

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible*. Stuttgart: German Bible Society, Haarlem: Bible Society of the Netherlands, 2004. \$279.95.

The recent release of the *Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible* (SESB) is a significant contribution to the use of Bible software for the scholarly study of the Bible in its original languages. Although SESB contains fewer resources than some similarly priced packages, the value of this product lies in the content of its databases. Most significant are the new databases related to textual criticism and the syntactical analysis of the Hebrew text.

Published jointly by the German Bible Society and the Bible Society of the Netherlands, the SESB contains the first electronic version of the textual apparatus for both the *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and the *Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece*. Due to an exclusive license agreement with Libronix, the uniqueness of the SESB as the only Bible software offering a computerized version of these widely used tools is firmly established.

Because the SESB is powered by the Libronix Digital Library System, it shares some basic functionality with the Logos Series X libraries. Users benefit from the expandable and user-friendly nature of this well-designed platform. Like other Libronix products, the SESB is equipped with the capability of unlocking any of the thousands of existing titles. When these titles are unlocked, they are integrated with one another through a series of links. The ease of research grows with each additional title. For example, users can evaluate a text-critical argument in one of the many available commentaries by looking at the evidence in the text itself and by checking Bruce Metzger's commentary on the text without leaving their Bible study software or opening a book. All this information is a mouse click away when the SESB is combined with other available titles for the Libronix platform.

The user-friendly design of this application is evident in its straightforward installation. Upon initial launch of the program, a home page provides enough information for anyone familiar with navigating a web page to get started. Between the Quick Start section of the home page and the printed manual, even those without much experience with Bible software should quickly feel comfortable enough to utilize the basic functionality of this product.

Unlike the other Logos packages, the SESB only includes texts directly related to biblical studies. Complementing the BHS and NA27 are Rahlfs's edition of the LXX and the *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*. While all the Greek and Hebrew texts utilize morphological tags, the Latin text does not. Available modern translations include five German versions, two English versions (NRSV and NIV), three French versions, three Dutch versions, and one Danish version. In addition to the biblical texts, four dictionaries are provided: the German Bible Society's *Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*; *A Greek-English Lexicon on the Septuagint*; *Kleines Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*; and the United Bible Society's *The Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*.

Access to the critical apparatus of both testaments could not be more convenient. One merely places the mouse pointer over the sigla in the text to see a pop-up window

containing all the variant information associated with that particular reading. Double-clicking on the siglum opens the textual apparatus as a document where pop-up windows containing definitions of the symbols and abbreviations as well as relevant manuscript information are available upon a mouse-over.

The Libronix platform allows the user to perform searches on both the Greek and the Hebrew apparatuses. While the BHS, LXX, and NA27 texts all permit morphological searches, the apparatuses are restricted to basic searches requiring a direct match. For example, one could search for all the plural forms of the lemma *αὐτός* in the NA27 text with the Greek morphological search tool. Finding those forms in the apparatus, however, would require searching for each individual plural form with the correct spelling.

Another important advancement for computerized biblical research is the WIVU database for the Hebrew Bible. Developed by the Werkgroep Informatica at the Free University of Amsterdam under the direction of Prof. Dr. Eep Talstra, this database is tagged with syntactical markers in addition to morphological markers. Using an add-in specifically designed by Libronix for the WIVU database, users can perform both morphological and syntactical searches on a word, phrase, or clause level. One weakness of this add-in is that it does not seem as intuitive as the morphological search tool for the Greek text. It is not immediately apparent how the word, phrase, and clause parameters relate to one another. While the manual is helpful in explaining the functions of the search tool, it would be greatly enhanced by some examples of searches utilizing the syntactical tags. These examples could be included in the documentation as well as be available to load into the search tool for further experimentation.

Another weakness of this search tool is its speed. A disclaimer appearing upon its first launch warns that the add-in may take a few seconds to load. Users accustomed to faster response times will find this frustrating. A final caveat concerning the WIVU database is that the current functionality for phrase and clause level searches only includes Genesis through 2 Kings. Updates are promised through the SESB web site as they become available.

In the context of biblical software development, these minor drawbacks should not eclipse the significance of the introduction of these new tools into the Bible software market. Scholars who have longed for access to textual variants on their computer finally have a solution. Others who are interested in going beyond morphological analysis of the Hebrew text to explore the possibilities of syntactical analysis will welcome and encourage the ongoing development of the WIVU database and its search tool. While this product might not be the best choice in its current packaging for every application, all users are ultimately benefited when the bar is raised for how software can further aid the scholarly study of the biblical text. The SESB has definitely raised the bar.

Russell D. Quinn

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

*Libronix Digital Library System 2.1c, with the Scholar's Library Upgrade.* Bellingham: Libronix Corporation, 2005, \$999.95 CD-ROM. *BibleWorks for Windows 6.0.011w.* Norfolk: Bible Works LLC, 2005, \$299.95 CD-ROM.

In a previous issue of the *Journal* (*JETS* 46 [2003] 485–95), I recommended BibleWorks (BWk) for searching biblical texts and Logos (Lib) for a library of collateral works. Since then, Lib (Libronix Digital Library System 2.1c with the Scholar's Library Upgrade, as delivered with the Scholar's Library Silver Edition) has improved its

searching, while BWk (BibleWorks 6.0.011w) has expanded its collateral resources. This update describes and compares the two packages under the five categories in the original review: searchable texts in the biblical languages, search capabilities, collateral resources, capabilities for user-generated material, and customer support.

Linguistic analysis becomes more reliable as one has a larger collection of texts in the language being studied. Both packages add new documents in biblical languages. BWk includes morphologically analyzed versions of Josephus and the Targumim, and both offer for additional purchase the Qumran sectarian manuscripts. Both provide unparsed editions of the Peshitta and Tischendorf. BWk has the Apostolic Fathers in unparsed Greek and Latin, while Lib has the Old Syrian gospels unparsed. Lib also offers a wide and growing range of materials for separate purchase, including the Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible with full apparatus, the parallel aligned Hebrew/Greek OT, and a study edition of the non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls, and is preparing an edition of the Targumim based on the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon project at HUCA.

BWk has not extended its original excellent search capabilities, although the interface has been improved. Lib's search language now covers the full morphological coding in its texts, although there is still no way to search for words with particular accents, or for constructions that span chapter boundaries.

Lib's new graphical search interface is similar to BWk's Advanced Search Engine. Lib's searches (unlike BWk's) can go through a collection of documents of the same language, but all elements of each construction must occur in the same document for a hit to register. BWk's Advanced Search Engine can construct a query whose elements come from different documents. Thus one can ask for all verses with יי in the Targumim but without יהיה in the MT. In Lib, the user must generate separate verse lists for each language, then merge and sort them.

BWk continues to offer very rapid searches, while Lib continues to be quite slow, requiring over two minutes on some searches (even over a single resource).

To help interpret search results, Logos has introduced a new visualization mechanism, the "river," which shows graphically how a particular set of features varies throughout a passage. Currently this mechanism is limited to displaying verbal inflections.

Lib's visual filter mechanism offers a novel alternative to simple morphological searches. Users can define multiple layers of color or font attributes that are applied to a text or texts based on a list of morphological patterns.

While Lib has improved its searching, BWk has added a range of collateral resources, including grammars and lexica. Some require payment of additional license fees. The number and range of resources offered in BWk are greatly restricted compared with those available through Lib as separate purchases.

BWk's resources are inconsistent in both their interfaces (confusing the user) and their preparation. Lib enforces a single interface across all of its material. One benefit of an electronic text is the ability to link dynamically to the biblical references to which the text refers (e.g. a link from one word in an article to another article discussing that word), and to other references (e.g. a citation of Gesenius's grammar from a lexicon). Lib supports all three kinds of references uniformly, with a consistent interface. BWk does not offer any inter-reference links, and supports biblical links and internal links only sporadically in some works. These missing links and inconsistencies make the use of collateral resources in BWk much more difficult than in Lib.

Both packages now let users generate diagrams of selected passages and export them to other Windows documents. Lib includes an excellent piece on diagrammatical analysis (Lee Kantenwein's *Diagrammatical Analysis*).

Analogous to the use of underlining or a highlighter pen, BWk allows users to attach multiple layers of color or font attributes to a text, either manually or as the result of a search. Unlike the highlighting that both packages use to show the results of a current

search, these notations are stored in separate files and persist after a search is closed. Lib supports a single layer of manual highlighting.

I have sometimes needed help with each of these packages. Lib has greatly improved its on-line help capabilities, providing indexing and search features. It still provides help in a Libronix dialog window, though this is clumsier to use than the Windows help browser. In my experience, BWk is the more robust software package, and their support system excels in promptness and effectiveness.

In summary, Lib has strengthened its search tools, while BWk has integrated the collateral resources of most interest to the exegete. Still, each tool remains dominant in its area. BWk's search is slightly more comprehensive and much faster than Lib's. BWk makes no attempt to match the huge collection of collateral resources that Lib offers now and is constantly releasing. The range, consistency, and completeness of links within and among the resources in Lib exceed what BWk has attempted. For someone wishing to read what other books say about the Bible, Lib remains the platform of choice. For linguistic study of the text itself, BWk is unsurpassed.

H. Van Dyke Parunak  
Ann Arbor, MI

Goldingay, John. *Old Testament Theology, Volume 1: Israel's Gospel*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003, 940 pp. \$45.00.

In what must surely be described as the beginning of a major publishing event among those who accept the "entire trustworthiness" of Scripture, British-born and American-adopted OT scholar John Goldingay has provided a stimulating and fascinating reading of the implied story of the OT. Goldingay's volume is the first of a projected three-volume "Christian midrash" on the OT, or as Goldingay prefers to call it, the First Testament. This first volume deals with the First Testament's story, and the projected second and third volumes discuss its faith and its vision of life or ethos, respectively.

Goldingay defines OT theology as the attempt to both describe the faith implied by the OT and to "reflect on it analytically, critically and constructively" (p. 17). Given the theological diversity evident in the OT, OT theology's task "is to see what greater whole can encompass the diversity within the Old Testament" (p. 17). Goldingay spends relatively little time on methodology, but given the impasse that such discussions have generated in OT study, his daring attempt to read the OT theologically without endless qualifications and the stranglehold of doctrinal constraints is to be commended. Goldingay uses the implied story of the OT as his arranging rubric and so begins with creation and ends with how the OT story finds its afterlife in the NT. But the rubric does not control his discussion. While he begins with creation because Genesis 1 begins with it, his discussion of creation ranges throughout the First Testament. Throughout the volume the order of discussion is determined by the order of the implied narrative. The first occurrences of terms and ideas that merit theological discussion provide the basis for a testament-wide analysis of the theme. For example, when discussing Yahweh's presence on Mount Sinai, Goldingay not only discusses the paradoxical nature of language about God's presence in Exodus, but also discusses the theme throughout the Bible.

When the First Testament does not provide a consecutive narrative (i.e. after the exile) Goldingay reconstructs the implied narrative from the largely non-narrative post-exilic texts in order to "write a theological midrash on the narrative the Judahites never wrote" (p. 698).

Goldingay differs from most other OT theologies in his careful attention to the subtleties of Hebrew narrative, in particular giving attention to characterization. Unlike some (e.g. Childs and Sailhamer), Goldingay rejects the hero/heroine reading of biblical characters and through their manifest flaws allows them to speak of God's gracious patience. One unique offshoot of his attention to narrative is his use of the implications of silence in the text when we might have expected it to speak.

He is also more forthcoming than many other scholars in confessing his own "situatedness," and frankly, he is more honest with the text as it is, and not as we would like it to be. Not surprisingly from the author of *Theological Diversity and the Authority of the Old Testament*, Goldingay displays a steadfast refusal to homogenize texts that are theologically diverse. He is not afraid of paradox and of fleshing out how seeming contradictions in the text actually imply a more complex, underlying unity.

One of his consistent assertions is the integrity and value of the OT on its own terms without (mis)reading it through the lens of the NT and of later developments in Christian theology. Since he often does discuss the implications of his analysis for contemporary Christians, he makes a strong case for that integrity and value.

Goldingay excels at pointing out intertextual echoes from previous episodes of Israel's story, and his narrative analyses are rich and full, seeing irony and ambiguity at many turns. For example, he contrasts the vow-keeping Jephthah and the vow-breaking Samson: "Whereas Jephthah keeps the vow we wish he would break and brings death on his daughter, Samson breaks all his vows and lives a life of violence, stupidity and sexual indulgence, brings death on other people and on himself, and still fulfills his vocation" (p. 544).

A strength or weakness depending upon one's perspective is the way Goldingay highlights the provisionality and conditionality of many of Yahweh's actions in the OT. The relationship is a process driven by an implied story with many twists and turns.

Goldingay has an incredibly broad command of the literature, mining the gold from such diverse streams as traditional historical-critical approaches on the one hand and feminist, liberationist, and deconstructive analysis on the other. But he wears his massive erudition lightly and writes in an engaging style with many puns and contemporary illustrations, both personal and otherwise. He leaves few stones unturned, and his analysis of Genesis (and to a degree Exodus) almost amounts to a full-scale commentary.

The volume is not without its disappointments. In his discussion of creation Goldingay seems to me to be too influenced by Levenson's *Creation and the Persistence of Evil*. Genesis 1 is read through the lens of the poetic descriptions of creation rather than being construed as refuting mythological accounts of creation for an Israel that was all too tempted to succumb to them. Creation in Genesis 1 is portrayed as a struggle with the forces of chaos and not the work of a God sovereign over creation. In fact, throughout the volume God is portrayed in such an anthropomorphic fashion that he is open enough to make Pinnock and Sanders blush. Unfortunately, however, no discussion of the issue of anthropomorphic language appears. It may be that Goldingay intends to address it more in volume 2, but at least some pointers in how one distinguishes between more and less anthropomorphic language would help. Goldingay seems to imply that God does not really know what the tower at Babel looks like or what is actually going on at Sodom. He leaves this reader with the impression that the OT invites its readers to assume God is somewhat unpredictable and almost unstable.

Challenging the simplistic (and equally anthropomorphic) portrayals of God in contemporary Christianity is a needed and salutary exercise. Refusing to puree the theological ideas of the OT into a bland gruel is commendable. But Goldingay has gone both too far and perhaps not far enough.

Another issue that will trouble many ETS members is Goldingay's approach to the issue of historicity. Goldingay defines history as the "intellectual form in which a civilization renders account to itself of its past" (p. 861). Since Israel is an ancient civilization it, like its neighbors, had a "conscious willingness to include other than factual material" in its historical narratives (p. 862). Goldingay accuses both conservatives and critics of treating the OT as "if it were or should be modern historiography" rather than giving account "to itself" of its past. He continues, "God's inspiring the biblical historians did not make them write as if they were modern historians, but made them write as really good ancient historians" (p. 863). Further, he adds that 150 years of historical-critical scholarship have brought us no closer to certainty regarding the original historical circumstances that brought forth the Scriptures. Theological exposition must therefore not be based on any particular theory about the relative or absolute dating of the biblical documents. While I would personally agree with the last sentiment, Goldingay's loose approach to history seems counter-intuitive at some levels. Surely the ancient Hebrew historians knew the difference between historical and mythological events. They knew the difference between an actual crossing of the Red Sea that occurred in real space and time and a fable about such a crossing. It matters whether Abraham and Moses and Jesus existed. Goldingay would like his theological expositions to have a more solid connection to history (p. 866), but given his reading of the current state of knowledge, he prefers to sideline the issue and deal with the literary and theological dimensions of the text.

In conclusion, part of me wants to say, "Finally, an OT theology that lets the OT have its say." Part of me is challenged and stimulated by new thoughts. Part of me is a little suspicious of how easily Goldingay leaves seemingly conflicting ideas in tension without any attempt to resolve that tension. While this tendency is helpful when it comes to accepting the paradoxical nature of many biblical notions, at other times it leaves this interpreter wondering about the coherence of the OT.

Volume one of what must surely be viewed as John Goldingay's *magnum opus* has appeared, and it is a must-read for those interested in biblical theology as well as the OT. It would be especially useful as a graduate-level textbook or a source of analysis of OT texts akin to a one-volume Bible commentary without the simplistic superficiality of such volumes.

Paul J. Kissling  
TCMI Institute, Heiligenkreuz, Austria

*Discovering the Way of Wisdom: Spirituality in the Wisdom Literature.* By Edward M. Curtis and John J. Brugaletta. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004, 240 pp., \$15.99 paper.

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in spiritual formation. But as Edward M. Curtis and John J. Brugaletta observe in *Discovering the Way of Wisdom*, the OT has been largely neglected in recent literary contributions to this field (p. 9). The authors believe this to be a significant lacuna, and have written this book to fill the gap. The goal of the book is "to introduce the reader to the potential of Old Testament Wisdom Literature for teaching us about God's order and encouraging us to practice God's truth so as to get those principles written onto the tablets of our hearts" (p. 10). It is not a critical introduction to OT wisdom literature, but rather a work concerned with the devotional life of its readers.

Most of the book's 10 chapters, along with the preface, introduction, and conclusion, were written by Curtis, though the change in authorial voice, where it does occur, is

neither abrupt nor distracting. Beginning with an introduction that explains why OT wisdom literature is important to the human dimension of sanctification (which to the authors is a term synonymous with spiritual formation), the book proceeds to discuss the value of OT wisdom literature for developing wisdom, shaping priorities, cultivating diligence, informing relationships, practicing meditation, understanding suffering, and various other related topics. Each chapter contains teaching not only from OT wisdom literature, but also other biblical books from both testaments. The book is peppered throughout with personal anecdotes and illustrations, largely from the authors' teaching experience. These help to drive home the principles the authors attempt to convey. Thoughtful questions for reflection conclude each chapter, and are similarly helpful for reviewing the material covered.

