with more space between each problem. This provides the student with more workspace without unnecessarily adding to the volume's cost and provides a convenient way for professors to collect their students' work (if desired).

Another great feature of the book is that it requires the user to translate various blocks of OT Hebrew text: Gen 5:1–32; 8:3–7; Exod 19:1–8, 7:25; 20:1–17; Deut 6:4–5; 1 Kgs 17:1–24; 2 Chr 13:1–16:13; Pss 87:1–6; 112:1–10; Prov 14:8–15; Isa 2:1–11; and all of Jonah. In addition to these blocks of text, the exercises include individual verses from all parts of the OT.

After introducing the Hebrew verbal system (perfect, imperfect, imperative, infinitive, and participle), Garrett introduces the student to the derived stems and weak verbal roots in broad terms. He then introduces the Qal stem in detail, as it appears with various weak roots. The fifth section of the book gives attention to the derived stems with weak verbal roots.

In addition to the features mentioned above, Garrett's provision of an answer key serves as a great tool. Although professors of Hebrew will continue to debate the ultimate value of answer keys for students, in my years of teaching Hebrew grammar I have found a good answer key relieves a good deal of frustration and enhances learning for most students.

As the above overview indicates, I have found Garrett's grammar textbook helpful and enjoyable. Presently teaching through it for the third time, I also have a few suggestions that would improve its usefulness. Apart from differences in teaching/learning philosophies (that would affect the way something is presented) and idiosyncrasies all Hebrew professors have about certain points of grammar, Garrett's text desperately needs a comprehensive subject index to help teachers and students find where a given grammatical concept receives treatment. The number of vocabulary words and the ones Garrett chooses also can be burdensome. If a student memorizes all the provided words, he will learn about 400 words each semester. One could significantly reduce and focus these lists by selecting those words that occur 75 times or more. Also, the parsing sections of the exercises can be tedious because of the repetition of the same forms. I would agree repetition is essential to learning a new set of forms introduced in a given lesson.

However, the introduction of a bit of variety might hold the students accountable to remember other forms as well.

Although one can see that section six serves as a place to attend to certain untouched grammatical features, a few of them could be moved forward with great profit. Since certain key accents are so helpful to recognizing clause structure (and thereby helping the struggling student see key breaks), accents deserve attention as early as the verbs are introduced. The jussive and cohortative forms demand attention when the imperative is covered. In light of the frequency of verbal forms that have pronominal suffixes, they deserve attention after the student has been exposed to the Hebrew verbal system in general (about midway through the volume as with Kelley's and Pratico and Van Pelt's grammars). Finally, Hebrew students would greatly profit if the feminine gender of nouns were consistently marked (in light of the numerous "cloaked" feminine forms) and if adjectives were marked as such (given the potential substantival function of adjectives).

As one would expect with any recently published volume that is detailed and technical, Garrett's grammar is not without its errors or points of frustration. Various words in the exercises are found nowhere in the glossary at the end of the volume. In a few places the exercises draw on grammatical concepts not introduced until a few lessons later. Having said this, Garrett has been very willing to receive any comments I have sent his way.

I have found Garrett's Hebrew grammar textbook a profitable tool to help students down the road of learning this important language. In spite of the above criticisms, its numerous helpful features make it a text that deserves consideration by any professor of Hebrew.

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How To Read Proverbs. By Tremper Longman. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002, 174 pp., \$13.

Readers of this journal are most likely already familiar with the contributions to biblical studies by Tremper Longman. This book is another work in that collection. A companion volume to his earlier *How to Read the Psalms* (IVP, 1988), this volume is a 163-page study of the book of Proverbs.

Longman divides his work into three parts. Part 1, "Understanding Proverbs," looks at Proverbs as a book. In chapter 1, "Why Read Proverbs?" Longman introduces the book, discussing its purpose, addressees, and several prominent themes. Chapters 2 and 3 are an extended introduction to Proverbs 1–9. Dividing them into 17 "speeches" (p. 23), Longman discusses chapters 1–9 by focusing on two themes: "Walking on the Path of Life" (chap. 2) and "Woman, Wisdom or Folly—Which Will It Be?" (chap. 3). Chapter 2 discusses the importance of the "son" terminology and the emphasis on the path of life, which implies a choice: the "son" is exhorted to choose righteousness, life, and wisdom. Chapter 3 focuses on the competition in Proverbs 1–9 between the two feminine images, personifications of wisdom and folly. Chapter 4 is an analysis of how the literary form of "proverb" works, discussing the various literary devices used in chapters 10–31. In chapter 5 Longman investigates the limits of the genre of "proverb." This is a particularly helpful chapter because Longman effectively warns the reader of Proverbs of what he calls "genre misidentification" (p. 48). A proverb is (usually) not universal in scope, but rather depends on the right time and circumstance to be true. The rest of the chapter focuses on the sources of wisdom: observation and experience; instruction based on tradition; learning from mistakes; and revelation.

In Part 2, “Reading Proverbs in Context” (chaps. 6–9), Longman discusses Proverbs in its ANE and canonical contexts. Chapter 6 is a survey of the relationship between Proverbs and other ANE wisdom traditions in which Longman discusses and quotes from Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, and Northwest Semitic wisdom collections. Chapter 7 contrasts the wisdom of Proverbs with two other biblical books with which it is often thought to be in tension—Job and Ecclesiastes. Chapter 9 examines Joseph and Daniel as pictures of wisdom in action, and chapter 10 focuses on God in Proverbs, concluding with a discussion of how followers of Jesus can read OT wisdom passages in light of Christ as Messiah.

Part Three, “Following the Themes in Proverbs,” illustrates how to read Proverbs topically by offering three studies: financial issues (chap. 10); sexuality (chap. 11); and the use of the tongue (chap. 12).

A two-page conclusion called “Principles for Reading the Book of Proverbs” and two appendices (one on the authorship and date of the book of Proverbs and the other on commentaries on the book of Proverbs) finish the volume. Each chapter ends with questions for further reflection and sources for further reading. Finally, the book has endnotes and is indexed by author, subject, and Scripture.

This is a basic book on Proverbs. If the book’s purpose is kept in mind, the reader will not be disappointed. It is neither a commentary nor a review of scholarship, but a basic introduction to the content and interpretation of the book of Proverbs. The book’s main rivals are the shorter commentaries on Proverbs by Kidner (TOTC), Murphy (NIBC) and Ross (EBC), or the helpful review of wisdom literature by Kidner (*The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes: An Introduction to Wisdom Literature* [IVP, 1985]). In the class I teach on Wisdom Literature, I require Kidner because the author covers the three main wisdom books of the OT in one volume. Longman’s book is a good resource for a church-based class on Proverbs or as one textbook among several others in a college level class on Wisdom Literature. In my opinion, however, Kidner is still hard to beat.

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Lamentations. By Adele Berlin. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002, xxvi + 135 pp., \$39.95.

Observing that “a commentary need not be encyclopedic” (p. ix), Adele Berlin has eschewed such a goal and in so doing has produced an extremely manageable and readable commentary on the literary techniques and message of Lamentations. Berlin, with her extensive background in literary study of the Hebrew Bible, provides a literary reading of Lamentations, which in turn elucidates the ancient religious world behind the text.

Berlin sets out the priorities for her study in her introduction. She only briefly treats the insoluble traditional critical questions like authorship and date, and gives her attention to those areas that most inform her literary reading of the book, including characteristics of the poetry in Lamentations, feminist and sociological perspectives on the personae in the book (particularly the contrasting portrayals of suffering women and men and the various leadership and familial terms mentioned in the book), the role of mourning in ancient Israelite religion as illuminating the movement of Lamentations, the theology of destruction and exile in the book as based on the concept of purity and the Davidic covenant, and the genre of the book in light of comparable literature both within the Hebrew Bible and Sumerian literature.

In the commentary proper, Berlin gives a new translation for each poem with notes that explain her rendering of more problematic portions of the Hebrew. This is followed by a lucid exposition of each poem both as a whole and with respect to particulars. Although she views the book as a compilation of five originally independent poems, throughout her commentary she presents a sustained argument that the book as a whole is a “perpetual lament commemorating unconsolable mourning” over the “utter meltdown of life” in the wake of the fall of Jerusalem, an event the poet longs for God to notice (pp. 10, 125).