Unfortunately, the authors do not make clear in the introduction which biblical books and which individual psalms constitute OT wisdom literature. There is also no mention of relevant apocryphal works such as Ben Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon. A brief introduction to the wisdom genre and the canonical and important non-canonical books that make up the genre would have been helpful for the uninformed reader. The subtitle, *Spirituality in the Wisdom Literature*, is also a bit of a misnomer, and may be more accurately titled *Spirituality in the Book of Proverbs*. The authors do not ignore the other wisdom books, but the emphasis here is clearly on Proverbs.

A final concern is the absence of explanation for the particular chapter foci chosen; the authors do well to explain the importance of OT wisdom literature for spiritual formation, but they do not explain their reasons for structuring the book as they have done. The result is something of a lack of transition from one chapter to the next.

Despite some of these relatively minor concerns, *Discovering the Way of Wisdom* is a cogent, well-written, and penetrating book that should prove particularly helpful for thoughtful lay readers, Bible college and seminary students, and pastors who may be neglecting the private study of and public preaching from OT wisdom literature. It can also be used profitably in a small group study format. The reflection questions at the end of each chapter provide especially helpful and intellectually stimulating material for engaging discussion. One of the great strengths of the book is that it motivates readers to pick up and read OT wisdom literature for themselves. The authors have attempted to show its relevance for matters of spiritual formation, and I believe they have succeeded in their goal. This book deserves to be widely read and pondered, and its conclusions and lessons applied.

Stephen J. H. Tu  
Knox College, University of Toronto  
Grace Toronto Church, Toronto, Canada

*Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*. By Duane L. Christensen. Word Biblical Commentary 6B. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002, li + 452 pp., \$39.99.

That three volumes on the same biblical book were published within a relatively short time span by the same publisher and author reveals something about the controversy in the interpretation of this biblical book. The first volume published by Christensen on Deuteronomy (1991) was not too well accepted by the scholarly community. The product of the revision was a new commentary in two volumes of more than 1,000 pages.

This second edition of Christensen's commentary is a significant improvement from the first edition in size, bibliography, and argumentation. Anyone who wants to do his

own research in some area of Deuteronomy finds an extensive, though sometimes incomplete, bibliography for every section.

The preface of the second volume is the same as in the first volume. But the maps and illustrations of volume one, which are also relevant for volume two, are missing in the second volume. The bibliography at the beginning of this volume is almost identical with the one in volume one. Christensen has to be commended for giving the users such a fine bibliography.

In his first edition Christensen favored the view that Deuteronomy was a song (p. lxi) and that the composer of the original was Moses. However, he says that the text enjoyed its own life within the public worship of ancient Israel (p. lxii). In the introduction of his second edition, there is no mention of Deuteronomy being a song; rather, Christensen has adopted Lohfink's position that the book is essentially an exposition of the great commandment (Deut 6:5). However, it is not a law code, but a work intended for religious instruction and education in ancient Israel (p. lvii). This also seems to be the reason why he has divided the book according to the triennial lectionary system of Palestinian Judaism. The first volume covers Deuteronomy's readings 1–5 (1:1–21:9). The second volume deals with readings 6–11 (21:10–34:12).

The introduction of his commentary gives a good discussion and overview of the text and versions, a review of critical research, and a detailed outline of the book. A number of important excursuses follow on themes such as Law, poetry, and music; Deuteronomy in the Canonical Process; the *Numeruswechsel* in Deuteronomy; Travel Notices in Deuteronomy 1–3 and 31–34; and Holy War as Celebrated Event in Ancient Israel. What I missed most in his introduction is interaction with historical-critical scholarship, and in particular with discussions of genre and dating.

The second volume, which is under review here, starts with "Reading 6: Laws on Human Affairs in Relation to Others" (21:10–25:19). Christensen sees this section as an elaborate concentric structure in which the sanctity of the military camp forms the center (p. 465). Within this overarching structure are two parallel five-part concentric structures. Deuteronomy 21:10–23:1 forms one part, and 23:2–25:19 the second.

In Christensen's discussion "Reading 7: Public Worship and Covenant Renewal" (26:1–29:8) there is no concentric structure that encompasses all chapters. However, he still clings to his five-part concentric structure, which forms the center together with the sentence in 28:69: "These are the words of the covenant." Every part of this concentric structure has its own five-point concentric pattern.

Christensen's section "Reading 8: Appeal for Covenant Loyalty" (29:9–30:20) is arranged according to a menorah pattern. The center is formed by the sentence in 29:28: "Do all the words of this Torah." Each chapter also has its own five-part concentric structure. The next section, "Reading 9: From Moses to Joshua—Moses prepares to die" (31:1–30), also has a concentric structure, the center of which is 31:14–15, which describes a theophany in the tent of meeting with Moses and Joshua. With von Rad, Christensen understands Deuteronomy 31–34 as in some way connected with the book of Joshua. He also sees a relationship with Exodus 33:11, which tells of Moses and Joshua in the tent of meeting. This report and Milgrom's Numbers commentary cause Christensen to think there is a macrostructure overarching Genesis 1 through 2 Kings, centering around Exodus 33—the theophany on Sinai in which Yahweh promises his presence (pp. 753–54).

In "Reading 10: The Song of Moses within Its Narrative Framework" (32:1–52) the five-part concentric pattern is seen again. The center is in 32:15–29, where Israel's sin provokes God's punishment.

Finally, "Reading 11: Moses' Blessing, Death, Funeral and Necrology" (33:1–34:12) also shows the same five-part pattern, with 33:26–29 forming the center. However, this chapter forms with chapters 31–33 a single literary structure (the menorah pattern) in

which chapter 33:6–25 (Moses' testamentary blessing on the twelve tribes of Israel) forms the center.

If one counts the pages Christensen uses for explaining his word count before and after an *'atnach*, his concentric patterns and other logotechnical criteria, one might conclude his work is primarily concerned with logotechnical devices rather than explaining the Hebrew text and the issues evolving from it. For example, in his comments on the Hebrew text of 24:1–5, lexicography and intertextuality cover one page. His explanation of these verses, what they meant, and what they mean also covers one page, but his information on form and structure stretches over seven pages. There is not always such an overemphasis on form and structure, but he definitely overstresses the logotechnical aspect in lieu of discussions of other scholars' interpretations. Christensen does give interpretations other than his own, but what is missing is a solid discussion. Listing text-critical variants and stating one's own preference without argumentation hardly suffices. (On the logotechnical analysis see the book review by R. A. Taylor in *JETS* 44 [2001] 727–29 on C. J. Labuschagne, *Numerical Secrets of the Bible: Rediscovering the Bible Codes* [BIBAL, 2000].)

Christensen's arrangement of the different chapters and pericopes seems to me a bit arbitrary, especially since he did not pay enough attention to the linguistic and rhetorical devices of the Hebrew text. Deuteronomy is a complex composition with its own headings, breaks, *Leitwörter*, and motifs to which one should pay careful attention. I can only half-heartedly support his view that Deuteronomy was designed for religious instruction and education centering around Deut 6:5, because every book of the OT was meant to be religious instruction and education for ancient Israel. Furthermore, if Christensen would have paid attention to H. Petschow's essay, "Zur Systematik und Gesetzestechnik im Codex Hammurabi," *ZA* 57 (1965) 146–72, maybe he would have seen things in Deuteronomy in a different light. To arrange Deuteronomy according to the Jewish readings and to view the Decalogue and with it 6:5 as the pivotal parts of this book is to pay too little attention to the rhetorical and didactic devices of the book. If one pays enough attention to these characteristics, one will see that the overall governing principle is not the Decalogue or parts of it, but the covenant.

In conclusion, one has to admit that Christensen's second edition of the commentary is a definite improvement from the first edition. The volume closes with extensive indices of 38 pages. However, he has not written a commentary in the classical sense; therefore, many things are missing that one expects to be discussed in a commentary of this many pages.

Helmuth B. Pehlke

German Theological Seminary, Giessen, Germany

*Judges and Ruth*. By Victor H. Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, xxi + 270 pp., \$55.00.

Victor Matthews's commentary on Judges and Ruth is a much-needed work that successfully balances academic depth, a wealth of helps, and practical application of the biblical text. His presentation is unlike commentaries that strive primarily to be technical linguistic manuals for a given biblical text. Instead, Matthews seeks to focus on identifying the big picture of each biblical book in terms of its historical context, pervasive themes, and purpose. He then works to show how each literary subunit fits into the larger unit.

Unlike the more grammatically-focused commentaries, Matthews uses a casual and even colloquial style of communicating. Yet even with his casual style, his consistent

sensitivity to the enduring scholarly questions and methods of investigation clearly differentiate his contribution from commentaries of a lighter, more homiletic style. Matthews concerns himself with questions of literary structure, philology, culture, canonical influence, and relevance. His footnotes betray his academic inclinations and lead well to further study. Viewed in its entirety, Matthews's commentary stands in contrast to other commentaries in its presentation. Where most critical commentaries begin their investigation at the word level, progress to syntax, and conclude with theme or theological purpose, Matthews begins with the themes and theological purposes of the larger literary unit, which he then uses to evaluate the smaller literary units, recognizing key terms and phrases where they are meaningful to the whole. The overall impression left by Matthews's work is one of a strongly coherent biblical text.

In order to accomplish his purpose, Matthews arranges the main body of information into three sections: introductory materials, suggested reading, and the actual chapter-by-chapter commentary. Within the introduction, Matthews provides a historical background for the biblical text and identifies elements that one would expect to find in the text and those that might oddly be lacking. He also offers his overall impression of the material. Judges, for example, is "rough, uncouth, and in places very exciting and comical" (p. 4). He addresses the underlying emphases, explicit themes, and authorial intent, along with a literary, cultural, and archaeological analysis of each book. The section of suggested readings, which explicitly shows Matthews's awareness of scholarship related to his present work, delineates bibliographical resources to aid further study. These complementary works in the field include commentaries as well as articles and monographs that use specialized approaches in the analysis of Judges and Ruth such as literary, redaction, feminist, social context and archaeohistorical, social scientific, historical-critical, and legal approaches. The actual commentary is concise and betrays the influence of many of these approaches to OT study.

Matthews writes this commentary for the preacher and student of the Bible who have limited knowledge of the primary biblical languages and/or the presuppositions of OT scholarship. He translates initial references to Hebrew terms and transliterates the Hebrew rather than using a Hebrew font. His concern to explain the motives and sources of the Deuteronomistic historian reveals his intended audience, as does his use of colloquial terminology such as "topsy-turvy" (p. 127) and "berserker frenzy" (p. 145). The most explicit evidence that reveals his intended audience is Matthews's consistent explanation of ancient customs and contexts, and his insightful help for the application of the biblical text to the modern context. Even so, it appears that Matthews desires that his work also be useful for those familiar with scholarly discussions in that he directs his readers to German and French resources as well as English ones. As such, this exceptionally clear and useful commentary for the minister also retains much value and utility for the advanced reader.

Among the strengths of this work is Matthews's attention to provide multiple explanations for a given claim and to discuss the merit of each explanation. He also succeeds well in showing the thematic continuities and contrasts within the OT and in comparing and contrasting the OT with ancient Near Eastern literature. The work also uses a thoughtful format. Matthews includes diagrams for the visual learner, charts that compare and contrast related biblical material, lists that provide a snapshot of extensive material, and footnotes rather than endnotes for convenient reference. Equally helpful is the shaded gray background used to identify "A Closer Look" and "Bridging the Horizons," which are his well-placed, in-depth studies and his suggestions for applying the material, respectively. Well-chosen fonts, such as boldface for the biblical text (NRSV) and appropriately-sized fonts for headings, facilitate the reading of this commentary. The only weakness is a few typographical errors.

Overall, Matthews's work is a valuable addition to any minister's library and an excellent source for those who desire an introduction to the various scholarly discussions concerning the books of Judges and Ruth.

James H. Boyd III  
First Baptist Church, Princeton, WV

*1 & 2 Chronicles*. By Andrew E. Hill. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, 699 pp., \$29.99.

In his recent commentary on 1 and 2 Chronicles Andrew E. Hill, professor of Old Testament studies at Wheaton College, makes a significant contribution to the non-specialist study of these two OT books. Most Bible readers do not approach Chronicles with initial enthusiasm, no doubt in part due to the lengthy genealogies and preoccupation with historical detail that characterize these writings. Chronicles has suffered much neglect in biblical study, both at the level of professional scholarship and especially at the level of lay reading. However, Hill's suggestion that dispensational theology must shoulder much of the blame for such lack of attention comes as a bit of a surprise (cf. pp. 21–22). To advocate that dispensationalism fosters neglect of the OT more than other evangelical theological systems is simply unfounded.

Hill characterizes Chronicles as "a sermon without explicit application" (p. 16; cf. pp. 30–37). He understands the purpose of these biblical books to be threefold. First, Chronicles is in a sense a biography of the God who superintended Israel's history. As such, it invites a response of faith on the part of those who are the recipients of his gracious dealings. Second, Chronicles is a theology of hope. By summarizing God's past faithfulness to Israel the Chronicler implicitly appeals to his audience to be secure in the promise of God's continuing faithfulness to his people. Third, Chronicles is a call to worship. It implicitly invites the believing community to respond to God with appropriate praise and adoration in light of salvation history.

Several features of Hill's discussions are noteworthy. First, he does not shy away from mentioning technical aspects of exegesis, although clearly in a commentary of this sort such discussions must be brief and to the point. For example, the reader is exposed to selected text-critical difficulties (e.g. pp. 83, 94, 97, 107, 167, 202–3, 262, 315, 324, 488). Structural features such as chiasm are mentioned (e.g. p. 77), as is word play (e.g. pp. 95, 577). The Amarna letters (e.g. p. 204) and the Mesha inscription (e.g. p. 117) are touched on in passing. Form-critical categories regularly receive attention (e.g. pp. 156, 166, 224, 241, 289, 309, 379–80, 453, 498–99, 513, 612, 619–20). Options for interpreting large numbers are discussed (e.g. pp. 208, 263, 293, 302, 397, 466, 575), although it is not always possible to determine what solution Hill prefers in such cases. To be sure, technical comments in this commentary are brief and limited, but they should be in a commentary whose goals are applicational in nature. However, in a few places more detail than what is provided might be helpful. For example, Hill accepts the height of Goliath as more than nine feet (p. 266) without mentioning the textual variant in 1 Sam 17:4 that reads four cubits rather than six for Goliath's height.

Second, Hill pays attention to the theology of the Chronicler, allowing that theology to direct and shape his discussion throughout the commentary. By focusing on the primary theological emphases of the Chronicler, Hill is able to undergird the transition to application with credibility.

Third, for the most part Hill does not overreach in seeking meaningful application of the text of Chronicles. His applications are neither forced nor fanciful, but consistent

with the exegetical and theological significance of the biblical passage under consideration. Hill has his hand on the pulse of contemporary religious culture. He interacts with influential popular literature, including an interesting aside on theological problems inherent in Bruce Wilkinson's much-touted *Prayer of Jabez* (p. 96). His sometimes extensive discussions of various aspects of Christian leadership and Christian worship, scattered throughout the book, are often insightful (e.g. pp. 335–45). Those interested in a theology of worship will find stimulating reading here.

Throughout this book Hill interacts with a wide range of secondary literature, some of it scholarly and technical and some of it popular and lay-oriented. The commentators on Chronicles that he appeals to most often are Leslie C. Allen, Roddy Braun, Simon J. DeVries, Raymond B. Dillard, Sara Japhet, J. G. McConville, Jacob M. Myers, J. A. Thompson, H. G. M. Williamson, and Martin J. Selman. Selman's work seems to be especially influential in this commentary.

An added feature of the book are the various lists, charts, and drawings that are scattered throughout its pages. There are also five appendices that provide various sorts of helpful information for the reader: maps of OT Israel; details regarding the Hebrew religious calendar; a comparative chronology of Hebrew kingship that aligns dates suggested by biblical scholars (viz. Hayes and Hooker, Thiele, Bright, and Cogan and Tadmor); a summary of major sacrifices in the Old Testament; and an index of synoptic parallels found in Chronicles and Samuel–Kings.

This is a very helpful volume, both for lay reading and for sermonic stimulation. Certainly those who may be inclined to question the contemporary relevance of 1 and 2 Chronicles should read this book. Hill demonstrates that these OT writings, when properly understood, continue to speak powerfully and meaningfully—even to cultures removed by millennia from their original audience.

Richard A. Taylor  
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

*Psalms 1–72*. By Richard J. Clifford. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002, 338 pp., \$28.00 paper.

Volumes in this series, together with its NT counterpart, have continued to appear rather steadily. By design, the series is intended “to provide compact, critical commentaries . . . for the use of theological students and pastors” (p. 9). Given the centrality of the Psalter, this commentary forms a centerpiece of the series. Happily, Richard Clifford (Weston Jesuit School of Theology) serves both the series and its readers well.

In keeping with the series design, Clifford provides a brief (20-page) introduction, discussing the place of the Psalms in Scripture, their role in the worship life of Israel (temple, prayer), literary features (genre, rhetoric, poetic style), overarching theological themes, and the place of the Psalms in the worship life of people today. He then studies each of the first 72 psalms individually, using the designated format of literary analysis, exegetical analysis, and theological and ethical analysis. Literary analysis (genre, structure, mini-collections among the psalms) generally sets the stage for the more extended exegetical analysis. Though the theological and ethical analysis is generally brief, Clifford's reflective and expressive style gives that analysis a relevance that is enriching and rewarding. With rare variation (one study of one page and another of seven), most of the psalms are given a discussion of 3–5 pages. As brief as that may seem, Clifford's economy of words maximizes his comments so the reader is given meaningful commentary on each of the 72 psalms.

Clifford is well conversant with critical issues, and they occasionally surface (joining Psalms 9 and 10, the division of content in Psalms 19 and 22, the connection of vv. 18–19 with the rest of Psalm 51). But this is not the focus of the commentary, nor is the discussion technical. There are no footnotes and no conversations with other scholars! Clifford works with the text as we have it.

Illustrative of the warmth and insight of this commentary is Clifford's treatment of Psalm 67, a "communal petition," though a prayer for the nations rather than a lament or a prayer for God's deliverance of Israel. The chiasmic structure of the psalm is noted, as well as the virtually exhaustive inclusiveness of the psalm (four references to "the earth" and seven references to the "peoples"). Clifford also alerts the reader to the variation in translations between future and jussive renderings of Hebrew imperfect verbs. In the exegetical section, the link with the Aaronic benediction is drawn, but with the twist that the nations are the ultimate recipients, and are indeed called on to join their praise to Israel's. This in turn points to "Israel's special role toward the nations and God's desire to be known by all the nations of the world" (p. 314).

Part of the theological richness Clifford brings to this commentary is his feel both for the canonical context of the psalms (Old and New Testaments) and for ongoing usage of the psalms in ecclesial communities, including comments by Jewish rabbis, the Fathers of the early Church, and the Reformers, as well as their place in the liturgical heritage of the Church.

As mentioned above, the stated audience of this commentary series is "theological students and pastors," namely those who lead the worship and educational ministries of the Church. This commentary may not be exhaustive, but it does offer helpful comment and insight for those leaders. It also highlights areas where a person may want to consult a more thorough or technical commentary, and Clifford provides a short bibliography of such resources. Similarly, the author does on occasion cite the nuance of Hebrew words and idioms (in romanized form), with enough explanation for the amateur reader to understand and enough material for the scholar to consult more scholarly works. This reviewer's sense, however, is that as well as Clifford serves the "theological students and pastors," he also serves well those whom the "theological students and pastors" serve. This would be a fine resource for a church library, for non-professional leaders of educational or small group ministries, and for any serious student of the Scripture.

Henry Rowold  
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

*Ecclesiastes*. By Michael V. Fox. JPS Bible Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004, xxxviii + 87 pp., \$34.95.

This volume is a welcome addition to the JPS commentary series. The format adopted prints the Hebrew text and NJPS translation side by side at the top of the page, with the author's brief notes below. This format makes it easy to go from the author's comments to the Hebrew text and back again, even for those whose Hebrew skills are rusty—a particular benefit in the case of *Ecclesiastes*, where the Hebrew is extremely challenging in places. The distinctive strength of this series is that it makes accessible the best of contemporary Jewish Biblical scholarship, which is itself in dialogue with the centuries-old tradition of the rabbis. Christian readers, too, can benefit enormously from this tradition of scholarship and wrestling with the text.

The earlier volumes in the series, covering the Pentateuch, also typically had a series of expansive excursuses at the end of the commentary, which in some cases were virtually

a book in their own right. This practice has not been followed in the newer volumes; this book therefore has simply a relatively brief introduction (38 pages) followed by concise notes on the text. Readers seeking a more extensive analysis of the book of Ecclesiastes should consult Fox's earlier work, *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), on which this commentary is built. In fact, the best approach would probably be to read the earlier book first to provide general background and then to use the present commentary to find Fox's thoughts on particular verses.

Fox views the book of Ecclesiastes as an essential unity, dating it as a third-century BC document because of its language and cultural references. For Fox, "Kohleth" is not a real figure but a persona through whom the author speaks, tracing "the struggles of a deeply committed thinker as he works the way to his conclusions, some unhappy and frustrated, some affirmative and productive" (p. xvii). The author is not the historical Solomon, yet the persona he adopts projects wisdom, power, and prosperity in genuinely Solomonic quantity and quality, at least in the opening section of the book. This does not constitute an attempt to deceive the reader since, as Fox notes, Kohleth is never directly named as Solomon.

While Ecclesiastes is an authorial unity, this does not mean it is always consistent. On the contrary, Kohleth wrestles with a world where he finds much that is "absurd" (Fox's preferred rendering of הַבָּל). That is, many things in this world ("under the sun") are violations of reason: people receive a fate that is opposite to what they deserve, while the wealth they accumulate through hard labor may go to someone who is undeserving. Many contradictory propositions in this world seem equally valid. The contradictions in Kohleth's various statements are thus an important part of his approach and should not simply be expunged or harmonized away. He wants his readers to feel the frustration of life as it really is.

At the same time, even though life is frustrating, Kohleth is not a nihilist. There are things in life that are worthwhile and that make life worth living: moderate work; temperate enjoyment of pleasure; love and friendship; fearing God; and hoping for divine justice. In spite of all of its contradictions, life itself is good.

For Fox, Kohleth is the closest the Bible comes to philosophy—that is, "the intellectual, rational contemplation of fundamental human issues, with no recourse to revelation or tradition" (p. xi). His style of discourse is reflexive, reporting what he planned, did, experienced, and thought. His readers thus are able not only to absorb his teachings but also to observe him "as he walks a rocky and winding path toward understanding and acceptance of life's frustrations and uncertainties" (p. xiii). The narrative style is what lends credibility and interest to the author's words.

In the epilogue (12:9–14), the author of Ecclesiastes evaluates Kohleth's philosophical struggle from a more conventional and conservative standpoint. He respects Kohleth's perspective but also keeps a certain distance from it. The words of the wise are helpful and good, he thinks, but must be handled cautiously and kept in their proper place, second to piety and obedience to God's law. Like sharp goads, they provoke us out of our comfortable stupor, encouraging us to think. Yet the study of wisdom can be overwhelming and troubling as well, and should therefore be kept in its proper place.

To conclude, this volume is a profitable resource for both scholars and pastors. Pastors will appreciate its brevity and clarity, and scholars will respect its depth and thoughtfulness. I expect it to find a useful place on my shelves alongside the volumes by Murphy (Word), Seow (Anchor Bible), and Longman (NICOT).

Iain M. Duguid  
Westminster Seminary California, Escondido, CA

*Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. By Andrew E. Steinmann. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004, 102 pp., \$35.99.

How often does a student have the opportunity to obtain both Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic grammars inside one cover? Steinmann's volume is the second half (pp. 281–378) of a volume also containing Andrew H. Bartelt's *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew* (Concordia, 2000). One volume containing both grammars is economical for the student and serves as a constant reminder that both are biblical languages employed in the OT. A parallel concept is the inclusion of an Aramaic section in Hebrew lexicons (e.g. Holladay's *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*). My colleague Michael Grisanti reviewed Bartelt's *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew* in *JETS* 45 (2002).

Steinmann's *Fundamental Biblical Aramaic* is a basic introduction without the detail characteristic of Franz Rosenthal's *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963, 1995), Alger F. Johns's *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (rev. ed.; Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1972), or Frederick E. Greenspahn's *Introduction to Aramaic* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999). I previously reviewed Greenspahn's Aramaic grammar in *JETS* 44 (2001).

Steinmann designed his grammar as a one-semester course in Biblical Aramaic. Both Johns and Rosenthal can also be covered in one semester, though both professor and student must push themselves to do so. Greenspahn includes more than Biblical Aramaic with his chapters on extrabiblical materials including inscriptions from Zinjirli, Jerusalem, and 'Ein Gedi, letters from Elephantine and Bar Kochba, and passages from the Genesis Apocryphon (DSS), *Genesis Rabbah* (Midrash), and Targum Jonathan. His grammar is best covered over two semesters.

Although Steinmann designed his grammar as both a teaching tool and a reference book (p. 281), its value as a reference is limited due to its lack of bibliography to provide the student some direction for further research and study. Johns's grammar has the same problem. Both Rosenthal and Greenspahn provide excellently arranged bibliographies. Greenspahn never intended his grammar to be a reference tool, constructing it as a workbook in content and format. As a teaching tool, Steinmann's exercises are a strength since they are taken directly from the biblical text. He provides the student with the biblical reference for each exercise. A large number of the exercises in Greenspahn and Johns also are drawn from the biblical text, but neither normally provides the reference. Greenspahn utilizes abridged and simplified readings from Daniel that are identified by reference. Steinmann's format for the exercises makes it easier for a student with a propensity for translation to go directly to the text in an English Bible. Such ease of access reduces the value of exercise grades as a means of gauging the student's actual acquisition of the language. Teachers who wish to limit the student's use of English translations will find Greenspahn and Johns better suited to their needs in at least that respect. Rosenthal's grammar, of course, is purely a reference grammar, so it does not contain any exercises.

One means of helping students make the transition from Biblical Hebrew to Biblical Aramaic is the list of common vocabulary words (pp. 289–90). Steinmann's list of ninety-six entries surpasses the eighty-six in Greenspahn and forty-four in Johns. Rosenthal provides no such list. Although his list is more complete, Steinmann omits  $\text{עֲצָרָה}$  ("finger") and  $\text{לְכֵן}$  ("therefore"). Greenspahn's grammar is the only one to go the extra mile in the early chapters to provide the student with the parallel Hebrew forms of Aramaic words that exhibit a phonetical difference (e.g. "generation" [Aramaic  $\text{דָּוָר}$  vs. Hebrew  $\text{דָּוָר}$ ] and "sheqel" [Aramaic  $\text{לְקָה}$  vs. Hebrew  $\text{לְשֶׁקֶל}$ ]).

Steinmann's grammar could be improved by a greater attention to the matter of grammatical terminology, in order to provide the student with the terms required to

pursue a specific topic in other sources. For example, the combination of the stative הָיָה and participle should be identified as a periphrastic participle (p. 325). Steinmann treats the pael (D stem) more adequately than any of the other three grammars because he reminds the student that the stem's characterization as intensive is not always accurate (p. 335). Pael can also be equivalent to the peal (G stem) or it can be a causative. Unfortunately, the author makes no mention of the factitive nature of the pael. Bartelt's Biblical Hebrew grammar does not provide a discussion of the factitive either. That rules out the possibility of directing students to the Hebrew portion of the volume for a brief review of the same concept in biblical Hebrew. A better coordination between the two grammars could increase the usability of both portions.

The limited topical and Scripture indexes and the conclusion of the volume (pp. 374–78) are very helpful provisions contributing significantly to the volume as a reference work. Such indexes are absent from the other three grammars, even though Gerald H. Wilson published a Scripture index for Rosenthal's grammar in *JSS* 24 (1979) that could have been included in the later editions.

Overall, *Fundamental Biblical Aramaic* is a user-friendly grammar that offers a viable alternative to the expense of Greenspahn's grammar and the unfriendly formats of both Rosenthal's and Johns's grammars. It is especially attractive for courses limited to one semester.

William D. Barrick  
The Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, CA

*Building Jewish in the Roman East.* By Peter Richardson. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2004, xxii + 413 pp., \$39.95 paper.

*Building Jewish in the Roman East* is a diverse collection of lectures and previously published articles and essays. A theme that surfaces a number of times is the origin and development of synagogues and churches. However, the book is not devoted to that subject alone. Topics include the piety of Herod the Great, a 3-D virtual reconstruction of first-century Khirbet Qana, the possible origins of monasticism, Jesus and Palestinian social protest, the first-century setting of Q, and the authenticity (or not) of the James ossuary. Therein lies the principal weakness of the book—it does not “hang together.” It is an eclectic collection without an obvious center. However, a number of the chapters are well worth the read.

Part 1 consists of an introductory chapter. Richardson provides a short autobiographical sketch and describes the purpose of the book. He accurately describes the book's format as “variations on a theme,” or even “postmodern.” Recognition of this fact may help the reader make sense of the otherwise seemingly disconnected chapters of the book.

Part 2, “Towns and Villages,” has mostly to do with Yodefat (Jotapata) and Khirbet Qana, where Richardson participated in excavations. Chapter 4 employs the data from Qana and Yodefat to reconstruct small towns and villages of the first century. Richardson concludes that these were typically unwalled, densely populated communities, which lacked a marketplace, specialized in a few industrial trades (wool dyeing, pottery, glass blowing, etc.), sometimes exhibited differentiated neighborhoods (rich vs. poor), and had graveyards surrounding each village. The Jewish nature of these towns is often identified archaeologically through the discovery of ritual baths (*miqvaoth*). Tantalizing bits of evidence may even point to the existence of a first-century synagogue at Khirbet Qana (probably biblical Cana). In a different vein, chapter 5, which tries to ascertain

the social setting and geographical location of the Q community, is a disappointment. The conclusion that “the lower Galilee is the most logical, if not the only, choice” adds little to what is already obvious from the Gospels.

Part 3, “Synagogues and Churches,” is the best-developed and most coherent part of the book. Among other things, Richardson argues that synagogues first appeared in the Diaspora as *collegia* (a technical word he never defines or adequately describes). The fact that the earliest known synagogues are found in the Diaspora tends to favor Richardson’s view that they originated there. However, archaeology continues to produce new evidence. Recently, two pre-70 synagogues were excavated in Judea, one at Jericho and another at Modiin. Both are mentioned in passing by Richardson, although little has yet been published on either one. It is quite possible, even probable, that future discoveries such as these will again force us to change our view of early synagogue and church development. Clearly the jury is still out on whether Richardson’s hypothesis is correct or not, but he builds a good case using the available evidence. Chapter 8, “Architectural Transitions from Synagogues and House Churches to Purpose-Built Churches,” and Chapter 11, “Building ‘A *Synodos* . . . and a Place of Their Own,’” are particularly good. The former describes the common practice of adapting a house for communal use. This practice was significantly altered when Constantine the Great legalized Christianity, after which the Roman basilica became the standard architectural model for purpose-built churches. Furthermore, Richardson suggests that purpose-built synagogues, also loosely based on the basilica design, preceded purpose-built churches. Chapters 11 and 12 argue that early synagogues and churches were viewed at that time as *associations* (another term that is undefined, but is applied to groups like cults, philosophical clubs, and trade associations such as ship-builders and carpenters). This proposal is intriguing, although it is not clear why or how the idea of an “association” would have been adopted within Judea.

Part 4, “Judea and Jerusalem,” is largely concerned with the building programs of Herod the Great. Richardson goes beyond a simple recitation of what and how Herod built to address the question of why he built and how his building programs fit within the broader context of both Judea and the Roman world. One of his conclusions is that Herod purposefully used his building programs abroad to keep Diaspora communities on a solid footing and in close touch with the homeland. There can be little doubt that his magnanimous projects, like funding the 192d Olympiad in 12 BC, were beneficial to Diaspora Jews. On a different note, Richardson argues in Chapter 14, “Why Turn the Tables? Jesus’ Protest in the Temple Precincts,” that the central reason for Jesus’ action was his opposition to the use of Tyrian shekels for paying the temple tax. He argues that Jesus, like the Qumran community, objected to coinage that portrayed pagan deities, the god Melkart in this case. While somewhat novel, this explanation finds little support in the Gospels. It also ignores de Vaux’s discovery of a hoard of Tyrian shekels at Qumran, which Jodi Magness has argued is likely a collection for the temple tax. Once again on a different note, the concluding chapter addresses the James ossuary, which Richardson was allowed to inspect with a magnifying glass at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. In addition to the rosettes noted by others on the back of the ossuary, he reports the existence of a faint *nefesh* sketch (a pyramidal tomb monument) on the left end of the ossuary. Regarding the inscription, he concludes that the first half has unquestionably been cleaned with a sharp instrument, but also maintains that small signs of the original letters still remain and should be more carefully studied. He grants at least a fifty-percent chance that the ossuary and inscription are both authentic.

Part 5 is a wrap-up chapter. Richardson reviews the previous sections and attempts to pull them together. In the end, he has been moderately successful in pursuing the larger goal of “understanding Judaism holistically using the material and built forms it utilized,” even if he has used a shotgun approach. A helpful selection of color photos

and drawings, a glossary, resources for further reading, and several indices are also included.

Kris J. Udd  
Grace University, Omaha, NE

*The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion.* By John Lierman. WUNT 2/173. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004, xiv + 368 pp., €64.00 paper.

This book, as with most WUNT titles, is a revision of the author's doctoral dissertation, which he wrote under the supervision of Professor William Horbury at Cambridge University. Lierman sets out to reveal "how Jews and Jewish Christians perceived the relationship of Moses with Israel and with the Jewish People" (p. 1). As such, he "consults ancient writings and historical material to situate the NT Moses in a larger milieu of Jewish thought" (p. 1). At first glance, one can see that the most striking feature of the book is its arrangement. Rather than surveying the relevant literature book by book (i.e. Josephus's view of Moses, Moses in Pseudo-Philo, etc.), he chooses to focus each chapter on a separate aspect of the NT Moses. Thus for example, chapter 2 focuses on Moses as a prophet by surveying all the biblical and cognate literature that addresses this aspect of Moses. Apart from the introduction and conclusion, there are a total of nine chapters which each cover a significant aspect of Moses. After looking at the prophetic office of Moses, Lierman moves to examine Moses as "Priest and Apostle" (chap. 3), Moses as "King" (chap. 4), Moses as "Lawgiver" (chap. 5), the enigma of Paul's reference to "Baptism into Moses" (chap. 6), Moses as "The Focus of Jewish Loyalty" (chap. 7), and lastly Lierman examines in summary fashion the various points of contact with NT Christology (chap. 8).

The most significant contribution that Lierman makes to the discussion regarding Mosaic Christology is that he goes well beyond the typical assumption that the only Mosaic template for Christ was his role as a prophet. To be sure, the prophetic category is dominant, but as Lierman argues, it is far from exhaustive (see esp. the clear discussion on pp. 258–88). Rather, other significant aspects of Moses such as his kingship, his role as lawgiver, his role as an apostle, and even his exalted status, all serve as valid templates for NT Christology. Lierman summarizes: "While early Christology need not have been exclusively mosaic, no other figure in Jewish lore incorporated so fully the concepts which became important in NT Christology, and so gave precedent for coherently uniting diverse, and at times potentially baffling, Christological attributes. First-century Christians clearly spoke about Jesus in the same way that, as Jews, they had been accustomed to speak about Moses" (p. 279). Lierman himself notes that this is the most astonishing feature of his study, that so "many diverse and important Christological functions appear together in one figure in pre-Christian Judaism" (p. 282). To the degree that Lierman's conclusions are vindicated, his study will no doubt cause quite a stir, possibly even a significant shift, in NT Christology.