Notable in Berlin’s treatment is her assessment of the feminine imagery for Zion, in which she rejects the extreme feminist view that the imagery is degrading to women and instead concludes that the imagery lends to the view that “no suffering is worse than that of an abused woman” (p. 9). Also noteworthy is the role she gives to the Israelite “paradigm of purity” in her exposition of the theology behind the book. This is played out on a large scale in her understanding of the destruction and exile as being a necessary “purging” of Israel’s moral impurity by God rather than an indication of God’s abandonment of his people, and on a smaller scale in her objection to seeing a reference to *ritual* menstrual impurity in 1:9 in favor of interpreting the verse as metaphorically representing Israel’s *moral* impurity—whoredom.

Overall, Berlin provides a readable and insightful exposition of Lamentations that includes an uncommon attention to the pervasive metaphors in the book. Scholars, clergy, and students alike will find in her commentary a noteworthy contribution to the study of Lamentations.

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Amos—The Prophet and His Oracles: Research on the Book of Amos. By M. Daniel Carroll R. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002, xiv + 224 pp., \$32.95 paper.

This book includes three essays that summarize research on the book of Amos, plus an extensive bibliography that is topically organized and annotated to help the reader understand the contribution of hundreds of books and articles on Amos. Each essay offers an overview of the fruits of years of scholarly research based on a wide variety of assumptions and methods. Each contribution is explained and appreciated, though there is relatively little critical interaction to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses inherent in these approaches.

The first essay briefly catalogues research from 1875 to 1990. Scholars studied Amos to discover his religious innovation (J. Wellhausen), his ecstatic behavior and utterances (G. Hölcher), and to distinguish his own words from later additions (W. R. Harper). Carroll describes how S. Mowinckel connected Amos to cultic worship, form critics found judgment speeches, laments, and covenant lawsuits in Amos, while S. Terrien and H. W. Wolff discovered evidence of wisdom influences in Amos’s messages. Next Carroll treats a series of studies that try to find what was behind the present text through a redactional (Wolff found six stages of redaction), cultural (the מרדח feast, 6:7), social (central and peripheral prophets), or economic (rent capitalism) analysis. The chapter ends with a review of authors that attempt to apply Amos’s critique against oppression of the poor to acts of oppression today, particularly liberationists from Latin America.

The second essay covers research from 1990 to the present. Carroll summarizes the redactional theories of modern German, Swiss, and English scholars who find as many as twelve redactional stages in the composition of Amos. Some argue that the

relationship of Amos to Hosea and the rest of the twelve Minor Prophets points to a cross-pollination of ideas (J. Jeremias) while others use quotations as signs of the canonical shaping of the Minor Prophets (J. Nogalski and M. Sweeney). Carroll surveys several archaeological contributions that shed light on the meaning of words (תִּן "tin," 7:7) as well as on the religious and social background of the book. He also discusses the four tasks needed to construct a rigorous social scientific study, outlines studies on the literary structure of the oracles in Amos, and reviews essays that engage the text of Amos on the level of application to real life situations.

The third essay, entitled "Readings from the Margins," introduces the thoughts of Latin American, African, feminist, and other ideological approaches to Amos. These illustrate how the weak and marginalized identify with Amos's social ethics against oppression. Carroll includes some of his own writings that demonstrate how Amos has impacted his life experience in Guatemala.

The second half of this book contains a series of annotated bibliographic references to works on Amos. These include chapters in introductions, articles in encyclopedias and dictionaries, commentaries, topical studies, doctoral dissertations, and journal articles that fit under nineteen different headings. A separate bibliography, arranged by chapter and verse, helpfully lists articles that address the interpretation of each verse.

Carroll's reading on Amos is extensive, and he carefully presents various authors' perspectives without attempting to undermine their positions. He has provided students of Amos a great resource for finding what earlier writers have thought about key issues in Amos. Although some may wish Carroll had used his critical skills to evaluate the weaknesses of many of the contradictory proposals about Amos, those who wisely use the breadth of resource available on Amos should be able to sift through the alternatives available. A courteous and informed learner must read the thoughts of others sympathetically, but a prudent interpreter will carefully examine the evidence for, and the implications of, each interpretation and application.

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Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. By Joseph Blenkinsopp. Anchor Bible series, vol. 19B. New York: Doubleday, 2003, xvi + 348 pp., \$45.00.

This volume is the third in Blenkinsopp's series on Isaiah in the Anchor Bible series. It follows the format of the first two volumes (1–39, 40–55) and indeed that of the series as a whole. There is a lengthy introduction (126 pp.), and then the material is treated according to units ranging from two verses (59:1–2) to 25 verses (63:7–64:11[12]) in length. The treatment includes a translation, textual and grammatical notes, and comments.

The introduction addresses the place of Isaiah 56–66 in the book as a whole, including the question of their distinctness as a unit and their relationship to chapters 40–55 and chapters 1–39. He concludes that there is a close relationship with the former, and almost none with the latter, leading him to believe the material was written after 40–55 and was combined with those chapters before they were together united with what is now 1–39.

With regard to the literary character of Isaiah 56–66, Blenkinsopp agrees with the present consensus that it is a composite. However, he urges caution concerning the ability of form- and redaction-critical methods to distinguish exactly what the original com-

ponents and their history may have been prior to the present combination. He sees evidence of deliberate structuring into three “panels,” 56–59, 60–62, and 63–66, and in a later introductory section on the formation of the material, notes with apparent approval that it is possible to discern a chiasmic structure climaxing in 61:1–3. However, his comments seem to take little account of this phenomenon and its possible significance for the interpretation of the material.

A bulk of the introduction is given over to the attempt to discern the historical, sociological, and theological settings in which these materials first emerged and to which they were supposedly addressed. Blenkinsopp’s erudition and his grasp of the scholarly investigations in these areas are evident. His work provides a concise and judicious survey of the various opinions and conclusions that have been put forward in the last 100 years. His conclusion reflects the general consensus at present that these chapters are a compilation of the speeches and writings of a group that had become marginalized from the cultic mainstream in Judah during the middle of the fifth century BC. But he rejects the idea that this group would have necessarily been opposing the work of Ezra and Nehemiah, or that it is possible to discern in these chapters the origins of apocalypticism in Judah. The amount of attention given to this reconstruction of the hypothetical setting seems a bit odd when the text itself is at pains to disassociate itself from all but the most general of historical and sociological settings.

The most disappointing part of the introduction, and indeed of the entire volume, is the discussion of the theology of this part of the book of Isaiah. One looks in vain for any treatment of abiding theological themes, or of the theological structuring of the material. In fact, there is no sustained discussion anywhere of the central topic of theology—God! Instead, one finds in the introduction a lengthy discussion of the ways in which some of the theological ideas are an outgrowth of the (supposed) deuteronomistic concepts and ideas in the “post-disaster” period. In other words, it is clear that the governing principle is simply historical theology, a study of how certain rather narrowly proscribed concepts developed in a certain time frame (whose characteristics in this case are almost wholly hypothetical). Someone who looks to this discussion to discover enduring theological ideas that should be considered today will be gravely disappointed.

As has been said, this theological vacuum is the primary deficiency in the commentary section. If one wishes to find a careful and thoughtful discussion of Hebrew terms, textual issues, historical usages, probable settings, and connections with other parts of the OT, this part of the book is very helpful. It is helpful both because of the wide range of coverage Blenkinsopp gives, but also because he eschews the more radical theories that are in vogue in some circles today, whether it be in historical reconstruction, textual history, or atomization of the text.