As with most dissertations, this book is dense. Lierman unearths a wealth of literature from the Second Temple period and even looks into Greco-Roman writings and Samaritan literature. He demonstrates a clear command of these sources and seems to leave no stones unturned (except for the surprising absence of any reference to the Qumran text 4Q504, which is not lacking in exalted Moses language; e.g. 4Q504 frags. 1–2 i 9–10). In fact, so much attention is given to the cognate literature that in proportion the NT receives less attention than one might expect. For instance, in his chapter

on "Moses as Prophet," he devotes 17 pages to Early Judaism and roughly 10 pages to the NT. This is not a critique but merely an alert to the reader to be prepared to wrestle with a plethora of Early Jewish (and Samaritan!) texts when venturing to crack open this book.

The most provocative proposal in the book is the suggestion that Paul's curious reference to a "baptism into Moses" (1 Cor 10:2) could have been based on an actual early Jewish tradition. While virtually all scholars believe (in one form or another) that Paul's reference to "baptism into Moses" is born out of Christian baptism into Christ, Lierman suggests "that Paul's doctrine of baptism into Christ may be indebted to the baptism into Moses, and not the other way around" (p. 208). While no direct parallel exists in Second Temple literature, Lierman argues that based on the overall presentation of Moses in the literature, he very well could have been seen as a unifying and incorporating spiritual figure. Lierman finds it "almost impossible . . . that the expression [baptism into Christ] should neither arise from, nor be understood in light of, what was widely said and thought about Moses" (p. 208). Lierman's proposal is at times cautious and at other times strongly suggestive. I am still not convinced that Lierman's arguments have moved this proposal beyond a mere "suggestive" stage. Nevertheless, his proposal is provocative and begs to be wrestled with.

The one feature that I found surprisingly lacking in the book is the rather slim treatment on the appearance of Moses at the transfiguration. To be fair, he does have a discussion on this issue scattered throughout chapter 6 (see esp. pp. 194–206; cf. 212), but his main drive is to show that Moses "appears as an active figure *post mortem eium*" (p. 206). However, no fresh analysis was made regarding the Christological importance of Moses on the mountain. I think that this issue could very easily have occupied the same space that he gave to the lengthy section on the "Baptism into Moses."

Despite these somewhat minor critiques, this is a fine work that has made a significant contribution to the study of NT Christology. Its thoroughness and provocative challenges are the marks of a good dissertation.

Preston Sprinkle  
University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Scotland

*Matthew*. By Michael J. Wilkins. NIVAC. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, 1003 pp., \$32.99.

Ten years from its inception, the NT portion of the NIV Application Commentary is now complete. It is probably fair to say that it has taken its place as the premier English-language NT commentary series with a significant focus on application. Michael Wilkins, dean and NT professor at Talbot School of Theology, is well suited for this volume, having already authored numerous technical and popular studies impinging on Matthew and discipleship.

As with most volumes in this series, the introduction presents just the most basic background details. Wilkins supports Matthean authorship, a pre-70 date, and an outline largely following the alternating segments of discourse and narrative in this Gospel. The commentary bibliography and the amount of secondary literature footnoted throughout the book are very up to date and, for this series, particularly ample.

When Zondervan editor Jack Kuhatschek first conceived of this project, he envisioned volumes that spent no more than about one third of their space commenting on the "Original Meaning" of any passage. The "Bridging Contexts" section was then to reflect on how one derives principles from the text, true to the original meaning but applicable

in other contexts as well. Reflections under “Contemporary Significance” were supposed to focus on modern-day issues, trends and situations in which the text’s message proves particularly timely or urgent. A General Preface has repeated these goals in every volume, and Wilkins himself reviews them in his introduction.

Were the intent of this series to focus substantially on original meaning but with more detailed and methodological reflection on application than “the competition,” Wilkins would win hands down. The first of the three sections on each text goes into more exegetical depth than most NIVAC volumes, especially on the Gospels and Acts. Over and over, I found myself applauding Wilkins’s positions, marveling at how often he has accepted views I hold even on fairly minute or controversial matters. To list just a few examples, I particularly appreciate his analyses of Matthew’s uses of the OT, the nature of the temptations of Christ, the Sermon on the Mount as a mandate for those already committed to Jesus at some level, a (moderately) Calvinist understanding of the petition for forgiving trespasses, the interpretation of parables in general and of chapter 13 in particular as at least partly allegorical, Peter as the rock (though not in the traditional Catholic sense), 16:28 referring to the transfiguration, the restorative intent of church discipline even in 18:17, the possibility of two temple cleansings framing Christ’s ministry, the understanding of the “least of these my brothers” in the parable of the sheep and goats as Christians, harmonizing John and the Synoptics on the day of the Last Supper by recognizing John’s use of “Passover” to refer to the entire week-long festivity, and the detailed sequence of resurrection appearances that demonstrates no necessary contradiction among any of the Gospels. The fullness of detail in the “Original Meaning” section, however, turns into a weakness when we come to the next two sections, since there is no way they can come close to occupying two-thirds of the book without doubling its length.

Thus one regularly welcomes the detailed exegesis of a passage only to be disappointed by the brevity of discussion in the remaining two sections. In one extreme case, seventeen pages of the original meaning of 8:1–9:8 are followed by two each on bridging contexts and contemporary application. Moreover, at least a little of the bridging sections begins to infringe on specific application, while much of what appears under contemporary significance is actually the kind of material on principles that belongs under bridging. For example, five categories of disciples (one for each major “sermon” in Matthew) intrude into the application of 5:1–2, while three pages of principles of how to interpret parables interrupt the contemporary significance section on 13:1–52. More confusing still, this same section on 26:47–27:26 contains substantial new historical material on Caiaphas, Pilate, the crowd, and Peter, significant timeless principles deriving from this history, and just a smattering of specific application.

At the same time, some of the bridging sections jump out from others as particularly well thought out, complete with detailed, even alliterative sub-section headings. Are these the portions of the Gospel Wilkins has himself preached? Not surprisingly, several of these appear in treatments of the theme of discipleship in Matthew. In addition, even though they often come under contemporary significance, a number of Wilkins’s lists of principles are particularly helpful—“tips for the wounded,” the Christian’s relationship to the Law, the Lord’s Supper as “life’s schematic,” and lessons on leadership from chapter 23.

When the contemporary significance sections are actually applying the texts to specific modern life situations, Wilkins’s illustrations are often riveting. Though I never understood personal anecdotes to be appropriate for this section when I wrote my NIVAC on *1 Corinthians*, a number of writers have included them as the series has emerged. This, of course, is hard to do well, especially when one has not personally experienced the most powerful applications possible. However, Wilkins does it well, utilizing illustrations from his pre-Christian life during the Vietnam War, along with others’ profound

experiences of suffering (e.g. John McCain's seven years in a P.O.W. camp), from premarital counseling assignments (spend two months trying always to put your fiancé(e)'s needs above your own), on the need for elderly Christians to model how to "die well," and on an exercise in which I imagine my closest human friend dying in agony on a cross so that I might empathize a little more with the love and sorrow the crucifixion reflected.

Only rarely do I find myself really disagreeing with Wilkins. He wrongly attributes to me the view that I think the Sermons on the Mount and Plain are separate events, and his thrice-repeated definition of *porneia* claims it refers to any sinful activity that intentionally divides a marriage relationship without specifying that it must be some kind of sexual sin. It is impossible that Jesus was *stressing* that the man who found the treasure in the field was *not* searching when all he says is "a man found it" (13:44). The harmonization of the geography of the healing of Bartimaeus can scarcely be solved by postulating two Jerichos—what first-century reader of any Gospel would ever have suspected that the OT Jericho was in view when no Gospel ever refers to two Jerichos and every other NT reference to Jericho means NT Jericho? Nor does any text of Matthew even hint at a restoration of Jews to the *land* of Israel, even as there *are* hints of an outpouring of Christian faith among Jews at a later date.

These concerns notwithstanding, this volume remains one of the exegetically strongest volumes in the NIVAC series and, even though one is never sure where one will find the discussions, an excellent resource for determining principles and applying the text as well.

Craig L. Blomberg  
Denver Seminary, Littleton, CO

*Mark: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist.* By Francis J. Moloney. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2004, xiv + 224 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Francis J. Moloney, SDB, the Katherine Drexel Professor of Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America, wrote the present volume after the completion of his award-winning commentary on Mark (*The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* [Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002]). Though intended to instruct readers approaching the study of Mark for the first time (specifically M.A. or M.Div. students, p. xi), the author nonetheless hopes the volume will make a contribution to scholarship on the subject. The book begins with a helpful preface (pp. ix–xii), which briefly introduces readers to the importance of the second Gospel with respect to Matthew and highlights the emergence of its importance in scholarly discussion from the middle of the nineteenth century. Though initial interests were in the historical value of Mark, Moloney indicates his attention will be turned primarily to its literary and theological contribution to NT scholarship, and his focus will be on the person of Mark and his role as a storyteller, an interpreter of Jesus traditions, and an evangelist (p. x).

This book is divided into four parts, the first of which deals with the person and work of the evangelist himself. Within this part are two chapters. Chapter 1 ("The Author of Mark in History," pp. 3–18) includes discussions titled "Which Mark?" "Why Mark?" and "Where and When?" Moloney presumes Markan authorship and traces that figure through the NT, though he underscores the uncertainty of the identity of the author of the Gospel that bears Mark's name (p. 5). Chapter 2 (pp. 19–46) discusses "History and Theology" in Mark. It begins with a very helpful discussion of the origin of critical scholarship on the historical value of Mark as a product of the Enlightenment. This naturally leads into discussion of synoptic relationships and the "synoptic problem."

This section is the strongest portion of the entire book and provides a helpful survey of the treatment of Mark beginning in the nineteenth century through the *religions-geschichtliche Schule* (Holtzmann, Wrede, Schweitzer, Schmidt, Dibelius, and Bultmann). It is well written and reasonably comprehensive given the author's limited purpose and space. Moloney examines Mark's identity as a theologian by use of redaction criticism and narrative criticism, though his conclusion to the chapter advocating a reader-response-oriented hermeneutic is disappointing and out of place.

Part 2 pertains to "Mark the Storyteller" and looks to the text itself. Its first chapter (chap. 3 "Mark's Story," pp. 47–58) primarily deals with the Gospel's plot (pp. 48–54) and illustrates the use of "textual markers" to outline the book and to provide guidance for a narrative summary of Mark's Gospel. Chapter 4 (Mark 1:1–8:30, "Who Is Jesus?") pp. 59–81) and chapter 5 ("Mark 8:31–16:8: Son of Man, Christ, and Son of God," pp. 82–124) provide largely a summary on those texts with some commentary.

Part 3 is concerned with "Mark the Interpreter." Here Moloney promotes a Mark not so much concerned with the "brute facts" of Jesus' life but with interpretations of traditions about him (p. 125). Chapter 6 addresses "Mark the Interpreter of Jesus of Nazareth" (pp. 125–58) and is largely concerned with Christological issues in this Gospel. The author rightly dismisses the inordinately narrow approach to this subject of focusing on Christological titles and instead begins the discussion with Mark's presentation of Jesus and the kingdom of God. This, coupled with his reading of Markan Christology through Jesus' affirmation of being "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One" (Mark 14:61–62), is a constructive approach to Markan Christology and enables him to address Christological titles from the overarching kingdom perspective of the evangelist. Moloney's treatment of Wrede and the so-called "messianic secret" is insightful and even-handed. Part 3 also includes chapter 7, "Mark the Interpreter of the Christian Community" (pp. 159–84). In this chapter, Moloney assumes that "[b]ehind this portrayal of the disciples in the story of the gospel lies Mark's teaching to his own community" (p. 161, cf. pp. 159–60, 167). Part 4 contains the concluding chapter (chap. 8, "The Good News of the Gospel of Mark," pp. 185–200). The volume contains a sizable bibliography (pp. 201–16) and indices of modern authors (pp. 217–19) and ancient sources (pp. 220–24).

While the approach to this book is fascinating—writing a commentary first, then a volume of this nature—it is not without its weaknesses. What is frustratingly uninteresting about the book is that a large portion of it simply recounts the Gospel's story. There are also a number of errors in the book, like saying that it was the holy of holies that was "torn from top to bottom" (Mark 15:38, p. 109) rather than the "veil of the temple" (cf. also pp. 7, 166). He casually asserts that the "early church always regarded the Old Testament as part of its sacred Scriptures" (p. 134), without acknowledging that for the most part the OT was their *only* Scripture! Moloney says nothing about the structure of Mark's Gospel or its language, other than passing comments on the primitiveness of his Greek.

Of a more serious nature are Moloney's failures to address critical issues in Gospels and Markan scholarship. He uncritically assumes the disputable view that Mark 13 was written after the fall of Jerusalem (pp. 93–96). He seems to presume Mark's "Gospel" was a unique literary genre while Richard Burridge's seminal work to the contrary (*What Are the Gospels: A Comparison with Greco-Roman Biography* [SNTSMS 70; Cambridge: University Press, 1992]) is not even found in the bibliography. Moloney's discussion of narrative criticism of the second Gospel makes no mention of the seminal work of David Rhoads and Donald Michie on the subject, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), now in its second edition (1999).

Another serious oversight on Moloney's part is his assumption of a "Markan community" (pp. 10, 11, 13, 159–76) without mention of Richard Bauckham's important thesis in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids:

Eerdmans, 1998), which has proposed a major challenge to the assumption that the Gospels were written to particular communities. Bauckham's challenge has been promoted in Markan studies in Dwight N. Peterson's *The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate* (Leiden: Brill, 2000). Neither Bauckham's nor Peterson's work are found in Moloney's bibliography. Moloney addresses the anonymity of the Gospel, though he entirely ignores the important thesis pertaining to the Gospel's title proposed by Martin Hengel (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark* [London: SCM Press, 1985] 64–80). For biographical information on the evangelist Moloney relies heavily on the critical and historically negative work by C. Clifton Black (*Mark: Images of an Apostolic Interpreter* [Edinburgh: Clark, 2001]). Interestingly, Moloney concludes that the identity of the author of this Gospel is “beyond the range of our knowledge” (p. 13), but for some reason the “Markan community” is not.

By far the greatest strength of this book is its pinpointing the negative use of Mark in historical Jesus studies within the shift in a broader epistemological framework of the Enlightenment. This goes unnoticed in most work in the Gospels, let alone Mark. Moloney provides a strong discussion of the OT background of the Son of Man sayings (pp. 144–52) and is among the few scholars to make adequate use of Donald Senior's important “Passion Series” volumes (*The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark* [Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1984]). Moloney's writing style is readable and inviting, and the price of the volume is reasonable.

It is difficult to assess this book overall in light of its strengths and weaknesses. Though likely a bit simplistic to be of much interest to Master's level students, it would make a helpful introduction to Mark for an upper-level undergraduate course, provided it was carefully supplemented by readings from Hengel, Wrede, Marxsen, etc. Other works which try to do what Moloney does are worth consulting but are of limited use as a textbook. W. R. Telford's *Mark* (T. & T. Clark Study Guides; Edinburgh: Clark, 1997) is immersed in form and redaction criticism and largely treats the Gospel as an unreliable source of historical information more than anything else. Ralph P. Martin's *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1972) is quite good but sorely outdated. Supplemented with well-informed lectures, Moloney's work could provide a helpful contribution to introductory instruction on the second Gospel.

Daniel M. Gurtner  
Tyndale House, Cambridge, England

*John: An Introduction and Commentary.* By Colin G. Kruse. TNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, 395 pp., \$16.00 paper.

In the course of time it occasionally becomes necessary to update the scholarly contributions of a previous generation in the light of new knowledge, hermeneutical advances, and shifting trends in biblical and theological studies. This volume represents just such an effort. In the newly revised and updated Tyndale New Testament Commentary series, this work on the Fourth Gospel by Colin Kruse serves as the replacement for R. V. G. Tasker's commentary on John (originally released in 1960). For the most part, the general aims of the series have remained the same. The concern is still primarily exegetical rather than homiletical, and the “main thrust” is to “help the non-technical reader understand the Bible better” (p. 8). Also, the series aims at reflecting an awareness of the major issues in and discussions surrounding the text without being “unduly long” or weighed down with too much technical material. With these explicitly stated goals in mind, it is possible to evaluate the present work.

The first sixty pages of the commentary cover quite a bit of material. Following a list of principal abbreviations (pp. 11–12) and a select bibliography (pp. 13–15), Kruse provides the reader with discussion on an extensive range of introductory issues. These include, among others, distinctive features of the Fourth Gospel, authorship, purpose, historical reliability, recent interpretive trends, and numerous theological emphases within the Fourth Gospel. While offering many insights to the non-technical reader, this section also serves as a methodological road map for Kruse as he prepares to take the reader through his analysis of the text.

When one considers the boldly evangelical thrust of this series on the whole, many of the author's preliminary conclusions in this introductory section can easily be predicted. For instance, Kruse predictably identifies the "beloved disciple" (an anonymous character within the Gospel) as the apostle John, whom he in turn identifies as the author of the Johannine literature—thus establishing apostolic authorship. He also argues for the general historical reliability of the Fourth Gospel vis-à-vis the Synoptic tradition. By and large Kruse displays an awareness of the pertinent issues in the study of the Fourth Gospel. There are instances, however, when Kruse's discussion is more eloquent than substantive. As an example, in recent years some of the most important work done on John's Gospel has been done in the area of narrative criticism. Although he recognizes this as an important development in Johannine studies, Kruse ultimately dismisses its value by stating, "[T]o read the Fourth Gospel in this way, without taking cognizance of its claims to historical reliability and the credibility of the eyewitnesses, opens the door to excessive subjectivity" (p. 37). Such a critique of the place of narrative criticism within Johannine studies seriously misses the point. In the end, however, Kruse's introduction is a more than adequate primer for the non-technical reader.