At the same time, it is hard to escape the conclusion that for Blenkinsopp, the Bible is anything more than a historical artifact. Almost nowhere in this volume does he suggest an explanation as to why there is still a market for commentaries on this material 2700 years after it was written. That fact is, of course, that while the Bible *is* a historical artifact, it is much more than that. It is the Word of God, and unless it is finally looked at from that perspective, there really is no need to write 348 pages of closely reasoned argument on what only amounts to 13 pages of text. If the Bible *is* the Word of God, containing final truth about ultimate reality, then it deserves the most extensive and intensive study. But if so, the study must have as its ultimate goal the uncovering and exposition of that perennial truth. To study the Bible as only a relic from the past is to miss the real reason for studying it in the first place.

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Tobit. By Joseph A. Fitzmyer. Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003, xviii + 374 pp., \$78.00.

The books of the Protestant Christian canon are not the only ancient Jewish works worthy of study and commentary. We have long had commentaries on rabbinic writings and also some on the so-called apocrypha (a term indicating a Protestant perspective on that literature), but usually the latter are included in commentary series that focus on the literature of the Christian canon in a broader sense (e.g. Anchor Bible). Yet NT scholars realize that the NT developed in a world of Jewish piety shaped by many works, whether part of the OT or not. Unfortunately, our knowledge of many early Jewish works is often limited to what we quickly read in James H. Charlesworth's *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, the equivalent of deriving our knowledge of biblical literature from a one-volume Bible commentary. Thus, both because of the value of these books on their own and because of their importance to the NT, we welcome the series in which the commentary under review is found, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature, for providing an accessible resource to help us to grasp more thoroughly the literature that formed the world of Second Temple Judaism.

Joseph Fitzmyer's contribution concerns Tobit, a fascinating and delightful story (semi-historical fiction rather than historical narrative) that Fitzmyer dates in the 50 years before the ascension of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The work falls into the usual two sections of a commentary, introduction and commentary proper, with a series of rather full indexes at the end. (The Hebrew Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls indexes are particularly helpful.)

The introduction begins in an unusual way, that is, by analyzing Tobit's complex textual situation. Two Greek recensions (short and long) of the book are known. The Vulgate was apparently translated from an Aramaic version that approximated the Greek short recension, but we also know of an Old Latin version that approximates the long recension. This picture was then complicated when the fragmentary scrolls from Qumran cave 4 revealed that four Aramaic and one Hebrew version of the work existed at Qumran (Fitzmyer believes that Aramaic rather than Hebrew was the language of composition). Fitzmyer leads us through this maze of text-critical information with a grace and clarity that is quite amazing. I found that part of the introduction enjoyable reading, as well as informative.

The rest of the introduction is less lengthy but still thorough enough. Fitzmyer discusses the language, subject matter, style, sources, integrity, teaching, date and place of composition, and canonicity of Tobit in that order, before proceeding to offer an outline of the book, followed by an extensive bibliography. Throughout this discussion Fitzmyer retains his readable style and admirable clarity. While leaving open the question of later redaction (if only the texts from Qumran were more complete, we might be able to settle that issue), he paints a composite picture of a pious Palestinian Jew writing an edifying story that promotes his community's version of faithfulness to the God of the Torah. While a variety of scholarly opinions are discussed (which also provides a decent history of patristic and more recent interpretation), Fitzmyer never gets bogged down in the details, nor does he forget to give his own conclusions. A helpful feature of the introduction is the numbering of each paragraph. Sometimes this can be a little distracting in that significant discussions are never finished in a single paragraph, but rather the next step is liable to come in the next numbered paragraph. Yet in general this is useful both for finding one's place in the discussion and for following the steps in Fitzmyer's thinking.

In the main body of the commentary, each segment of text is treated in a four-part discussion. First one finds a readable translation of the text; then comes a comment on

the text (this both maintains the story line and gives a theological perspective). After the translation and comment come detailed exegetical notes, which are in turn followed by a short bibliography. This order, almost the reverse of that found in the Word Biblical Commentary, is utilized effectively in this work. It allows readers to examine the text in the depth that they wish, for the primary interest of any reader is in the text and, where the text may be unclear, in the reflection on it in the comment. Those wishing to pursue a topic further can get more detailed insight in the notes, which are extensive indeed. The brief bibliographies for each section point one to additional resources without having to consult the main bibliography. This is an extremely readable format. What makes it even more readable is that in the notes Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin (all of which are important in understanding Tobit and its textual history) are normally translated into English.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the commentary section is that the translation has been divided into two columns, one for the (Greek) short recension and one for the long recension (with occasional notes when he must choose among manuscripts). While differences found in the Old Latin and Vulgate are discussed only in the notes (these versions being secondary to the Greek and Aramaic), Fitzmyer has chosen to bring the Hebrew and Aramaic material to our attention in the translation itself, that is, he changes his text to italic where the Dead Sea Scroll fragments support the Greek text and uses parentheses to indicate where they differ from that text. Thus in one glance the reader gains a significant amount of text-critical information about the section under consideration (with the notes, of course, giving fuller details). This is done without sacrificing readability.

It is difficult to be critical about this commentary. Fitzmyer has already demonstrated his skill as a commentator in his work on Luke in the Anchor Bible. He continues to display his skill here. One may disagree with this or that position that he takes or desire a bit more information here or there, but in terms of this review and the general picture it needs to paint, Fitzmyer shows himself a master of the art of commenting: he retains flow and lucidity while giving the necessary detailed information. The most negative thing about the commentary is the price, which is, unfortunately, what one expects from a European publisher, even when publishing in English. In fairness, it should be noted that Tobit will not be the first book about which most people purchase a commentary. The price will, however, keep the sales smaller than they should be, because it is not only scholars of Second Temple Judaism but also NT scholars who should eagerly purchase works like this so that they are truly informed about writings that they often cite without an in-depth knowledge.

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Plowshares and Pruning Hooks: Rethinking the Language of Biblical Prophecy and Apocalyptic. By D. Brent Sandy. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002, 228 pp., \$16.00.

Somewhere in the dark recesses of my Christian journey I remember the identification of Magog with Russia and the torrents of fire raining on the Red Army as a description of a nuclear holocaust (Ezek 38:18–22). But is that the best way to interpret the prophetic and apocalyptic language of the Bible? This book seeks to rethink the language of prophecy and apocalyptic. The lack of a consensus on how to interpret prophecy is due to seven problems Sandy has stated as follows: predictive or poetic?; literal

or figurative?; exact or emotive?; conditional or unconditional?; real or surreal?; oral or written?; and fulfilled or unfulfilled? The rest of the book seeks to address these problems in order to help the reader better understand the role and function of prophecy.

The heart of the book is to show that prophecy is full of metaphor and to demonstrate how an understanding of metaphor is essential to interpret prophecy correctly. In fact, understanding how metaphor works will answer most of the problems related to prophecy stated above. A metaphor is by definition figurative language that pushes one beyond the dictionary definition of words. The imagery of prophecy is not concerned about the details, but is describing a reality beyond this life (surreal). Metaphor is also a characteristic of poetry, which uses emotive language rather than exact language. The harsh language of judgment and the exuberant language of blessing are full of hyperbole in order to get the prophetic message across.

The main mission of the prophets was to prosecute the covenant in light of the disobedience of the people and to persuade God's people to repent. Although there is prediction in prophecy, it is the least significant ingredient. If one analyzes prophecies in the Bible that have already been fulfilled, such as the judgment against Eli or the indictment against Solomon, one is hard-pressed to be able to predict exactly how the prophecy will be fulfilled ahead of time. Metaphor makes prophecy translucent because it is hard to tell before the fulfillment whether the surface meaning of the words will be fulfilled in an exact manner. In dealing with the future, prophecy and apocalyptic give us the big picture. What we know about the end is that Jesus will return in the most dramatic divine visitation of earth ever to occur. There will be rewards for those who overcome, and God's name and kingdom will be acknowledged and praised by everyone in every place.

There are many things to be commended in this work. The role of the prophets in the context of the covenant is clearly laid out. The limited role of prediction in light of the mission of prosecution and persuasion is affirmed without denying that there is prediction. The explanation of how metaphor functions and the implications of that for prophecy are consistently developed. And yet something is missing. The knock-out punch never comes. Early on the author makes the point that the intention of the book is not to defend or dismantle dispensationalism. But does not his understanding of the language of prophecy cut the legs out from under the "literal" approach of older dispensationalism? After affirming that numbers can be metaphorical, we are left waiting for the implications of this affirmation for the thousand-year millennial period, but this is never addressed.