Following the introduction the author proceeds to the commentary proper, where he provides a verse-by-verse exegesis of the text. Unlike the older volumes in this series, which were based upon the Authorized Version, Kruse's exposition in the present volume is based upon the Greek text. He consistently references the Greek text in transliterated form and incorporates his personal translation into the running commentary. He also interacts extensively with a number of the standard English translations where certain issues need nuancing and/or clarification.

Kruse's exegesis divides the Gospel into four sections: (1) Prologue (1:1–18); (2) Jesus' Work in the World (1:19–12:50); (3) Jesus Returns to the Father (13:1–20:31); and (4) Epilogue (21:1–15). Overall, the commentary is a good balance of exegetical insights based upon lexical, grammatical, and textual factors alongside ample summarization of scholarly opinion on select topics. Kruse moves with utility among the primary sources as well as the secondary literature and does so in a way that will not be threatening to the non-specialist. The presentation is not overly saturated with footnotes or lengthy citations. Rather, the majority of the discussion occurs within the context of the verse-by-verse commentary. This makes for greater readability and surely has the untrained reader in mind.

A particularly helpful feature of the commentary is the periodic excursus that appears under the heading, "Additional Note." There are twelve such excursuses covering terms like *μονογενής* (p. 70) and important Johannine terminology such as *ἐγὼ εἰμί* (p. 138) and *παράκλητος* (p. 303). These additional discussions provide a greater depth of exploration on important topics and help prevent the verse-by-verse exposition from becoming cumbersome and difficult to read.

One notable weakness in Kruse's presentation is his failure to emphasize the prominence of situational irony, ironic speech, and *double entendre* in John's story of Jesus. Kruse makes a few passing comments on certain noteworthy passages (e.g. Jesus' statement about raising the temple [p. 101]; Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus about being "born again" [p. 106]; Jesus with the woman at the well [p. 129]) but fails to make a

sustained argument for the place of irony in understanding the Fourth Gospel's presentation of Jesus and his ministry.

In the end, this commentary stays true to the aims set forth by the editorial staff. The length, content, and format of the commentary will certainly be helpful for the non-technical reader. Beyond that, it is certain that this volume will be a valuable resource for years to come in several venues. First, because it consists of a wide coverage of issues presented in clear and non-technical language, this commentary is an ideal resource for the busy pastor in the throes of homiletical preparation. This commentary is also ideal as a primary text for an introductory course on the Fourth Gospel in particular or the Johannine literature in general. Kruse's exegetical work may even find a place as a solid, supplemental text for the more advanced student or scholar seeking an informed "second opinion." This book achieves its stated goals and should be taken seriously as a useful resource for studying the Fourth Gospel.

Christopher W. Skinner  
The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

*Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period.* By Gary T. Manning Jr. JSNTSup 270. London: T. & T. Clark International, 2004, xii + 240 pp., \$130.00.

*Echoes of a Prophet* is the author's slightly revised dissertation completed under the auspices of Marianne Meye Thompson at Fuller Theological Seminary. Overall, this is a helpful contribution to the burgeoning field of Johannine studies and to the exploration of the use of the OT in the NT. While not groundbreaking, the present work does provide a helpful compendium of possible allusions to Ezekiel in John's Gospel and should be consulted by all serious students of the Fourth Gospel including scholars working on the subject. Since a competent, detailed interaction with Manning's work is already available in the form of the review by David Miller (posted at [www.bookreviews.org](http://www.bookreviews.org)), the following comments will not repeat some of Miller's points but rather supplement his review and add several observations of my own.

In the opening chapter, Manning helpfully presents a methodology of identifying probable allusions, an issue of critical importance in his case since John's Gospel never explicitly quotes Ezekiel. Chapters 2 and 3 on the use of Ezekiel in the DSS and other Second Temple literature are included to demonstrate that John was not the first to draw on Ezekiel in his theological formulations. In the context of Manning's monograph, these chapters lay the groundwork for his treatment of John's use of Ezekiel in chapters 4 and 5.

In those latter chapters Manning identifies major allusions to Ezekiel in Jesus' discourses on the good shepherd in John 10 (esp. Ezek 34:24; 37:21-24) and on the true vine in John 15 (esp. Ezek 15:1-8; 17:22-24). Manning also proposes the following minor allusions to Ezekiel in John's Gospel: (1) John 1:51 cf. Ezek 1:1; (2) John 3:5; 4:13-14 cf. Ezek 36:25-27; (3) John 5:25-28 cf. Ezek 37:4, 9, 12; (4) John 7:37-39 cf. Ezek 47:1-12; (5) John 20:22 cf. Ezek 37:9; and (6) John 21:1-11 cf. Ezek 47:9-10.

Of these, some allusions are more convincing than others. While all are possible, not all are equally probable (see further below). Many will question, for example, whether the evidence adduced by the author is sufficient to demonstrate that John 1:51 alludes to Ezek 1:1, indicating John's conviction that Ezekiel saw the pre-existent Christ. Also, Manning's proposal that John 21:11 alludes to Ezekiel's vision of a large number of fish swimming in a river from the Temple may not find many converts. On the other hand,

other allusions identified by the author, such as John 3:5 drawing on Ezek 36:25–27, are already widely accepted in the scholarly literature.

The concluding chapter helpfully summarizes the findings of the present study. Even if one does not follow Manning in all of his conclusions, he has convincingly shown the considerable range of Johannine allusions to Ezekiel. Like almost all studies on the subject of the use of the OT in the NT, however, the author does not adequately probe Jesus' use of the OT underlying John's usage. His comment that he "cannot enter into that debate [of the historical Jesus] at any length" (p. 20) is unsatisfactory. Even if space constraints did not permit this for the dissertation, Manning should have done more in this regard when preparing his work for publication. One thinks here particularly of the seminal work of R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London: Tyndale, 1971), which extensively deals with Jesus' self-understanding in terms of passages in Ezekiel and other prophets such as Daniel or Zechariah. This omission and the relative brevity of the work add up to the impression that Manning's interaction with the scholarly literature is less than comprehensive. This is confirmed by a look at the Index of Modern Authors, which comprises only slightly more than two pages.

Also, the assertion that "John does not use any other OT source so comprehensively" (p. 212) as Ezekiel may be an instance of the writer of a dissertation believing there is no subject as important as his. In fact, Margaret Daly-Denton, *David in the Fourth Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), has recently demonstrated the extensive use of the Psalms in John's Gospel. Over half of the Gospel's explicit OT quotations are taken from the Psalms. Broken down by book, John cites from a psalm from Book 1 of the Psalter four times; from Book 2 three times; from Book 3 three times; and from Book 5 once. To this should be added possible allusions, especially those involving Davidic typology. Thus the book of Psalms is a much more likely candidate for most-comprehensively used OT source in John's Gospel than Ezekiel.

Finally, Manning may have improved on his division of material into "major" and "minor" allusions. Manning states that the "major" allusions are "clearest" (pp. 100, 149) and the "minor" ones "less clear" (p. 150). However, as mentioned above, some of the "minor" allusions are "less clear" than others. It might have been helpful to subdivide chapter 5 further into "more probable" and "less probable" allusions. These minor criticisms notwithstanding, within the limitations noted Manning's is a solid work that will provide further food for thought for all those interested in John's theology and the use of the OT in the NT.

Andreas J. Köstenberger

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC

*The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church.* By Charles E. Hill. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, xiii + 531 pp., \$150.00.

In this seminal work, the author takes aim at what he calls the "orthodox Johannophobia paradigm," that is, the notion that John's Gospel was avoided by orthodox second-century Christians owing to its popularity among heterodox groups such as the Gnostics. According to this thesis, it was not until Irenaeus used the Fourth Gospel to refute the heretics that John's status in the canon was assured.

As Hill persuasively shows, however, this paradigm, although widely held, lacks adequate support in the available sources. Hill's analysis of primary sources, both heterodox and orthodox, makes clear that (1) the extent of the use of John's Gospel among the orthodox has been underestimated; and (2) its reception among the Gnostics has been

misunderstood. Hence the “orthodox Johannophobia paradigm” lacks historical credibility and is largely a scholarly myth.

In Part I, Hill chronicles the history of the “Johannophobia paradigm,” dividing it into three phases: (1) “foundations”: Bauer to Braun (1934–59); (2) “heyday”: Schnackenburg to Koester (1959–90); and (3) “uneasy supremacy”: Hengel to Nagel (1989–2000). The current consensus owes much to the theses of Walter Bauer as set forth in his hugely influential work *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Early Christianity* (1934; ET 1971).

The first period, from 1934 to 1959, witnessed the laying of the groundwork for the “Johannophobia paradigm” by some very influential scholars. Walter Bauer held that in the second century AD heresy and orthodoxy were still fluid and that “the heretics considerably outnumbered the orthodox” (Bauer, ET, p. 194, cited in Hill, p. 13). Bauer claimed that none of the Apostolic Fathers relied on the authority of John’s Gospel while the Gnostics, the Marcionites, and the Montanists loved it. Hence, caution characterized the mood in Rome, manifesting itself through silence or even explicit rejection.

The chief architect of the current paradigm is identified as J. N. Sanders, author of *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge: University Press, 1943). Sanders was influenced by Bauer and held to an Alexandrian origin of the Gospel (though he later suggested Syria as more likely). According to Sanders, the Gospel was at first popular among the Gnostics, and it was only Irenaeus who helped the orthodox overcome their prejudice against it. The noted commentator C. K. Barrett (1955, 1978) was influenced by Sanders and adopted his main thesis. The only dissenting voice in the 1950s was the French scholar F.-M. Braun (1959).

Hill dates the heyday of the “Johannophobia paradigm” from 1959 to 1990. During this period, T. E. Pollard’s important monograph *Johannine Christology and the Early Church* (SNTSMS 13; London: Cambridge University Press, 1970) essentially concurred with Sanders, as did Raymond Brown in his magisterial Anchor Bible commentaries (1966, 1970) and D. Moody Smith in *Johannine Christianity* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984). Not only did the “Johannophobia paradigm” relate to the Gospel’s use by Gnostics, but rather, as Hill points out, “[f]rom Sanders in the 1940s, to Barrett in the 1950s and 1970s, to Smith in the 1980s, the disparity in orthodox and heterodox use of John in the second century has been seen as requiring or supporting either a somewhat heretical or at least an obscure *origin* for this Gospel, away from the mainstream of the Church” (p. 35).

The third period, termed by Hill “uneasy supremacy,” spans the work of Martin Hengel and that of Titus Nagel (1989–2000). Hengel’s work *The Johannine Question* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989; expanded German edition, 1993) signaled the potential for a major disruption in the “Johannophobia paradigm.” Hengel’s copious treatment of the second-century evidence and his charge of neglect of this evidence by much of Johannine scholarship mark a turning point in scholarship on the subject, though Hengel himself did not draw out the full implications of his own research. Still, in 1994 R. Alan Culpepper could write of the “nearly complete absence of any explicit reference to the apostle or to the Gospel of John in the first half of the second century” (*John, the Son of Zebedee* [Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1994] 108). Culpepper proposed that Irenaeus was the first to refer explicitly to John’s Gospel (*John* 116).

Yet, the little-known work by Titus Nagel, *Die Rezeption des Johannesevangeliums im 2. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2000), the most extensive recent treatment of the subject, challenges the assumption of widespread “Johannophobia” among the orthodox in the first half of the second century. Nagel notes that prior to Irenaeus John is rarely cited with literal precision or express identification of the source. He also observes that the Valentinians represent only one aspect of the

Gnostic reception of John and that John was also the object of Gnostic rejection (*Rezeption* 491).

Part II is devoted to a painstaking analysis of the use of the Johannine writings in the second century. Hill's survey of "John among the Orthodox" (c. 170–200) shows that "Catholic writers of this period are using the Fourth Gospel with ease and regularity, in an authoritative manner, and often explicitly as scripture" (p. 167). The Gospel is impressively attested in several early NT papyri (already bound together with Luke in  $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ ) and well represented among images painted in early Roman catacombs. There is no evidence that the Gospel was considered to be tainted with Gnosticism. Nor is there evidence of any consciousness that the orthodox were taking over a previously suspected or rejected Gospel. Also, Hill notes that the Gospel, the epistles, and the Apocalypse were used by writers in this period in virtually the same manner and attributed to the same author.

With regard to John and the Gnostics, Hill shows that J. N. Sanders's view that John was "spoiling the Egyptians" by taking their Gnostic terminology and clothing the original *kerygma* with it (as is alleged in the case of John's dualism or his "docetism") is flatly contradicted by the available sources. "Despite decades of scholarly energy spent on the question, we are still far from being able to affirm that anything like such a gnostic myth existed when the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel was written, let alone that the author knew it, and let alone that he thought it important enough to require him to adapt it" (p. 286). According to Hill, the Gnostic's appropriation of John "was adversarial or supersessionary" (p. 293) rather than accepting and incorporating the Gospel's own Christology.

The climactic portion of Hill's monograph is his discussion of "John among the Orthodox, 150–c. 170" and even prior to c. 150. Hill shows that as early as between c. 120 and 135 Papias (as quoted by Eusebius) identified the Fourth Gospel as an authoritative source for his and his contemporaries' knowledge of Jesus alongside Matthew, Mark, and Luke (pp. 385–96). Hill also demonstrates that John's Gospel was likely known by Polycarp, Ignatius, and the Shepherd of Hermas. The first use of John's Gospel is likely evidenced in 1 John (as well as possibly 2 and 3 John).

In his final chapter on the Johannine corpus Hill shows that John's Gospel was "commonly considered not simply as one of four Gospels functioning with special authority in the Church, but as one of a group of writings which emanated from a common, authoritative source" (p. 471). This may explain why both 2 and 3 John were preserved and included in the canon.

Hill concludes that both notions of "Gnostic Johannophilia" and "orthodox Johannophobia" are not borne out by the evidence and subject to urgent revision. One important implication of Hill's "rehabilitation" of John's Gospel is that its alleged non-use in the first half of the second century can no longer be legitimately used as argument against its apostolic authorship. There is no longer any need to argue that apostolic authorship was postulated as part of an effort to legitimate a Gospel tainted by its use by Gnostics. Rather, "[t]he surprisingly wide and authoritative use of the Fourth Gospel in particular, and of the Apocalypse and the First Epistle secondarily, and their habitual attribution to a common apostolic origin, point to a very early and seemingly instinctive recognition of authority which befits some authoritative source" (p. 475). Henceforth, "[a]ssessments of the 'Johannine school' and its history, and treatments of the rise of a New Testament canon, should recognize what looks like a mostly shared history of the use and reception of the books of the Johannine corpus in the second century" (p. 475).

Hill's study is a powerful exemplar of the dismantling of an established paradigm and a tribute to the power of data gathered from primary research. It is, conversely, a potent reminder of the dangers of dogmatism and a warning against falling prey to sweeping theses that may have surface appeal but are not solidly based on a thorough assessment of the primary evidence. Hill's monograph will have far-reaching implica-

tions on the future study of John's Gospel, including its authorship and setting. It is a most welcome injection of historical data into a discussion that has increasingly drifted into a postmodern subjectivism that Don Carson has recently labeled the "balkanization" of Johannine studies.

Andreas J. Köstenberger  
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC

*Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary.* By Ben Witherington III, with Darlene Hyatt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004, xxxviii + 420 pp., \$36.00 paper.

Ben Witherington has written a wonderfully lucid volume on Romans. He initiates the study by acknowledging that, while he is Wesleyan in background, this is not a Wesleyan commentary *per se*. As is typical in the series, this book deals with the rhetorical structure of Romans and compares it to ancient literature in order to analyze the letter. This is not a typical verse-by-verse exposition; it looks at larger sections as a whole, breaking down individual words or phrases only to illuminate the entire section. Instead, this commentary will focus "on the contributions social and rhetorical analysis can make to the interpretation of Romans" although "theological and ethical issues can hardly be overlooked or avoided" (p. xii). In terms of what this commentary claims to do, it does accomplish its stated purpose.

The introduction deals briefly with the date and authorship issues and moves quickly to a consideration of the background of the recipients of the letter. Witherington spends time detailing the social and political features of Rome before discussing the important rhetorical features of the book. After reviewing other options, Witherington proposes the following structure: epistolary opening (1:1–7a), epistolary greeting (1:7b), *exordium* (1:8–10), *narratio* (1:11–15), *propositio* (1:16–17), *probatio* (arguments 1–2 in 1:18–3:20, expansion of *propositio* 3:21–31, arguments 3–8 in 4:1–8:39), *refutatio* (arguments 9–12 in 9:1–15:13), *peroratio* (15:14–21), travel plans (15:22–33), epistolary greetings and instructions (16:1–16), supplemental *peroratio* (16:17–20), greetings from coworkers with benediction (16:21–24), and final benediction (16:25–27). This structure opens a different way of looking at Romans, a way that is not fully defended in the introduction itself but is carried through the entire commentary. Much of this proposed structure hinges on the beginning of the letter and how one should understand the opening statements and arguments.