The author specifically applies his approach to Isa 2:1-5, but he has a very weak understanding of the meaning of this passage. His emphasis on metaphor causes him to limit the meaning of Isa 2:1-5 to a picture of everything bowing down to worship God. The statement of nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord is just stereotypical language. There is no analysis of what this passage means in light of the coming of Christ. He does not believe it is a prediction of the last days, even though Isaiah uses the term "latter days." There is no exploration of what the phrase "last days" means in the NT, or what coming to Zion means in the book of Hebrews. Does not Isaiah 2 have some fulfillment in the future, either in the church, or in the millennium, or in the new heavens and new earth? Although Sandy tries to direct key questions to both amillennialists and premillennialists (p. 206), many amillennialists are no longer emphasizing the spiritualization of OT prophecies in the Church, but the fulfillment of OT prophecies in light of the first coming of Christ.

The author's plea for unity among eschatological views is appropriate because many times our differences take center stage. Certainly there is a common foundation among the views that affirm that the OT prophecies are fulfilled in some way in the Church, regardless of our differences related to the nation of Israel. The understanding of the

language of biblical prophecy laid out in this book is a significant step in that pursuit of unity.

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Ancient Israel and Ancient Greece: Religion, Politics, and Culture. By John Pairman Bowman. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003, 229 pp., \$22.00.

John Pairman Bowman, who has taught at the American University in Beirut and at the Pacific School of Religion, has distilled for the general public some of the essays originally published in three volumes in Germany as *Israel and Hellas* (1995, 2000, 2001). He offers a stimulating and often provocative comparison of the two unique cultures that have been most important to Western Civilization as they were each “the center of a free society generating a novel literature” (p. 1).

The four conditions that made a new freedom possible, liberating these two cultures from the dominance of the ancient Near East were: (1) a defensible citadel surrounded by rain-watered fields; (2) iron for weapons and tools, lime for waterproofing cisterns; (3) elements of democracy; and (4) a phonetic alphabetic script (pp. 6–7). Like W. F. Albright, he sees the contributions of Hellas and Israel culminating in the new synthesis offered by the NT (p. 26).

He contrasts Israel as “an old inland society” with Hellas as “a new seaboard society” (pp. 8–9). He desires to use insights from the past to motivate us to reform society in the present. He stresses the uniqueness of the Ten Commandments (p. 11) and the significance of the resurrection of Christ (pp. 214–15).

The author knows not only classical and biblical texts very well, but also has a command of later European texts and their translations. Like Cyrus H. Gordon and Michael Astour, he is able to recognize comparisons between Hellas and Israel not noted by others. The results are at times exhilarating and at other times exasperating, as some comparisons are persuasive while others are dubious.

He offers this striking observation: “How do Plato’s Socrates and Jeremiah most clearly differ? Socrates is constantly in dialogue with other human beings (always, in fact, men) of different viewpoints . . . whereas Jeremiah is in dialogue only with God” (p. 3). He correctly notes in one comparison that similarity of language (between Exod 13:9 and Iliad 25.694–95) may actually conceal very different viewpoints (p. 13).

His best essay is a chapter on “Paradise and the Forest of Lebanon,” based on his extensive research into ancient forests and his firsthand knowledge of deforestation in Lebanon. He helpfully details the Persian background of the Hebrew loanword *pardes* (which gives us “paradise”) and its many later associations. He notes its occurrence as a loanword *firdaw(un)* in the Qur’an in two passages, but says nothing of the more frequent use of the Arabic word *jannātun* to evoke the gardens of Paradise.

At times parallels lead him to postulate highly speculative links of diffusion, for example, suggesting that Ps 95:3 is based on the Old Persian regal formula (p. 55). Rather mind-boggling is his suggestion that the ursine (bear-like) character of Elijah was somehow transmitted from northern shamanistic traditions (p. 117). He also believes Mark’s description of the storms on the Sea of Galilee (4:35–41; 6:45–52) is a literary trope rather than a reflection of actual events (p. 187).

It is doubtful others will see much similarity between the two consuls at Rome, the dual kingship at Sparta, and the kings of Israel and Judah (pp. 66–68), or between the Hebrew prophet, the Hellenic reforming poet, and the tribunes of the Roman plebeians

(pp. 71, 196). Among his more dubious identifications are Hivites as Achaeans (p. 53) and the Greek Gergithes with the Palestinian Gergashites (p. 116).

There are also a few surprising lapses. For example, Bowman suggests "Cadmus from Phoenicia is not thought of as bringing any knowledge of foreign social institutions" (p. 19), when in fact, Cadmus brought the "Cadmeian letters" (usually interpreted as the alphabet) to Thebes in Greece. He believes Melqarth lacks "a certain Semitic etymology" (p. 105), when actually it is derived from Semitic *melek* "king" and *qaryat* "city." He believes the word for "wine" was a late entry (p. 184), but it is already attested in Linear A and Linear B. Mopsus, far from being a "generic name for a seer" (p. 115), is attested as a historical figure in the bilingual inscription of Azitawadda.

The fervor of his earlier writings, *Planet on Strike* (1970), and the co-authored *The Covenant of Peace: A Liberation Prayer Book* (1971), when he was involved with the Free Church of Berkeley, is tempered somewhat, but his passion for reform still shines through in his comments against violence against women (p. 146) and his concern for the earth's ecology (p. 175).

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Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament. By Walter C. Kaiser Jr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003, 222 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Kaiser's purpose is to show how to preach and teach from the OT (p. 10). There are two sections in the book. The author titles the first section "The Need to Preach and Teach from the Old Testament." Actually, he does much more than establish need in these chapters.

His first chapter is on need. Kaiser asserts that we need the OT because it is the "powerful word of God" (p. 16). Furthermore, he insists we must preach from the older testament because it "leads us to the Messiah" (p. 20). Also, it has primacy for Christians because it deals with questions of life (p. 23) and it is the only Bible the early Christians had (p. 24).

Kaiser follows with a chapter on "The Problem of the Old Testament for Today." In this chapter he raises several questions. "Is the Old Testament the master problem of theology?" Kaiser says "yes," and for that reason argues that we must study and preach the OT. "Does the Old Testament have a center?" Again, Kaiser says, "yes!" He insists the promise theme is the center of OT theology. "Does the Old Testament exemplify legalism or grace?" Kaiser makes his case for grace. "Is the Old Testament to be made over into the New Testament?" He says the OT is "part of a unified plan of God for all times and all peoples" (p. 37).

The next chapter, "The Task of Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament for Today," is probably mistitled. This chapter is not so much on the task of preaching as it is on the need for the OT. As in his first chapter, Kaiser again says we need to hear from the OT because it points us to Christ. Also, he suggests that we need the OT because it gives us a balanced view of God.

Finally, in this first section of his book Kaiser includes a chapter on "The Art and Science of Expository Preaching." Here he abbreviates for the reader the principles he discusses in detail in his well-regarded book *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981).

In the second section of the book, he directs his attention to the purpose of the book: to show how to preach and teach from the OT. In this portion, utilizing sermon outlines and in some cases whole sermons, he explains how to preach from narrative

texts, wisdom books, the prophets, the laments, the Torah, praises, and apocalyptic literature.

The strength of this book is that it is slavishly accurate to the biblical text. Kaiser is very sensitive to the various genres of the OT. Furthermore, he not only writes about how to preach but includes sermon outlines and some whole sermons demonstrating the method he introduces. In his chapter on how to preach from narrative literature, he summarizes the principles detailed in Robert Alter's widely acclaimed *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Kaiser's explanation, however, is far more readable. He also gives a very helpful explanation on what constitutes a "judgment prophecy" and then shows how to develop a preaching outline from a judgment text (pp. 102–3). Finally, he offers a useful commentary on the difference between descriptive and declarative praise. He then illustrates the difference with a sermon on Psalm 84 (pp. 157–60).