The author combines his structural arguments along with some detailed exegesis. For example, in discussing 1:16–17, he gives detailed options as to how the verses could be understood. He then examines each in light of contemporary scholarship and ancient rhetorical technique. Witherington is careful to be fair to each interpretive position presented, often not tipping his hand until he gives his opinion. With respect to specific passages, he reads 2:1–16 as a dialogue with a Gentile interlocutor and 2:17–3:20 as a dialogue with a Jewish interlocutor who probably teaches Gentiles. Both of these derive from the diatribe style of writing (see the aside on pp. 75–76). The author understands 7:7–13 to be about Adam and 7:14–25 to be about "Adam's lost race" (p. 193). Witherington argues that Paul is using a rhetorical device by speaking in the first person in these sections. He also links chapters 9–11 closely with chapter 8, such that the discussion in 9–11 is about God's justice coupled with the problem of unbelieving Israel, but it springs from the description of life in Christ and the Spirit found in chapter 8. The ethical sections that conclude the formal letter itself are directly tied to the rest of the contents of Romans.

A typical chapter begins with some introductory comments about how the structure of the section in question fits within the greater context of Romans. A brief introduction

to the content of the section follows. Witherington then gives his own translation of the text, which is somewhere between woodenly literal and slightly paraphrased. Next he delves into the significant exegetical and theological issues of the text. Each chapter ends with “Bridging the Horizons,” a paragraph to a page dealing with how the section could be applied to everyday life.

One strong positive in this work is how the author blends together all of the sections of Romans into a single letter from Paul. Each part of the letter, whether 1–8, 9–11, or 12–15, is an integral part that could not have been left out. The logic of both structure and content is clearly displayed by Witherington’s meticulous reconstruction of the rhetorical aspects of the epistle. Another highlight within the book is how the author has occasional asides that offer quick theological or practical parallels from ancient literature. For example, there is an aside about predestination, election, salvation, and apostasy in which the author delves heavily into the writings of early Judaism (pp. 246–49). He also blends social aspects into the book, bringing in appropriate mentions of the honor and shame culture that shed light on more difficult passages or phrases. The select bibliography at the beginning of the book offers comments on many of the works listed, usually giving a fair assessment of them and mentioning how they contributed to Witherington’s own study.

Overall, this is a work of careful scholarship with respect to the social and rhetorical issues. The structure of the epistle is the most common subject in the pages of this book other than actual commentary on the text. Each “Bridging the Horizons” section helpfully moves the reader from studying Romans as a text to applying what is written to one’s life, a feature that enhances the use of this book compared to other commentaries. Some of the sections that comment on the text, however, can be uneven. In some instances Witherington interacts in painful detail with numerous scholars on a specific point of grammar or theology, whereas on the very next page he will often gloss over a conundrum in a paragraph or two. This is a commentary that I would recommend to those who are dealing with rhetorical issues in Romans, are specialists in Romans, or are preaching through Romans. In terms of the rest of Witherington’s commentaries, his *Romans* would rank as one of his stronger works. This is a mid-level commentary, often moving from the simple to the complex and back again without losing any readability.

Ron Fay

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*1–2 Thessalonians*. By G. K. Beale. IVPNTC. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, 279 pp., \$20.00.

Greg Beale, the 2004 Evangelical Theological Society president and a professor of biblical studies at Wheaton College Graduate School, has produced a commentary on 1–2 Thessalonians that (1) has mostly traditional introductory, exegetical, and Calvinistic conclusions; and (2) has fascinating theological discussions about a host of topics.

Beale mentions two emphases for his commentary: implications from an “‘already and not yet’ notion of eschatology . . . and the importance of the Old Testament and early Jewish understanding” (p. 13). Beale’s OT thrust especially stands in contrast to three relatively recent major commentaries that have concentrated on Greco-Roman sources and socio-economic background (Wanamaker, NIGTC, 1990; Malherbe, AB, 2000; Green, PNTC, 2002). Beale often notes not just the OT or OT pseudepigraphic verse that serves as a possible allusion or echo, but he also includes a brief overview of the context and broader themes that might dovetail with 1–2 Thessalonians. For example, Isaiah 59 has possible connections to both 1 Thess 1:9–10 and 5:8; there may be broad

Jeremiah 6 connections to 1 Thess 5:3 that include more than the “peace” parallel (Jer 6:14). I appreciated Beale’s summary of these possible backgrounds; however, several times I thought it hindered his exegesis. For example, based on Genesis, Deuteronomy, and *Testament of Naphtali* connections, he interprets “doing good” in 2 Thess 3:13 as referring to one’s creation tasks, not specifically referring to supporting the truly needy, which is the traditional interpretation.

Included in the brief twenty-seven page introduction is an excellent, six-page discussion of the standard “already and not yet” understanding of eschatology. Given that Beale will emphasize this throughout the commentary, he cautions that “our understanding of most of the traditional doctrines is not so much changed but radically enriched by seeing them through end-time lenses” (p. 22). He is true to his word. For example, concerning 1 Thess 5:5–10 and the phrase “sons of light,” Paul sees the “final judgment [for Christians] having been pushed back to the cross . . . so that their resurrection life [would] spiritually begin in the midst of the old world” (p. 154). Also with reference to the “already and not yet” Beale explains several of the theological errors in Thessalonica as over-realized eschatology. For example, the errors in eschatology (1 Thess 4:13–18, 2 Thess 2:1–12) and idleness (2 Thess 3:6–12) arise from believing that Christ’s “resurrection” and his “return” along with the church’s “resurrection” had already occurred, and all these events were only “spiritual.”

Concerning introductory matters, Beale concludes that Paul wrote both 1 and 2 Thessalonians (including 1 Thess 2:14–16) within a few months of each other and that 1 Thessalonians was written first. First Thessalonians 2:1–12 is a real defense against real opponents (*contra* Malherbe). Beale does not see the usefulness of recent trends in using Greco-Roman rhetorical analysis (*contra* Wanamaker) or client-patron relationships (*contra* Green). I happen to agree with Beale on all these points.

For the outline of both epistles, Beale employs an extended discourse analysis, by which he develops the main point of each paragraph and then shows the logical development of these points throughout each epistle. I found this interesting but somewhat forced for a whole epistle because it downplays the standard letter-format patterns in a Pauline letter. For example, in Beale’s outlines, “thanksgiving” and “peace” are very important elements. However, I see them as somewhat less important because I view the opening thanksgiving sections (1 Thess 1:2–10; 2 Thess 1:3–12) and the concluding peace sections (1 Thess 5:23–24; 2 Thess 3:16) as standard Pauline letter format, not a necessarily integral part of the epistle’s overall logical development.

Exegetical interpretations of interest include: 1 Thess 4:13–18 and 1 Thess 5:1–11 both refer to the second coming, which is an anti-dispensational view; 1 Thess 4:13–18 does relate to grieving about dead Christians, since it was believed they would never be resurrected, not simply grieving about a delay of their resurrection at the second coming; *ataktos* and *ataktōs* (1 Thess 5:14; 2 Thess 3:6, 11) are best translated as “unruly,” not “idle”; 1 Thess 3:11 does support the divinity of Christ, but 2 Thess 1:12 does so only implicitly as *theos* refers to the Father; “eternal destruction” (2 Thess 2:9) does not refer to annihilation; and the “restraining” (2 Thess 2:6–7) is the gospel with a God-sent angel being the divine force behind it.

Beale gives traditional Calvinistic explanations for election/reprobation; providence; the relationship between Christ’s work, our faith, and our good works at the judgment; the decretive and preceptive will of God; prayer and its relationship to both God’s sovereignty and witnessing; and the general and effectual call. His way of discussing these difficult issues is mostly pastoral. Of course, since I am a Calvinist, I liked Beale’s conclusions. However, I also liked his general manner of keeping the exegetical justification of his conclusions firmly tied to the context.

In addition to the Calvinistic topics, Beale tackles all types of difficult theological issues. Many of these discussions, although brief, I found fascinating. Examples include: (1) the level of literalness of Christ’s coming down and our going up (1 Thess 4:15–16);

and (2) the point at which in a church discipline process that is moving toward excommunication the guilty party is to be no longer considered a brother (2 Thess 3:14–15).

Due to the IVP New Testament Commentary series format, there are plenty of modern trends and “hot topics” that Beale discusses. Among other things, he is theologically against Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, the Re-Imaging movement, practicing homosexuals, continuing prophecy, certain trends in the church growth movement, and seminaries’ unhealthy attraction to distance learning. On the other hand, there are many personal and touching applications. A striking one is Beale’s comparison of a funeral for a wonderful Christian to the funeral for his father, who Beale relates was (apparently) not a Christian.

Both scholars and pastors should have this commentary. Although the commentary format limits Beale’s footnotes, it will be obvious to Thessalonians scholars that Beale is well aware of the issues and should be consulted for his succinct justifications of his exegesis. For my pastoral students, even my few Arminian ones, I recommend this commentary as a “must.”

Robert J. Cara

Reformed Theological Seminary-Charlotte, Charlotte, NC

*From Hope to Despair in Thessalonica: Situating 1 and 2 Thessalonians.* By Colin R. Nicholl. SNTSMS 126. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, xx + 315 pp., \$75.00.

Dr. Nicholl serves on the faculty of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. This monograph is based on his Cambridge dissertation, done under Dr. Morna Hooker. It is a fascinating and well-documented study that tries to understand the theological and social situation of the Thessalonian churches and how it developed during the time of Paul’s two epistles. Nicholl wishes to construct a plausible scenario that accounts for two genuine Pauline letters, written so closely together that they could barely keep up with changing circumstances in Thessalonica.

A careful mirror reading reveals not multiple problems, but two stages of a single and relatively simple crisis. This Nicholl labels a change from “nervous dread to perturbed despair” (p. 188). Behind the first letter is panic because some Christians have died, and the Thessalonians have no serviceable resurrection doctrine to explain their fate. They are beginning to fear that God’s wrath will come upon them: “Certainly the deaths seemed to declare that among the number of the converted were at least some whom God had not elected to salvation at the parousia, which means that the elect status and eschatological destiny of the whole community was subject to suspicion” (p. 78). At the same time they found themselves living among a vengeful Jewish community and following an apostle who, some might have claimed, had abandoned them (hence, the “apology” in 1 Thess 2:1–12). Paul’s emphasis in the letter is that in fact God has chosen them to eschatological salvation.

In 2 Thessalonians Paul deals with a situation that has swiftly evolved into panic. The Thessalonians are not delving into apocalyptic speculation nor leaning toward a spiritualized Day of the Lord; rather, they are terrified that the impending Day (1 Thess 5:2) has now fallen upon them. Not so, says Paul, and they should have known better than to interpret the signs of the times in that manner (2 Thess 2:5). The evangelical reader will be pleased that the author affirms the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians. He also provides some useful distinctions that show that the (relative) imminence of the end in 1 Thessalonians is compatible with the expectation of eschatological signs before the parousia in 2 Thessalonians 2.

If the volume has any weakness, it is merely that it is an attempt at a fresh look at the letters, not a review of and dialogue with other constructions. This means that some of the interaction with other viewpoints is brief. Nicholl sees no firm evidence for the opinion that 1 Thessalonians was written (*pace* R. Jewett) to counteract an over-realized eschatology; neither does the refusal to work in 2 Thessalonians 3 have an eschatological basis—either in over-realized eschatology or in apocalyptic fervor—but it is rather *inertia vulgaris*.

Two special points are in order. First, the reader should not skip over the preface; it is a surprising and passionate illustration of the very hope that Nicholl expounds in the volume. Second, the fascinating appendix on the identity of the “restrainer” in 2 Thess 2:6–7 should be read. It originally appeared as “Michael, The Restrainer Removed (2 Thess. 2:6–7),” *JTS* 51 (2000) 27–53. Nicholl points out that some commentators (notably, I. H. Marshall) regard the restrainer as an angelic being. Nicholl takes the viewpoint further by trying to show a particular background for the idea in Daniel and in other apocalypses. He seeks to demonstrate that it comes from Daniel 12, “At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise” (NRSV). Nicholl argues that *amad* (meticulously rendered by the LXX as *parerchomai*) should be rendered “pass aside” or “step aside,” that is, Michael will now allow Israel to suffer rather than “arise” to protect the nation. Since Paul shows acquaintance with other passages from Daniel 10–12, whether directly or mediated by the synoptic tradition, his point is that Michael will “stand back” from protecting the people of God (now the church), leading to the great tribulation and then the resurrection of the dead.

Gary S. Shogren

Universidad Cristiana Internacional ESEPA, San José, Costa Rica

*The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews: An Investigation of Its Influence with Special Consideration to the Use of Hab 2:3–4 in Heb 10:37–38.* By Radu Gheorghita. WUNT 2/160. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003, xii + 275 pp., €49.00 paper.

This work, the author’s doctoral thesis written at Cambridge University under the supervision of William Horbury, seeks to contribute to our understanding of the Epistle to the Hebrews, not by analyzing the text form of OT quotations or the writer’s hermeneutics, but rather by attempting to assess the degree to which the LXX as an authoritative text influenced the writer of the epistle. Gheorghita opens his work (chap. 1) with the obligatory but helpful survey of scholarship. He then divides his study into two parts. In part 1, he studies in detail the text of quotations, the context of quotations, the use of the OT outside the quotations, Septuagintal language, and the theology of the Septuagint. In chapter 2, he surveys a collection of quotations from Hebrews in which the Septuagintal form is more convenient to the author’s argument than other forms of the quotation (e.g. Deut 32:43 in Heb 1:6; Ps 8:5–7 in Heb 2:6–8; Psalm 40 [LXX 39] in Heb 10:5–7). In chapter 3, Gheorghita attempts to establish two conclusions: (1) the contexts of several Septuagintal OT quotations exhibit factors that are conducive to the interpretation the writer to the Hebrews endorses (e.g. Psalm 44 [MT 45], Isa 8:17–18); and (2) several of the Septuagintal OT quotations contain lexical or conceptual parallels between them. These points lead to the conclusion that the writer of Hebrews did not quote his Greek text atomistically but rather interpreted the Septuagint as a coherent text. In chapter 4, Gheorghita tackles the difficult subject of Septuagintal allusions in Hebrews. He finds that, while some allusions would yield the same point if taken from the Hebrew text, other allusions to the Septuagint differ from the Hebrew text and are therefore intentionally selected from the Septuagint to make a point. In chapter 5,

Gheorghita extends his investigation to the level of lexical units. At certain points, the Septuagint translators mistranslated a Hebrew word or phrase or sometimes translated a phrase in a certain way due to theological motivation. Gheorghita demonstrates that at times the author of Hebrews follows the Septuagint translator by using lexical units in the same way, even when there is significant semantic divergence from the Hebrew text. He looks at the use of βραζύτι in Hebrews 2, ἀρίστημι in Heb 3:12, πιστός in Heb 3:2, 5, and διαθήκη in Hebrews 9:16, all of which can take different senses than their Hebrew counterparts. Finally, in chapter 6, Gheorghita surveys two distinctive theological emphases of the Septuagint (eschatology and messianism) and, although not drawing hard and fast conclusions, suggests that the author of Hebrews owes some of his theology to the distinct theological perspective of the Septuagint.

In part 2 of his work, Gheorghita subjects Hab 2:3–4, as quoted in Heb 10:37–38, to a rigorous examination in light of the conclusions of part 1. If it becomes clear that the author of Hebrews has reshaped this passage for his own concerns, then this quotation serves “as a valuable test-case for investigating the presence or the absence of direct Septuagintal influences on its text, literary context, and theology” (p. 148). Gheorghita begins, in chapter 7, with a lengthy investigation of the textual issues surrounding the quotation of Hab 2:3–4 and concludes that the form of the quotation as it appears in critical editions of the Greek NT is the original reading. He also observes that the form of the quotation, as it appears in Heb 10:37–38, although not identical to the LXX reading, is dependent on that reading. In chapter 8, Gheorghita notes that the Habakkuk quotation and its context share several themes with other passages quoted in the surrounding context in the Epistle to the Hebrews, i.e. Deuteronomy 32/33, Isaiah 26, Haggai 2, and Proverbs 3. He also draws attention to the similarity between the historical situation surrounding the book of Habakkuk and what we know of the situation of the addressees of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In chapter 9, Gheorghita explains, by way of a thorough discussion of the translational and theological idiosyncrasies of the LXX version of Habakkuk, that the modifications made in the Hab 2:3–4 quotation by the writer of Hebrews make perfect sense. In other words, the LXX version of Habakkuk (and by extension, the LXX as a whole) influenced the writer of Hebrews because he read and interpreted the LXX as a coherent text, without recourse to the MT.

Gheorghita has successfully put forth the idea that the writer of Hebrews depended on the text, vocabulary, and distinctive theological concerns of the Septuagint, but this raises some nettling questions for those with a high view of Scripture. How can we affirm the inerrancy of a letter that consistently quotes from, depends on, and was influenced by a text of the OT that differs substantially from the OT autographs? Why does the MT enjoy a privileged position among conservatives in terms of textual criticism, if NT writers quote from the LXX even when it differs from MT? The few evangelical treatments of OT textual criticism seem oblivious to the complexity involved. Basic terms such as “autograph” remain undefined. The questions are huge and cannot remain unaddressed for much longer. Part of the problem is that historically, an OT equivalent to the “Cambridge Three” (Hort, Westcott, and Lightfoot) never arose to do for OT studies what these three men did for NT studies. Most of the textual criticism on the text of the Greek NT has already been done, but really, the discipline of OT textual criticism, due in some measure to neglect but also due to the DSS and the complexity of the task, remains in its infancy. Gheorghita, an ETS member, brings these questions before us with a renewed urgency.

An interesting byproduct of Gheorghita’s study, to which he draws occasional attention, is the observation that the writer of Hebrews employs a hermeneutical method that exhibits amazing consistency, often quotes passages united by common themes, and pays attention to details of the (Septuagint) OT context. This is a welcome contribution, for traditionally, the writer of Hebrews has often been accused of employing suspect hermeneutics. Now we may understand better his hermeneutical method, but we

must still solve the text-critical question of how and why he treated the LXX as an inspired text.

John C. Crutchfield  
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

*Render to God: New Testament Understandings of the Divine.* By Jerome H. Neyrey. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004, xviii + 313 pp., \$23.00 paper.

In *Render to God*, Neyrey seeks to address “the neglected factor in New Testament study,” the study of God in the NT. Neyrey uses concepts from Judean and Greco-Roman “God-talk” to examine the NT writings within the cultural understandings of the writers and audience. However, the overarching framework through which he views the data is through God-in-relationship as patron. He notes, “studies of antiquity increasingly urge us to consider God’s relationship to Jesus as that of patron to client. Moreover God has another relationship, this time as patron to Israel through Jesus, which patron/client relationship now envisions Jesus as broker or mediator between God and the people. This will greatly aid in our understanding of God’s benefactions and the role Jesus plays in their distribution” (p. 2).

In many of the chapters, relationships between actors—God/Jesus, Jesus/disciples, disciples/people, Paul/churches—are viewed and interpreted through the grid of patron/client. Although Neyrey uses other concepts to understand God, the data is first interpreted through this framework. In the first chapter, he describes Mark’s understanding of God as patron. He argues that God’s declaration of Jesus as the beloved Son indicates Jesus’ special status as a favored client. Jesus’ baptism is his commissioning, and his temptations prove his commitment and faithfulness to God, his patron. Jesus, on his part, gives honor to God as his patron. After setting the relationship of God and Jesus in the primary relationship of patron/client, parables, conflicts with the leaders of Israel, and prayer are interpreted through this relationship. Finally, Neyrey discusses the holiness of God and the change in the worship system that God affects through his client, Jesus.

Neyrey continues his discussion of God as patron in Matthew in the second chapter. He begins by examining the titles of God, which he asserts are synonymous with benefactor. Although noting that the title “benefactor” is never used for God in the NT, he argues that the actions of a benevolent heavenly patron are found everywhere, both to Israel and Jesus, the favored client. He then discusses the teachings about the kingdom of God as instructions about the model patron/client relationships and what benefaction looks like in those various relationships.

The third chapter focuses on the book of Acts, in which Neyrey uses the patron/client model to discuss the Lukan understanding of God, Jesus, and their relationship to the apostles and others in the early church. Neyrey argues that in Acts God’s favoritism to Jesus as client increases: “Jesus’ Patron uniquely honors him with a power reserved to the Deity” (p. 85). God also elevates Jesus to the role of broker and mediator through whom God gives his Spirit. “God now makes the entire heavenly treasury of power, commitment, inducement, and influence available to all persons and every ethnic group through Jesus” (p. 85).

The fourth chapter departs from a study of God-in-relationship to examine Romans using concepts of Greco-Roman philosophy. The majority of the chapter focuses on a discussion of Paul’s understanding of the nature of God. He proposes that Paul’s understanding of God is found in two attributes, mercy and just judgment, and in two powers, creative and executive. Finally, Neyrey notes that some of the more striking of Paul’s insights into God are his impartiality and inclusiveness.

The fifth and sixth chapters bring us back to the discussion of God-in-relationship. However, in Corinthians the discussion of patron/client relationship now expands to Paul and the Corinthian church. Neyrey claims that "Paul primarily explains God's relationship with the Corinthian in terms of the common social pattern of social patronage" (p. 145). Neyrey also claims that the patron/client model is beneficial for the study of Galatians, because the Galatians would have understood the privileges or gifts that God bestows upon believers as those that a benefactor gives to a client. After describing those benefits, Paul urges the Galatians to provide their benefactor the proper response: faith and obedience. The final two chapters on the Gospel of John and Hebrews examine who God is by asking the question, "Who else is called God?" Neyrey notes, "we can still learn more about this God and Father of Jesus Christ by examining documents in which Jesus is 'acclaimed God' and 'Lord' or 'equal to God'" (p. 212).

The strength of Neyrey's work is that it provides a variety of concepts and models as ways of reading the NT documents. However, the weakness of the work is that it interprets much of that data through the framework of patron/client for understanding God-in-relationship. The usefulness of Neyrey's study rests on the validity the reader gives to patron/client as an accurate framework in which to interpret the data. As an anthropologist with training in the applications of these models, I observed several places in which the data can be better read through a different framework. Patron/client was an important relationship in the Greco-Roman world; however, it was not the only type of relation in the cultural context of the writers. The question that needs to be asked is if a competing model fits the data better, and then, which is the more likely interpretation. I provide an example of this below.

Neyrey interprets the interaction between Simon and Philip in Acts as Simon seeking to obtain the goods of benefaction from God without any continuing relationship with him. Neyrey interprets the passage as follows: "Philip arrives in Samaria and as sub-broker brings to the region the power that Jesus enjoyed and that Jesus himself brokers to others through deacons and other roles. . . . Simon 'believed,' but with notable qualifications; he offers Philip money to receive the Holy Spirit" (p. 89). Neyrey concludes that Simon's fault, and the reason he was rebuked, was because he sought "a simple exchange of goods for power, but no element of commitment or faith whatsoever" (p. 89).

An alternate explanation of the passage is based on the prevalence of magic in the ancient world and the anthropological concept of syncretism. As a magician, Simon would have purchased tablets, incantations, amulets, etc. giving him the power to heal or to curse. When Philip comes healing and casting out demons through the power of the Spirit, it is very likely that Simon viewed this through his world view as new kind of magic. When Simon offers John and Peter money for their ability, he was asking to purchase this "new and more powerful magic" to make himself greater in the eyes of people. Peter's rebuke gets to the heart of this matter. Considering other places in Acts where the work of the Spirit was interpreted through a culture's worldview, this seems to be a more likely explanation of the interaction in this passage.

Neyrey's intent was to provide a study of God in the NT through the backgrounds of the readers and writers. His discussion of the covenants, God's attributes, God's power, and providence do provide interesting insights into the study of God. However, by reducing God-in-relationship to patron, Neyrey misses other concepts that would contribute to our understanding of God. By guiding us through the NT data primarily through this one lens, Neyrey misses much of the richness and depth of the "God talk" that he sets out to explore.

A. Sue Russell  
Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA

*The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius.* By Paul Trebilco. WUNT 2/166. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004, xxiii + 826 pp., €149.00.

In this substantial volume, Paul Trebilco provides us with the first comprehensive history of the development of earliest Christianity in the city of Ephesus. The book covers the period of c. AD 35 (pre-Pauline Christianity in the city) to AD 110 (when Ignatius wrote his letter to the Ephesian Christians).

The monograph turned out to be somewhat different than I expected. I had anticipated a book heavy on historical data—epigraphy, archaeology, Greco-Roman, and Jewish literary sources—with some implications drawn for the rise and development of early Christianity in Ephesus (corresponding somewhat to the approach of Ramsay or Hemer). I suppose I was also thinking more along the lines of the kind of contribution Trebilco made in his outstanding 1991 SNTS monograph, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, but here with more engagement with the biblical text. *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, however, is much more driven by the text of the NT. After a relatively brief overview of the history of Ephesus and a description of the Ephesian Artemis, the Imperial Cult, and the Jewish Community in Ephesus, Trebilco provides an interpretive assessment of every book and passage in the NT that has any connection with Ephesus. This includes, principally, Acts, 1 Corinthians, the Pastoral Epistles, Revelation, and the Johannine Letters. Nearly 300 pages of the book are taken up with this endeavor.

Part II of his book examines the Pastoral Epistles, Revelation, and the Johannine Letters for what they can tell us about the early Christians in Ephesus. In this 150-page section of his book, Trebilco explores the traditional introductory issues related to this literature and seeks to explore the authorship of these documents, when they were written, and what they reveal about the communities in Ephesus that they are addressed to and the communities represented by the respective authors. In this section, Trebilco also seeks to establish the *irrelevance* of John's Gospel for exploring Ephesian Christianity. He registers his agreement with Richard Bauckham that John's Gospel is a book written for all Christians and that its contents are not to be tied too closely to any contextualization strategy for Ephesus.

His overall conclusion in this section is that there are two distinct Christian communities in Ephesus. One is a Pauline community to which the Pastoral Epistles are addressed by a Paulinist somewhere in the period of AD 80–100; the other is an egalitarian community that is addressed by John the Elder in the Johannine Epistles roughly at the same period of time. The book of Revelation, written by a figure he calls "John the Seer," addresses both communities. There is much that is controversial here.

The second half (Part III) is the creative part of Trebilco's monograph. He begins by applying John Barclay's heuristic categories of acculturation, assimilation, and accommodation as a device to assist him in exploring the contents of the Pastoral Epistles, the Johannine Letters, and Revelation in relation to the cultural context at Ephesus. This is a fascinating and helpful part of his overall work. He then explores a number of themes in this literature in relation to Ephesian cultural context. These include the themes of material possessions, leadership and authority, the role of women, and self-identity. These chapters all prove to be very helpful and illuminating discussions.

The final portion of the monograph (Part IV) covers Ignatius's letter to Ephesus. He dates the letter to the period of AD 105–110 and sees Ignatius addressing all Christians in the city except for the opponents, which he interprets as Docetists who had their origin in the schismatic group mentioned in the Johannine letters. Trebilco sees a leadership controversy reflected in the letter with many Ephesian Christians resisting a new development toward monepiscopacy. Trebilco effectively argues that Ignatius hoped that his letter would be an important weapon in support of the cause of monepiscopacy in Ephesus.

My overall evaluation of this monograph is very positive. Trebilco has provided a helpful assessment of all of the canonical literature that has some connection with Ephesus. He has also done an admirable job of painting a portrait of the development of Christianity in Ephesus from the beginning to the time of Ignatius. I found myself in agreement with him on many of the broad range of issues he needed to address in this book. Yet there were a number of substantive issues on which I would register disagreement. I can only mention a few of these in the short space available here.

(1) On p. 99 of his work, Trebilco laments “how much we are hindered by the lack of a letter written by Paul to Ephesian Christians.” Of course, anyone familiar with my own academic work would not be surprised to hear me raise the question, “But what about Ephesians?” This is a complex issue, but at the minimum I think Trebilco much too quickly dismisses Ephesians as having any firm connection with Ephesus. Even those who discount the authenticity of *en Ephesē* in Eph 1:1 usually contend that the letter was still written to Ephesus, even if it was only one of the destinations as a circular letter.

(2) Similarly, I wonder if Trebilco has also too quickly detached the Gospel of John from some level of connection to the city of Ephesus. With Trebilco, I find Bauckham’s thesis to be quite attractive, but does the Gospel reflect no language, imagery, or concern with issues in which the author and initial readers were enmeshed?

(3) I am not convinced by Trebilco’s arguments for two distinct communities of Christians in Ephesus toward the end of the first century AD, that is, a Paulinist community (addressed in the Pastoral Epistles) and a separate Johannine community established by John the Elder sometime after the Jewish War (AD 66–70). A significant part of his case hinges on seeing the Pastorals written after the death of the apostle Paul and reflecting conditions of the Ephesian church close to the time of the Johannine Letters—a conclusion that I do not find convincing.

(4) Although I agree with Trebilco that contextually, *presbyteroi* and *episkopoi* refer to holders of one and the same office in the Pastoral Epistles and that both are distinct from the *diakonoi*, I question his denial that this leadership structure is adapted from the synagogue. For that matter, he finds it unlikely that there was a group of appointed officeholders in the synagogue called “elders.” The famous Theodotus inscription (CIJ 1404), as well as other Jewish inscriptions, give early evidence to the use of *presbyteros* as a leadership title in the synagogue. Further, when Paul revisited the Galatian churches in the early 50s, he “appointed elders for them in each church” (Acts 14:23). This seems to suggest that he was an early purveyor of this leadership structure, which for him derived most naturally from the synagogue model.

(5) The final point I would raise has to do with the role of women in the churches of Ephesus and the response to this offered by the Pastoral Epistles. Trebilco argues that the author of Pastorals advocates a role for women that would bring them more into conformity with prevailing Roman culture, that is, “the ideal of the hierarchical Greco-Roman household is applied to the church” (p. 508). This is not the conclusion that I would have expected him to come to based on a chapter in his previous monograph entitled, “The Prominence of Women in Asia Minor.” In that work, Trebilco accumulated an impressive amount of epigraphical evidence illustrating the varied and prominent roles of women in the civic life of Asia Minor as well as in the synagogue communities. His conclusion there was that local Roman culture had given women significant freedom to assume leadership roles in the civic life, in the local cults, and even in Judaism. It seems to me that the natural implication of this evidence would be to suggest that a Pharisaic-trained rabbi from Jerusalem would have had great difficulty with the leadership roles accorded women in the synagogues in Asia Minor and, by extension, the leadership roles that they were likely assuming in the Ephesian churches. It provides insight into a motive for Paul to resist some of the tendencies he saw in the Ephesian

churches. This latter explanation seems to accord better with the epigraphical and exegetical evidence than his new suggestion.

These concerns are not at all intended to detract from the extraordinary accomplishment that this volume represents. This volume is destined to be required reading for anyone exploring the history of Christianity in Asia Minor or doing research on Acts, 1 Corinthians, the Pastoral Epistles, the Johannine Letters, or the book of Revelation.

Clinton E. Arnold  
Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA

*Why I Am Not a Calvinist.* By Jerry L. Walls and Joseph R. Dongell. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004, 230 pp., \$14.00 paper. *Why I Am Not an Arminian.* By Robert A. Peterson and Michael D. Williams. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004, 224 pp., \$14.00 paper.

Theologians do not want to miss this classic match-up, and interested pastors and laypeople will also enjoy it. Released as a pair of texts with opposing views, the *Why I'm Not* duo presents an up-to-date and stimulating treatment of a timeless impasse. Jerry Walls and Joseph Dongell are professors of philosophy and biblical studies respectively at Asbury Theological Seminary; Robert Peterson and Michael Williams are professors of systematic theology at Covenant Theological Seminary. These two works are not exactly parallel in structure, but each team of authors freely challenges the opposing theological stripe while validating its own. They highlight what they perceive to be flaws, inconsistencies, and biblical misinterpretations in the opposing theological view, especially in the arena of salvation, in order to construct a case for their preferred model. Both teams rightfully call readers to decide which theological paradigm best represents Scripture, and all strive for collegiality in the context of shared faith. The approaches and issues are somewhat predictable but still insightful; the authors strive to be irenic yet judicious. Despite improved diplomatic measures, each book can still draw the ire of readers from the opposing perspective.

Peterson and Williams portray the Calvinist view by first introducing the formative debate between Augustine and Pelagius and then presenting the Reformed perspective on predestination and perseverance in separate chapters. The seminal Synod of Dort is next examined, followed by a Reformed treatise on freedom, inability, grace, and atonement in four separate chapters. Throughout the process, these Calvinists herald the preeminence of Scripture, the absolute sovereignty of God, and the need for a compatibilist position. They recognize the role of grace in the opposing view of salvation but show how Calvinists part company with Arminians by affirming that God's grace is efficacious, particular, and irresistible. As compatibilists, they present God's sovereignty as the ultimate cause of things, while "human freedom, although not ultimate, is significant and considerable" (p. 64). They distinguish between Calvinist compatibilists who believe an ultimate/immediate cause theory (e.g. Feinberg) versus those who advocate an antinomy theory that allows for plain contradiction (e.g. Packer). Perseverance is a biblical necessity and inevitability; the authors view Hebrews apostasy passages as describing non-believers in the church while warning passages function to foster faithfulness. Prevenient grace gets special attention as universal opportunity and conditional election require biblical justification. The authors present the doctrine accurately but find its exegetical evidence thin. Predestination is buttressed by data from every major section of Scripture; the authors prefer an asymmetrical election to salvation. The bottom line for Peterson and Williams in this debate: "Divine sovereignty

and human responsibility cannot be pitted against one another” so that libertarian free will is unnecessary (p. 151).

This treatment of Arminianism has an ongoing flaw. Peterson and Williams forget that Arminians believe that Scripture governs their view and not merely an “anthropocentric and abstract view of human freedom” (p. 145). They thus misrepresent the Arminian position when they claim it “enshrines an almost idolatrous doctrine of the autonomous human being” (p. 117) and that “the human will is free and the divine is not” (p. 140). They sometimes exaggerate the Arminian view of saving faith as if it were meritorious: “Rather than affirm a boot-strap doctrine of merit, the Calvinist insists upon the effectiveness of divine grace” (p. 18). Such condescension does not invalidate their criticisms but surely weakens their cause. They rightly reveal some Arminians’ view of substitutionary atonement as excluding Christ’s penal role on our behalf and as thus governmental in nature, but the correction surely does not represent all Wesleyan-Arminians and still does not necessitate particular atonement. In an effort to establish limited atonement, the authors surprisingly limit Isaiah 53 “the iniquity of us all” as exclusive to Israel and believe the term “Savior” in 1 Tim 4:10 does not refer the work of Christ or the cross (p. 208). The authors address more particular biblical texts and challenge the Arminian understanding on specific passages, yet they overlook the philosophical judgments that construct their system when they explain passages simply with a Calvinist interpretation. Perhaps the inability to treat each passage thoroughly yields brevity that appears biased.