An obvious limitation of this book is that Kaiser only shows how to use a hybrid of the "key word" method taught by Lloyd Perry (*A Manual for Biblical Preaching* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965]). There are no inductive outlines or sermons in this book or sermons reflecting any other method.

On occasion his interpretative biases sneak into his suggestions. He argues, for example, that the Song of Solomon "should be taught and preached" from the perspective of three main characters, not just two (p. 95). Obviously, there are some fine OT scholars who argue that there are only two main characters.

On the whole, however, Kaiser's book would be an excellent addition to any practitioner's library. I highly recommend this book to serious expositors who desire to unlock the treasures of the OT for their listeners.

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Two Thousand Years Ago: The World at the Time of Jesus. By Charles A. Frazee. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002, viii + 248, \$24.00.

Mention the world of Jesus, and one typically thinks of Palestine, Jerusalem, or maybe even Greco-Roman culture. Rarely, therefore, do people or events outside of the greater Mediterranean region come to mind as one thinks of Jesus in a first-century context. Charles Frazee, in *Two Thousand Years Ago*, roundly challenges such a view and takes an innovative and engaging look at global events during the early Christian period. In essence, Frazee broadly asks, "What *else* went on in the world during Christ's lifetime?" Frazee also interestingly considers the response of other cultures, had Christ's life and teaching emerged outside of a Greco-Roman and Jewish context.

Predictably, Frazee begins by offering a thorough overview of the Mediterranean region including virtually all of North Africa. These chapters are factual yet concise and set the social, political, and religious contexts from which Christianity sprang and within which it grew and flourished. Frazee then covers greater Europe and considers the life and livelihood of the Britons, Celts, Germans, and Slavs, to name but a few.

Frazee next discusses the various groups who resided in sub-Saharan Africa and artfully plumbs the depth of the Kushites, for instance, an industrious people who communicated with Caesar Augustus and later formed the foundation of Ethiopian society and culture. Frazee innovatively suggests that had Christ lived in sub-Saharan Africa, the Christian message might have remained an oral tradition confined essentially to "local" disciples.

Frazee also spends several chapters detailing the politics and cultures of greater Asia, noting, for instance, the remarkable sophistication of Chinese culture, the archaeological

voices of ancient Korea, and the ancient and industrious Japanese laboring masses. Frazee moves from Asia to the complicated structure of ancient Indian society, from the political and economic remnants of Alexander the Great's travels in the fourth century BC to the Kushans, Keralas, Cholas, and the Pandvas, diverse peoples who inhabited first-century India.

After short but lucid chapters on the Arctic, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, Frazee devotes considerable attention to the complex people of ancient North, Central, and South America. Frazee deftly reminds the reader that, unlike many cultures, knowledge about and study of inhabitants from the first-century Americas comes primarily from the painstaking and careful work of archaeologists.

Frazee's unique approach faithfully accomplishes what it sets out to do: present a broad overview of world history during Christ's lifetime. This approach places Christ in a new world, as it were, one that fits nicely into contemporary discussions of global history. In addition, numerous annotated pictures of cultural artifacts enhance Frazee's commendably readable narrative. For example, one notices "familiar" artifacts like Roman coins or the terra cotta army of Qin Shi Huangdi. One is also equally enriched by images of an Eskimo shaman's mask and African head sculptures. Adding further texture, Frazee includes short "further facts" and "daily life" readings. For instance, Frazee offers the "further fact" that "the Ainu [Japanese] were one of the few ancient peoples to believe that humans could legitimately argue with the gods, and even deprive a god of its status if it caused humans undue harm for no apparent reason" (p. 143). In a "daily life" selection, Frazee observes that in the first century BC Julius Caesar published the *Acta Diurna*, roughly the equivalent of a daily newspaper. Finally, Frazee further unlocks the mysteries of the past by including a unique selection of primary source quotes, including the legend of Issa (Jesus) visiting ancient Buddhist monks in India (as told by a nineteenth-century Russian physician who visited India) and a Polynesian creation story (as recorded by nineteenth-century British author Sir George Gray).

While *Two Thousand Years Ago* is eminently useful for undergraduates (or even an advanced college preparatory setting), the keen reader is surprised at Frazee's slim introduction, the disappointing omission of a concluding chapter, and the stark absence of a bibliography. But then again the primary audience for *Two Thousand Years Ago* is not the seasoned scholar. These modest critiques aside, Frazee is bold to ask "What if?" questions that situate Jesus in non-Mediterranean cultures of the first century and thereby suggest provocative multicultural comparisons and carefully open up a new field of historiographical inquiry.

Those interested in both early Christianity and global history hope Frazee considers writing an enhanced scholarly version of *Two Thousand Years Ago*, drawing on his authoritative knowledge of world history and straddling the disciplines of archaeology, linguistics, political science, ethnography, economics, geography, art, anthropology, history, demography, and biblical studies.

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The Myth of a Gentile Galilee. By Mark A. Chancey. SNTSMS 118. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, xv + 229 pp., \$60.00.

This book is an outgrowth of the author's experience in the recent archaeological fieldwork at the ancient site of Sepphoris located in Lower Galilee in present-day Israel. In particular, Chancey's interest in the subject was sparked, as he states in his preface,

by the archaeological evidence he had observed in Galilee and by his subsequent reading about Galilee in treatises by NT scholars. This interest was encouraged by his Ph.D. dissertation supervisors who oversaw his work on the topic, "The Myth of a Gentile Galilee: The Population of Galilee and New Testament Studies."

Chancey covers the following subjects: images of Galilee's population in biblical scholarship (chap. 1), the political and demographic history of Galilee (chap. 2), Galilean communities in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods (chap. 3), and Galilee and the circle of nations (chap. 4). The aim of Chancey's work is clear when he states, "My primary goal in this study is to bridge the gap between textual studies and archaeology, combining both to provide a more detailed and accurate picture of first-century CE Galilee . . . this work demonstrates that most Galileans in the first century CE were Jews" (p. 4). Thus, Chancey's goal is clear, but he readily admits that he is running against the mainstream of NT scholarship, which holds that first-century AD Galilee was truly a Gentile Galilee. For example, he cites K. W. Clark (*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* [New York: Abingdon, 1962] 2.344–47) who suggests that the Jews were but a minority in Galilee: "Shrines to numerous deities must have existed in the larger cities of Gentile Galilee, especially in a Roman town like Tiberias, and would have been found even in more Jewish towns. They represented the normal and traditional worship of the Gentile majority in Galilee."

Though the author admits the preponderance of this opinion, he argues against it and strives valiantly to press his own position that, based upon a re-evaluation of the literary evidence (largely of Josephus and some from the Gospels) and upon his appraisal of the archaeological evidence (sometimes contrary to the evaluation of the excavators), first-century AD Galilee was mainly Jewish. Sometimes Chancey overplays his case. He argues for a differentiation between "Hellenistic" and "Greco-Roman culture" on the one hand and "paganism" (the worship of any deity other than the Jewish God) on the other hand. "One reason that the amount of evidence for gentiles in Galilee has been exaggerated in some recent studies is that evidence of Greco-Roman culture has been misinterpreted as evidence for paganism" (p. 7). Yet Chancey also identifies the Greeks and Romans as being *gentiles* and *pagans* when writing about Caesarea Maritima and about its status as "a center of Greco-Roman culture" (with a population "consisting chiefly of *Greeks*" and a minority of wealthy Jews, according to Josephus (*J.W.* 2.2.68; 3.409; *Ant.* 20.175, 178; p. 145). At the same time, Chancey talks about these *Greeks* as also having *pagan cults*, and that the evidence for this "is abundant" (pp. 145–46). He further indicates that "[r]elations between the city's *Jewish* and *gentile* inhabitants were often uneasy" (p. 147; emphasis added).

In the first part of the book, Chancey gives an adequate survey of Jewish literature, especially Josephus, but on the whole he deals less adequately with the Gospels. Further, when he is dealing with the Decapolis cities, his treatment is incomplete in that he does not adequately cover Capitolias, Dium (possibly at el-Husm near Irbid, Jordan) or Philadelphia (even though the latter is only somewhat south of Gerasa, which he does include). His research on the Decapolis city Abila is also sometimes incomplete.

In examining the phrase "Galilee of the Gentiles" in Matt 4:15–16 (a quote from Isa 9:1), Chancey argues that the area was known as just "Galilee" in the Bible generally and in other Jewish documents (pp. 170–74). However, he does not really deal exegetically with the issue of why Matt 4:15–16 includes the quotation or of how Matthew saw the fulfillment of OT Scripture in the coming of Jesus to "Galilee of the Gentiles" to minister to Jews and Gentiles in the whole area, people who had been heavily influenced by Hellenistic and Greco-Roman culture and language.

Despite his claim from archaeology that the evidence for "Judaism is greater than that for paganism," Chancey also says, "we should neither exaggerate its quantity [of the Jewish population] nor minimize the challenge of generalizing about a community's [first-century AD] population from such limited evidence" (p. 118). He concludes that he

thinks his analysis of the current archaeological materials and literary evidence of Josephus and the Gospels heavily favors his viewpoint, but he grants that future discoveries could refute his argument (p. 182). Overall, this book presents an interesting thesis. Could we not say that, whatever the exact balance between Jews and Gentiles in the population of first-century AD Galilee, the whole area was heavily influenced by the Hellenistic and the Greco-Roman cultures of the non-Jews?

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Chairman Mao Meets the Apostle Paul: Christianity, Communism, and the Hope of China. By K. K. Yeo. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2002, 302 pp., \$29.99 paper.

In his book, author Yeo Khiok-Khng, Harry R. Kendall Associate Professor of New Testament at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, evaluates the thought of Mao Zedong and compares it with that of Paul, especially Mao's utopian ideal with Pauline eschatology. In the process, the author also interprets critically the missionary enterprise in China. In the introduction, Yeo describes himself as a diaspora Chinese Christian who wants to understand the phenomenon of Maoism in China and to connect it with his work in Pauline studies. He points out that both theology and ideology have great implications in politics.

Yeo begins with a survey of biblical and Chinese traditions. Both the millenarian view of history in the OT and the eschatological view of history in the NT are summarized. An overview of utopian ideas from ancient and modern China is provided, including Chinese views of an ideal state from Confucianists, Legalists, and Daoists, the Chinese cyclic view of history, and the Chinese *yin-yang* worldview.

Yeo then traces the development of Western political theory through Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. He mentions Sir Thomas More's contribution to the idea of communism without pointing out that it was related to John Wycliffe's earlier contribution to *De civili dominio*. He describes the modern socialist utopia as a secularized version of the Christian eschatological vision. Marx's historical materialism went to an extreme, arguing for a revolution to create a proletarian society.

According to Yeo, Maoism is a convergence of Marxism and Chinese views of history. He points out that the Maoist utopia is basically a Chinese one with various contributions from Confucianists, Daoists, secret-society, *yin-yang* worldview, and Legalists. Another difference between Marxism and Maoism is in the source of historical forces: urban workers versus country peasants. He describes Mao as an idealist who used an anarchistic rule of mass movement and dictatorship as a means to solve China's socio-political problem and to continue perpetual revolution. Yeo sees that the masses were equivalent to God in Mao's eyes. Here other historians may beg to differ, seeing Mao as a manipulator who sought to sustain his own grasp of power.

Yeo traces the interaction of Maoism and Christianity in Communist China after 1949. Since a Chinese worldview does not differentiate clearly between the secular and the sacred, it was easy for Mao to replace God or gods with his personality cult. According to Yeo, when the Communist regime came to power, it seriously adopted a policy of religious freedom, and the Chinese church should have clarified for believers and the society the possible fruitful interaction between the communist utopia and the Christian eschaton. However, due to the fundamentalist emphasis on judgment and destruction of the world during the end time, preaching on eschatology was prohibited in China. However, Chinese Christians, through the leadership of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, live according to Paul's admonitions in the Thessalonian letters.

Not only is Yeo sympathetic to Maoist liberation, he is also very critical of Western missionaries. Here one may wish he would cite references and statistics to support his accusations. According to Yeo, many missionaries were compatriots with their national interests, and many missionary activities were imperialistic. The Christian West was a Holy Empire using cultural aggression to rape China in its weakness. God was viewed as the Colonizer, the Imperialist, and the Drug-Seller. Not addressing the political and national problems, missionaries were unconcerned with incarnate truth and trusted in Western culture rather than God. Yeo blames the Taiping uprising and the Boxer Rebellion on missionaries. Yeo says that Christian socialism is attainable, and it was one of the visions of the Christian tradition. He criticizes capitalist Christianity as culturally biased and praises Chinese Christians in China as living out the Pauline theology of faith, hope, and love.

Yeo compares the canonization process of the thoughts of Mao and Paul and finds similarity in the leadership and power structure of Mao and Paul. Yeo claims that the agapaic communalism of Paul was communist in structure. However, one only finds a church commune in Acts 2, not in later Pauline churches. Yeo criticizes the Red Guards as rebellions of *ataktoi*. However, he spares Mao the primary responsibility of promoting the Red Guards. Yeo claims that the demise of Maoism came because of the shifts from the socio-economical level to the ideological and political levels of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. One may seek for an opposite interpretation here. The Great Leap Forward was Mao's failed attempt to improve the Chinese economy, and the Cultural Revolution was his desperate struggle to regain his power. Pure ideology, political maneuvering, and guerrilla warfare could not govern a country well nor improve its social-economic condition.

Finally, Yeo comments on the de-eschatological worldview of utopian progressivism and technological optimism. He laments the embrace of industrialization and technology in present-day China and warns about the problems of a market economy and capitalism. He concludes that both in the post-Paul West and the post-Mao China, the dream of utopia does not contain an element of hope. Only Pauline eschatology provides the hope of a new beginning.

Overall, this book provides information about Chinese culture, modern Chinese history, Maoism, and the interaction between Christianity and Maoism. It upholds the finality of Pauline eschatology. However, readers should be aware of the author's sympathy with liberation theology. He does not view science and democracy as positive contributions of the Christian faith, contrary to the understanding of many evangelical scholars. He still holds a dim view of capitalism, despite the metamorphosis of traditional capitalism into democratic capitalism and the recent moderation of Christian social critics, such as Ronald Sider and others. He ignores the underground churches in China and rarely cites scholarly works written in Chinese. The book also contains a few factual errors, such as Mao's invention of large-character posters (p. 124) and Chiang Kai-shek's funeral in 1976 (p. 173).

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Where is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5. By Simon J. Gathercole. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002, xii + 311 pp., \$32.00 paper.

Dissertations that promise to debunk the work of a leading scholar are usually a dime a dozen. When the dissertation is supervised by the same scholar, however, there is reason to look again. Simon Gathercole, whose *Doktorvater* was James Dunn, has

offered serious students of Paul quite an attraction in this well-argued critique of the so-called “new perspective” on Paul.

Avoiding the extremes that so far have characterized the debate, Gathercole strikes a more sober tone. He rejects the loaded terminology that has been favored in the “traditional” camp, such as “legalism,” “merit,” and “works-righteousness.” He also goes a long way in crediting E. P. Sanders with a correct understanding of Second Temple Judaism and agrees that entrance into the people of God was based mostly on grace through election and not on works (he notices the exception in Qumran). Nevertheless, Gathercole points out the virtual neglect of eschatology as a major methodological flaw in Sanders’s work. By exclusively focusing on the categories of “getting in” and “staying in,” Sanders neglects a proper examination of a question that was at least equally significant in the first century: how to be justified in God’s eschatological judgment. While God’s gracious election was important in Jewish thought, Gathercole shows that works were frequently considered crucial for eschatological vindication.

Paul’s quibble with works must therefore be understood in this context. “Works of the law” are not adequately explained as ethnic “identity markers” but come into play in a strictly theological sense, as the basis for “boasting” and hope for acquittal facing God’s judgment. In this respect, Gathercole clearly represents a corrective to the new perspective. His own position cannot be classified as merely reiterating traditional interpretations, however, as he also offers an alternative to the understanding of justification that the Reformers found in Paul’s letters. In contradistinction to this tradition, Gathercole maintains that Paul distinguished between two kinds of justification: initial justification, which is by faith alone, and final, eschatological justification, which is also based on works. The major difference between Paul and Judaism Gathercole finds in the fact that Christian boasting is boasting in what God has done through Christ and that Christian obedience has its source and continuous cause in God’s action.

The most devastating critique of the new perspective comes in chapters 1–2, where Gathercole offers a comprehensive examination of the teachings on eschatological vindication in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and in Qumran. His treatment of the literature from Second Temple Judaism is unusually thorough and well-informed for a work whose primary field is the NT. Gathercole relates to the work of Friedrich Aemarie, who has shown that, in the rabbinic material, the two concepts of salvation, as a result of election and as a reward for obedience, are both present without the one being played out against the other. In this book, Gathercole finds that this “ambivalence” can also be observed in much of the literature of Second Temple Judaism. Eschatological vindication on the basis of works is most clearly attested in *1 Enoch* 38:1–2; *Pss. Sol.* 9:1–5; *Wis.* 6:18; *T. Jos.* 18:1; *T. Zeb.* 10:2–3; *Bib. Ant.* 3:10; *2 Enoch* 44:4–5a; 4QMMT^c 26–32; 1QpHab 8:1–3. Occasionally, however, I wonder if the author too quickly concludes that when the texts mention “reward” the meaning is a reward for good works (p. 69).

In chapters 3 and 4, Gathercole completes his survey of the sources for Jewish soteriology by including in the account the NT and Jewish writings dating from the earliest period after AD 70. By the criterion of multiple attestation, the reward theology of first-century Judaism is now well documented. Gathercole’s insistence on using the NT as a primary source for our knowledge of early Jewish soteriology is a welcome corrective to dominant trends in NT scholarship. In chapter 5, Gathercole’s evidence is less overwhelming, but he shows that various Jewish texts display an interest in the obedience of Israel as a whole and of individual Israelites. Some of these statements may well be taken to imply that law observance leads to vindication in God’s final judgment.

Turning to the exegesis of Romans, Gathercole shows that the imaginary Jewish interlocutor in Romans 2 can be understood against this background. Paul’s polemic is therefore directed against confidence based on works, not merely “nationalistic pride” (chap. 6). Gathercole drives home his point in the exegesis of Rom 3:27–4:8 (chap. 7).

The question of boasting here is not a question about the terms upon which the inclusion of the Gentiles takes place. As the example of David aptly demonstrates, the issue is how someone living under the Mosaic covenant can be justified. And the answer is emphatic: without works, but by faith. Finally, in his exegesis of Rom 5:1–11, Gathercole finds evidence of what he sees as the major difference between Paul and contemporary Judaism: Paul's theology is never synergistic; his boast is always in what God has done.

Stripped of Jewish synergism, Gathercole's Paul still betrays considerable common ground with Second Temple Judaism: grace (election/faith) fully accomplishes initial salvation, and works are determinative for vindication in the end (p. 135). Gathercole tentatively concludes that "Paul is operating with two somewhat distinctive perspectives on justification: the first occupying initial justification . . . and the second referring to God's final vindication of the one who has done good" (p. 265). The evidence for the second justification is drawn primarily from Romans 2.

I find this part of Gathercole's conclusion problematic for several reasons. The rhetorical function of Romans 2 is to serve as an indictment of the Jews, not to explain how one is justified. If the concession that the doer of the law is justified were Paul's own view of justification (not merely an argument that the law does not justify even on its own terms, as long as it is not kept), one would expect that it would be reflected in the part of Romans where Paul lays out his teaching on justification. Yet, as Gathercole points out, Paul insists that David, after his initial justification, was still justified by faith, to the exclusion of works. Moreover, if Paul held such a dual view of justification, I am at a loss to explain Galatians, where the issue is not initial justification, but how the believer can continue to be in a state of being right with God.

Gathercole interacts with Kent Yinger and glosses him as a proponent of the new perspective, while he understands himself as a critic of the same. The main differences between the two have to do with their interpretation of the synergistic nature of Judaism and of the expression "works of the law." Nevertheless, their basic understanding of the continuity between Paul and Judaism is the same: as in Judaism, Paul simultaneously believes in salvation by grace and judgment according to deeds. This may be symptomatic of the value of Gathercole's book: it blurs the distinctions between the camps and moves the discussion forward.

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The IVP Women's Bible Commentary. Edited by Catherine Clark Kroeger and Mary J. Evans. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002, xxxvii + 874 pp, \$30.00.

The IVP Women's Bible Commentary asks the question, "What happens when we look at Scripture through women's eyes?" Unlike traditional commentaries, this volume highlights women's concerns and perspectives on Scripture. In this way, it is a "complement" as opposed to an "alternative" commentary. As the editors state, "Many insights into the text are never revealed simply because the questions that might have revealed them have never been asked" (p. xiii). While drawing upon some of the positive contributions of feminist criticism, the work stands as an evangelical option to *The Women's Bible Commentary* edited by Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992).

There are 90 contributors, mostly women, to this over-900-page volume. The contributors exhibit a variety of qualifications and backgrounds. The majority have Ph.D.s, a lesser number Master's degrees, and a couple list B.A.s as their terminal degree. The

majority teach at theological colleges or universities, while others work in church ministries or parachurch organizations.

Each commentary begins with a short introduction, including an outline of the book, and some end with helpful conclusions. Each has a brief bibliography. There are cross-references to Scripture and related articles cited in the text. Almost 80 supplementary articles are interspersed throughout the book. Most are embedded in the text of the commentaries themselves, a format which can at times make it difficult to distinguish an article from the text of a commentary. The articles, which vary greatly in length and depth of scholarship, are informative for the most part. The volume is sprinkled with illustrations, tables, and diagrams, though some tables are presented in a size font that will test one's visual acuity.

The editors state that they have given the contributors a "great deal of freedom" (p. xiv), and this proves to be the case. The individual commentaries vary widely in terms of form and style. Some move methodically through the text (Exodus). Others focus on specific passages that pertain to women and pass over the rest of the text (Genesis). Still others are organized thematically (most of Isaiah) or according to an overarching framework (conversations between men and women in John). Some are almost exclusively focused upon exegesis, while others concentrate on relevance to contemporary women. While it is interesting to see the various approaches to the text, the lack of predictability could make the volume harder for readers to use as a reference tool. Furthermore, while some inconsistency is inevitable in a multi-author work, it goes beyond what one would expect in a one-volume commentary. The wide variety seems to reflect a deeper problem, which is the need for a consistent, well-developed understanding of what it means to read Scripture "through women's eyes."

This problem is especially apparent in the various ways in which the authors treat the text hermeneutically. The editors state,

[The commentary] unashamedly approaches the text from a particular and identified perspective, seeking to provide a resource for the whole church—both women and men—that will allow the readers to notice and identify issues within Scripture that relate to women and reflect their unique perspective. It seeks deliberately to ask women's questions. It is not written simply "for" women as opposed to men; it is rather written "from" women. In other words, this commentary doesn't just look at passages about women, it looks at all of Scripture from a woman's perspective (p. xiii).

However, the lack of a consistently applied hermeneutic makes it difficult to get a firm grasp on exactly what it means to approach Scripture from this "particular and identified perspective." We agree this is a significant goal, but the commentary would be much more effective if approached with a uniform methodology, as well as form.

Thus, some entries are virtually indistinguishable from traditional commentaries except for the occasional extra paragraph that draws attention to an exceptional woman or other concern for women. Others provide samples of alternative views on select texts, such as Flesher's excursus on feminist and womanist perspectives on Job 1–2 or Hilton's discussion of Isaiah 61–62 concerning victims of childhood sexual abuse as part of her "exploration of pastoral and theological implications" of Isaiah (p. 368). The use of inclusive language is also not consistent. Le Cornu rightly questions whether inclusive language can do justice to the intentional gender contrast in Proverbs. On the other end of the spectrum, Powell suggests that God in Eph 1:2 might be more appropriately thought of as "Parent" rather than "Father."

The most enlightening sections are those that judiciously apply some insights of feminist criticism while coming from a standpoint of a "hermeneutic of faith" as opposed to a "hermeneutic of suspicion" (p. xiv). For example, Taylor sensitively reminds the

readers that the sexually explicit references and images of violence against women in Ezekiel have sometimes been used negatively against women. Yet, she also explains that these references and images must be read in their literary and cultural contexts. Thus, the graphic portrayal of the punishment of adulterous Israel in chap. 16 must be seen in light of the author's intent to shock his audience into recognizing the severity of their apostasy. In this way, Taylor makes the readers aware of the potential negative impact of the text on women while demonstrating how a proper reading of the passage clarifies its intended effect.

Other favorable examples are seen in sections that highlight the significance of women in a story that prominently features male characters told from a male perspective. Although Osgood overemphasizes Bathsheba in perceiving her as "the focus of God's concern," her insight on Nathan's use of the lamb picturing Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:3-4, 9) does retain her prominence in the narrative. In general, treatments of the OT books are more effective than those of the NT, with those of Leviticus, Jeremiah and Amos particularly exhibiting sensitive and sophisticated expositions of whole books.

The differing ways in which the commentators balance application and analysis also produce mixed results, again revealing the need for a more well-defined understanding of a "women's commentary." On the positive side, the personal tones, where used by a number of contributors, are a welcome change in a commentary, and are particularly noteworthy when configured by good exegesis, reasonable assessments, and successful analyses of the text. Some applications are particularly effective, such as Gritz's development of Paul's image of the nursing mother in 1 Thessalonians 2.

However, the concern to be relevant to women sometimes leads to additional problems. On occasion, devotional-style writing dilutes the impact of a passage. Dowsett offers her personal reflections on the Sermon on the Mount:

Had I been among the crowd that day when the Lord came to the close of Matthew 5, I think I would have been horrified as well as astounded. And yet, I think, too, there would have been born within me a deep wishfulness for the kingdom life being described: a life where people did not hurt and exploit each other, where loving relationships prevailed, where faith transformed present adversity into a highway to God-rooted happiness (pp. 526-27).

Use of this style in an attempt to draw for the reader more individual relevance or private reflection proved wordy and at times misdirected, focusing on secondary or even tertiary issues.

Some segments of allegorical writing reflect a reading into the text, thereby detracting from original authorial intent. The illustration that the Kingdom of God is like yeast (Luke 13:20-21) develops into an application where because kneading dough requires the use of hands, women's "hands-on ministry of positive nurture and practical outreach permeates society far beyond their numerical strength." Indeed, Luke's unique pairing of male and female examples in his gospel underscores his assumption that women are significantly featured in God's plan. But here, Kroeger's utilitarian treatment of Scripture marginalizes the intended picture of the expansive power inherent in God's Kingdom, concluding that the paired parables "affirm male and female participation are necessary to understand growth of the kingdom of God." This attempt to be relevant to women preempts the intended focus on the surety and potency of the Kingdom. Similarly, in her introduction to 2 Corinthians, Kroeger finds that Paul's speaking with much emotion and feeling reveals the "feminine side of Paul." However, "pathos" was an important part of every treatment of proper rhetorical style and when exercised was not understood to exhibit either femininity or masculinity.

Efforts to promote women yield forced interpretations of some passages. McCrory asserts in Nehemiah 3 that the shared tasks and work of Shallum and his daughters

constitute a model of egalitarian leadership. Perhaps one of the most unsettling instances of forced interpretation appears in 1 and 2 Kings. Jezebel is extolled for her education and slyness, and the deference she demanded and received from the military, religious leaders, and most of the people becomes the platform for which she is lauded as a great leader. Her shortcomings are minimized to simply her unwillingness to worship God alone. This promotion of a prominent woman who is negatively featured in biblical history compels us to be wary of this and other texts where such analyses may result in errant application.

At times the editors could have applied more control over the volume's content. Our concern for the exegetical mistreatment and editorial leniency of a passage is most vividly displayed in Irwin's treatment of Numbers 12. One would expect to find God's discipline of Miriam in Numbers 12, but nothing related to that incident is addressed. Instead, a tangential comment on Miriam as prophetess, based on Exodus 15, dominates the discussion, leading to an overspeculation that prophets needed musical as well as religious training. The allusion to music and dance then becomes her platform for liturgical dance. Overall, these cases serve as precautionary examples requiring more prudent reading.

Interpretations of key passages on women's roles such as Ephesians 5 and 1 Timothy 2 are, for the most part, in line with egalitarian conclusions. Since these passages are already well discussed in contemporary evangelicalism, there is less need to go into an extended treatment of the arguments here, especially given the limitations of the review. Suffice it to say that egalitarians will find the conclusions on the whole amenable while complementarians will not. However, we were surprised at the apparent lack of emphasis on the character, distinction, and leadership of particular women where that would have been well warranted and expected, especially in an egalitarian women's commentary. We anticipated with great expectation the treatments of specific women such as Ruth, Esther, Junia, Prisca, Euodia, and Syntyche and were met with disappointment. Portrayals of each of these women in their respective roles could have been more substantive and more powerful.

While we were initially intrigued and encouraged after reading the preface and first few entries, we were disappointed at the overall quality of the work. Several interpretations seem forced or speculative. Uneven exegesis and overspeculation necessitated more discriminating reading. This commentary should be read with care, and as such is more valuable to a scholar dealing with gender issues than for a layperson who may not be accustomed to practicing such discernment in using a reference work. In presenting a view of Scripture through the eyes of women, this initial work could have offered far more significant insights and application. However, where good scholarship is incorporated with substantive interpretation, this commentary makes some significant inroads toward revealing the presuppositions we as interpreters can bring to the text and toward recognizing the value of women's issues and perspectives.

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The Essential IVP Reference Collection. Version 2.0. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, \$180.00, CD-ROM.

The Essential IVP Reference Collection (EIVPRC) facilitates the use of computer technology to do biblical research. Its target audience is "pastors, scholars, students, Sunday School teachers and anyone who is serious about studying the Bible" (inside

cover). The technology behind *EIVPRC* is the Libronix Digital Library System by Logos, a powerful tool for working with electronic books and an upgrade from the earlier Logos Library System that operated Version 1.0.

EIVPRC's goal is to include "only work from the best of today's biblical and theological scholars" (inside cover). To that end, the CD-ROM includes the following works: *New Bible Dictionary*, *New Bible Commentary*, *New Dictionary of Theology*, *New Bible Atlas*, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament*, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* (OT and NT), *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, *Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies*, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, *Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics and Philosophy of Religion*, and *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of New Testament Greek*. The CD also contains the KJV Bible. Other Bible translations, as well as *The Complete Works of Josephus* and *The Works of Philo*, are on the CD and may be accessed for an additional fee.

Once *EIVPRC* is installed, a home page provides an overview and helpful information for getting started. The "Quick Tips" lay a basic foundation for proceeding, and the "Library Links" section gets one right into using the product. I found the home page quite helpful. The information is presented in such a way that novice computer users can understand it, but it contains enough depth and assistance that all should read it as a first step.

The library browser is easy to use, as is the search feature, which can be limited or expanded to one's desire. The tool bar is easily navigable and allows the user to return to the home page with one mouse click. Naturally, the speed at which one can access many articles in several key works makes *EIVPRC* a valuable study tool. I personally would rate myself a "semi-advanced level computer user"—somewhat more advanced than many of my colleagues but not as advanced as many of my students!—and I found navigation between various works easy to figure out.

Prices for unlocking desired additional files vary, and in some cases may be beyond IVP's control. *The Complete Works of Josephus* costs only \$19.95 and *The Complete Works of Philo* \$24.95, while Bible translations cost \$19.95 (RSV), \$39.95 (*Message*, NLT, NRSV) or \$49.95 (NASB).

EIVPRC will prove a valuable asset for those who want to quickly access the results of the solid evangelical scholarship contained in these works.

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