Walls and Dongell present the Arminian perspective by first discussing their methodology in interpreting Scripture. This section includes an introduction to the Calvinist perspective on salvation, which they insist is an issue not of power and sovereignty but of God’s character (p. 8). They caution against “those who insist that their entire theological program flows straight from the Bible” as if interpretation was not a complex matter (p. 33); this principle leads to a handling of Scripture that is more theological and philosophical than exegetical. Four chapters treat Calvinism with respect to the nature of human freedom, divine sovereignty, consistency, and the Christian life. “Hard determinism” receives criticism for its inability to handle the problem of moral responsibility. Compatibilism, or “soft determinism,” receives special criticism for its adaptable free will. Walls and Dongell grant the compatibilist definition an initial consistency, but they maintain that the definition dissolves at a deeper level of reason when confronted with understanding unconditional election, limited atonement, and the problem of evil: “We contend that Calvinists often vacillate between compatibilist and libertarian views of freedom in a way that is neither clear nor consistent with other commitments” (p. 164). Calvinists who saturate evangelism or counseling sessions with unqualified free will rhetoric (as if salvation opportunity or evil agents are *bona fide*) are either misleading or inconsistent (p. 173). Some Calvinists resort to language of permission when they deal with sin and evil, and wrongly use the terms “mystery” and “contradiction” to mean the same thing. These Arminian authors insist that divine sovereignty can involve God’s permission of free will and even evil without compromising his sovereignty. Perhaps most commendable in this volume is the way that grace remains an integral part of the salvation formula.

Walls and Dongell only address some Calvinist passages and hope that the contradictions revealed in sample Calvinist exegesis apply to others. However, particular passages used to support election and divine sovereignty should be directly addressed in each chapter rather than regularly challenging Packer, Piper, and Sproul. To their credit, the authors treat Romans 9 and the passages about Pharaoh thoroughly. In their treatment of the logical restraints of compatibilist Calvinism, Walls and Dongell grant a level of consistency to the compatibilist definition of freedom (e.g. p. 108), but they withdraw the compliment with respect to libertarian free will (e.g. p. 185); this shift

can cause confusion about which Calvinist view is logical in which scenarios. Practically speaking, the authors claim that the “notion of permission loses all significance in a Calvinist framework” (p. 132), yet most Calvinists do not believe any such contradiction inhibits practical ministry. Their call is clear, nonetheless: “Calvinists should face unflinchingly the implications of their position” when determinism eliminates freedom (p. 185). Theologically, prevenient grace and the nature of depravity deserve better fortification behind Arminian-type passages since they undergird universal opportunity and conditional election. Further explanation about the relationship between predestination in Paul and the benefits of salvation, such as “predestination to adoption” (Eph 1:5), is warranted here, although the corporate nature of salvation “in Christ” is posited well. Genuine foreknowledge is defended but not in a clear category of “simple foreknowledge” against other foreknowledge theories. In fact, the authors are suspiciously uncritical of open theism and “wider view” judgment theories; a reader could think that somehow these conjectures represent classical Arminianism.

These two volumes are as worthy as any other books on the topic and especially highlight the “hot spots” in the debate. All authors keep the discussion focused, the scholarship is up-to-date, and the scholarly citations accurately represent positions for rebuttal. Each team of authors takes impressive strides toward evenhandedness by criticizing theological deficiencies in their own camp as well as past polemical misrepresentations of their opponents. There is an impressive variety of Reformation and contemporary sources that keeps the reading historical, but the index sometimes omits authors referenced in the footnotes. Unfortunately, there is no direct interchange between the books; the debate could use a real head-to-head exchange between author teams. The books are more like enemy ships passing in the night than battleships squaring for battle.

As both an Asbury College and Covenant Seminary grad, I was particularly eager to see the duel between these two works; I realized that books like these often demonstrate the impasse between positions more than they significantly reduce it. However, the *Why I'm Not* duo fosters some good and careful thinking about the nature of God, the meaning of sovereignty, suffering, divine permissibility, God's actions in time, the nature of prayer, and the problem of evil—issues that permeate many of our systematic theologies. In most ways, this match-up draws traditional lines and assumes customary positions. In fact, each authorial team seems to forget that its opponent lives normal Christian lives unstrained by a framework of sovereignty or of logic and permissibility. Their task is challenging, for who can look at an opponent honestly and write against them objectively? If you find yourself becoming heated when reading one text or the other, it is probably an indication of your own true theological stripe.

W. Brian Shelton  
Toccoa Falls College, Toccoa Falls, GA

*Dogmatic Theology*, third edition. By William G. T. Shedd. Edited by Alan Gomes. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003, 992 pp., \$59.99.

William Greenough Thayer Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology*, completed in the 1880s, is not well known to most seminary students these days despite the fact that it is one of the most important expressions of nineteenth-century orthodox theology. Shedd's *Dogmatics* was the fruit of a lifetime of careful and serious reflection upon theology in the Western tradition; furthermore, it draws upon his philosophical and literary background (he was a professor of English literature at one time and was conversant with

a considerable amount of philosophy). Shedd was also familiar with a remarkable range of patristic and medieval sources and able to articulate his Reformed heritage in a fresh way without departing from the contours of orthodoxy. This, in itself, is no mean achievement. Yet today there is almost no serious theological literature on Shedd's work and his *Dogmatics* have been out of print for some time. (Even when it has been reprinted, it was only available in old-fashioned Victorian volumes.)

Shedd's work, unlike much contemporary systematic theology, is written in remarkably clear, careful prose, littered with references to Milton, Shakespeare, and classical literature. He is an heir of the Protestant Scholastic tradition of the post-Reformation period, but his method is not that of the schoolmen; he writes with a surprisingly light touch for someone probing theological issues so closely. Although not perhaps as comprehensive as Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, Shedd's *Dogmatics* is nevertheless a powerful, erudite, and at times remarkably original piece of work. It also offers an alternative account of major themes in the Reformed tradition that Hodge and those sympathetic to Old Princetonian theology usually champion, such as federal theology (of which, more in a moment). Even where one disagrees with Shedd—and, as with any systematic theology, there are many things with which to disagree—there is still much to be learned from reflecting on the arguments he gives for his particular views.

For these reasons, contemporary systematic theologians and historical theologians should welcome the new edition of Shedd's *Dogmatics* that has been edited by Prof. Alan Gomes of Talbot School of Theology, Biola University. Gomes has completely re-typeset Shedd's work and included a helpful running index on each page to facilitate reference along with wide margins for close work with the *Dogmatics*. He has also translated all the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew phrases used by Shedd in the body of the text, making it more accessible to readers unfamiliar with the ancient languages. Whereas previous editions of Shedd's work have been published in two or three volumes (the third having been added subsequently by Shedd as an expansion of what he had written in the previous two), Gomes has opted to integrate all three into a single-volume edition; this makes for a more user-friendly version of the work. Each chapter ends with a small print section where the relevant part of the third and supplementary volume of previous editions of Shedd's work is placed, and the paragraphs of this small print section are indexed to the relevant passages in the text where they are flagged for the reader to peruse. In addition to this, Gomes has provided a valuable introductory essay on Shedd's work and his place in theology together with several indices, including one of technical terms used by Shedd, and another on prominent theologians mentioned in the text with whom contemporary readers may be less familiar. There are also comprehensive person/subject and Scripture indices.

This is a very handsome edition of Shedd's work and a considerable improvement over previous versions (in fact, it is the only real revision of Shedd's work that has been undertaken despite the fact that it is the *third* edition). It is to be hoped that with the reissue of this important piece of systematic theology, there will be a renewed interest in the theology of Shedd. What he says is of much more than merely historical interest. An example using a characteristically Sheddian doctrine will make the point. Shedd departs from the Calvinistic tradition in rejecting federalism—the idea that Adam is the representative of the whole human race and whose original sin is imputed to his entire posterity in virtue of the fact that he represents humanity. Like Augustus Strong, his Baptist contemporary, Shedd believed that Augustinian realism offered a better way of thinking about this matter. Realism is the view that the whole of humanity constitutes a single metaphysical entity, human nature, which is had by Adam and which is—in Shedd's version of the doctrine, at least—individuated in subsequent human beings as they are born. (According to Shedd, human nature is a concrete particular, comprising a body-soul composite, and each particular individual human being has a

human nature composed of these two substances.) One's human nature is sinful because it was part of the unindividualized whole of human nature "in" Adam that was affected by the fall. This argument, unlike the federalist alternative, means one is really guilty of Adam's sin because it really was one's sin, or the sin of the human nature one possessed in an earlier, unindividualized state. It should be clear that this version of Augustinian realism implies traducianism, the view that human souls are not specially and immediately created by God but are passed down from parents to children. Just as one's physical substance comes from the physical substance of one's parents, so also one's spiritual substance comes from one's parents, too, going all the way back to Adam. For this reason, Shedd can claim that the human nature Adam had is the same as the human nature any human being has; one's human nature has as it were "split off" from the human nature of one's parents, and their natures from their parents, and so forth, going all the way back to Adam's human nature. This is strong medicine for a tough theological ailment, namely, the problem of the transmission of original sin, including original guilt. But Shedd presents one of the most convincing cases for the Augustinian (or, as he calls it, the "elder Calvinist") view that can be found in the Reformed tradition. This has important implications elsewhere in Shedd's *Dogmatics*, not least in his Christology. There he claims that Christ's human nature, in order to escape the curse of original sin, had to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit before the Word could assume it so that the Word does not become defiled by a fallen human nature.

This is not the only doctrine that Shedd develops with interesting—some might think, startling—conclusions. But it is one that is important to Shedd's project and that can be traced through his anthropology into his Christology. I hope this gives the reader who is unfamiliar with Shedd a flavor of the sort of theological argument to be found in this new edition of the *Dogmatics*. Of course, Shedd is not without his limitations. He has very little to say about ecclesiology, for instance, which is somewhat astonishing and quite disappointing in a systematic theology. And some of what he has to say about theology as a science may seem a little wooden to modern or postmodern readers unversed in the ways in which this topic was discussed before the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Shedd's *Dogmatics* repays careful study and opens up a number of interesting lines of argument that could be usefully explored by contemporary theologians and historians of doctrine.

The way that this volume has been produced should mean that it is accessible to students of theology and interested laymen, as well as professional scholars in the field. This is an important edition of a remarkable statement of classical theology. Alan Gomes is to be congratulated for a job well done and a considerable service to the academy and the Church.

Oliver D. Crisp  
University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

*Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century.* Edited by Donald M. Lewis. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004, x + 324 pp., \$40.00 paper.

Donald M. Lewis, this volume's editor, comments in his introduction, "Three religious movements in the world today can claim to be global faiths: Roman Catholicism, Islam, and evangelicalism. Of these three, it is perhaps surprising that the evangelical movement is so little studied and poorly understood" (p. 1). Why the neglect? Lewis suggests two intertwined causes: the belief, still common among academics, that evangelicalism is "more a movement of the past than the wave of the future" (p. 1); and these academics'

expectation that as Western colonialism faded after World War II, third world evangelicalism, taken to be an aspect of that colonialism, would fade as well (p. 2). Far from fading, evangelical Christianity has experienced a post-colonial surge of growth across East Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. In the global North, where evangelicalism has more than held its own, the evangelical community has reacted to scholarly misunderstanding by producing its own scholars. Over the past quarter-century, our story has been eloquently told by the likes of Mark Noll, George Marsden, and David Bebbington. In the global South, though, where the evangelical community is still quite young, its story remains largely untold and thus unknown. For a course on global evangelicalism that I teach, I have had great difficulty finding texts that would familiarize my students with developments outside the English-speaking world.

Perhaps the situation is beginning to change. This book is not itself a history of third world evangelicalism but it does help lay a foundation for such histories yet to be written. Most of its chapters were originally presented at a consultation of the Currents in World Christianity Project held at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, in July, 1999. Ten scholars augment basic description with cutting-edge analysis, and it is very encouraging that several of these scholars are themselves third world evangelicals.

*Christianity Reborn* is divided into five sections: as a kind of prelude, the first presents wide-ranging surveys of evangelicalism during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries; the second, third, and fourth sections narrow the geographical focus, offering studies of Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America; and the fifth and final section presents another global survey as a kind of summary. Not all of the book's chapters meet the same high standard, but most of them make solid contributions to the literature and several offer important interpretive insights that should draw the attention of non-evangelical academics.

W. R. Ward's opening study, "Evangelical Identity in the Eighteenth Century," returns to terrain that he has already surveyed in two trailblazing books, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge University Press, 1992) and *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). Ward notes Bebbington's often-cited fourfold characterization of evangelicalism as distinguished by conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism (*Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p. 3), but he also observes that these attributes have never been unique to evangelicalism; instead, they reflect its continuity with historic Christianity. What then was truly distinctive about eighteenth-century evangelicalism, differentiating it from the common orthodoxy of the day? He points to three marks: its eschatological "hope for better times" (p. 13), reflected in the premillennialism of Cotton Mather as well as the post-millennialism of Jonathan Edwards; its reliance on small-group fellowships, *collegia pietatis*, as it shifted from a top-down to a bottom-up strategy of Church renewal; and its attraction to the writings of Catholic mystics like Miguel de Molinos and François Fénelon. Ward seasons his analysis with fascinating historical details as well as telling observations. He notes, for example, evangelicals' "empiricism" as they escaped what came to be seen as mysticism's "blind alley" in preparation for the "globalization" of the next century (p. 30).

The latter development is the focus of Mark A. Noll's article, "Evangelical Identity, Power, and Culture in the 'Great Nineteenth Century.'" Noll notes the eagerness of evangelicals as disparate as the Anglican Zachary Macaulay and the Restorationist Barton Stone to forsake "traditional authorities . . . including the authority of evangelical tradition" in favor of "self-created evangelical authority" (p. 41). Noll is saddened by the elevation of power over principle that led members of the Evangelical Alliance to allow the issue of slavery to derail their plans for global cooperation in the 1840s and four decades later induced a wave of Keswick-influenced Anglican missionaries to overthrow the work of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther's historic Niger Mission. And he is intrigued by attempts at tackling cultural challenges head-on, such as the ill-starred 1841 British

anti-slavery expedition to the Niger River Delta and Protestant missionaries' decision in the 1880s regarding translation of the word "God" in their Korean edition of the Bible. The latter, Noll observes, led to unintended consequences as "elements of Korean culture that the missionaries thought had been discarded" were instead retained in mature Korean Christianity. This gave rise to "forms of the faith that missionaries [might not have] recognized as Christian maturity" (p. 51). Unintended consequences are also a theme of Brian Stanley's article, "Twentieth-Century World Christianity: A Perspective from the History of Missions." Stanley focuses on the landmark 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, noting that many of its participants' prophecies concerning the Church's future were indeed fulfilled, though often in ways that they could not have foreseen. Especially astute are Stanley's remarks about the unanticipated alternative forms of Christianity that have accounted for much of the Church's post-Edinburgh growth.

The first of three articles focusing on Asia is Philip Yuen-sang Leung's essay, "Conversion, Commitment, and Culture: Christian Experience in China, 1949–99." Leung uses the story of Lazarus as a metaphor to describe the Chinese Church under Communist rule: seriously ill in the years after 1949, practically dead during the Cultural Revolution, brought back to life in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and subsequently experiencing vigorous growth (p. 88). He notes Chinese Christians' early division into two camps, with "Marys" like Wang Mingdao "more interested in . . . spiritual life" and "Marthas" like Bishop K. H. Ting "show[ing] greater interest in social and political movements" (p. 89). This division continues today, the latter group being associated with the officially sanctioned Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the former with the frequently persecuted house-church movement. Yet Leung points to a recent study of TSPM church members that finds that they, like house-church members, are mainly concerned with issues related to salvation and personal discipleship rather than social concerns. As "members of one big family," he urges, "Martha should embrace Mary" (p. 107). Robert Eric Frykenberg's article, "Gospel, Globalization, and Hindutva: The Politics of 'Conversion' in India," describes a rather different situation. Indian Christians are persecuted not by government officials but by local mobs convinced that evangelists and their converts are engaged in a "sinister attempt to undermine and destroy the very foundations of India's cultural and national unity" (p. 130). In Frykenberg's view, this tragic misunderstanding is at least partly due to the militarist rhetoric of some misguided Christian missionaries. He warns against globalization's "dumbing down [and] homogenization of the gospel message" (p. 129) and stresses the importance of recent indigenous expressions of Indian Christianity such as the independent church movement, Pentecostalism, and the swelling ranks of so-called "churchless believers" (pp. 126–28). Allan K. Davidson's article, "'The Pacific Is No Longer a Mission Field?' Conversion in the South Pacific in the Twentieth Century," which questions the need for such movements in Oceania, seems out of place in this volume.

In "Conversion and Social Change: A Review of the 'Unfinished Task' in West Africa," Jehu J. Hanciles, a young African scholar, considers the making of converts in the traditional churches planted by Western mission agencies during the colonial era. He specifically focuses on two groups: (1) African Independent (or Initiated) Churches (AICs) planted by Garrick Sokari Braide, William Wadé Harris, and the many who have followed in their footsteps; and (2) the Pentecostal and Charismatic congregations and denominations that have multiplied among middle-class Africans since the 1970s. Hanciles comments on African Christianity's amazing growth over the course of the twentieth century, but he balances ballooning overall numbers against what he sees as the "tardiness of Christian expansion" in West Africa (p. 179), closing with a rather downbeat assessment of the current situation: "[T]he continent's emergence as a major heartland of Christianity coincides with its economic marginalization in the global arena" (p. 180). Afrikaner scholar Marthinus L. Daneel adopts a more optimistic stance in his

article, "African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa: Protest Movements or Mission Churches?" While many scholars have seen AICs as primarily responding to and even protesting against the deficiencies of more traditional mission-planted churches, Daneel stresses AICs' historic roots in and ongoing ties to those churches. His characterization of AICs as "inculturated extensions of the Christian family of churches" (p. 216 n. 76) is helpful, though his positive assessment of some AIC leaders' public participation in traditional African religious rituals will alarm many readers of this journal.

Paul Freston's article, "Contours of Latin American Pentecostalism," is the volume's longest and also one of its finest. Freston offers a capsule history, an array of statistics describing the current situation, and a survey of the literature as well as his own trenchant assessment. Against conspiracy theorists who ascribe Pentecostals' rapidly swelling ranks to the baleful influence of bountifully-funded American missionaries, he cites the counterintuitive conclusion of Brazilian scholar Rubem César Fernandes that "the churches which grow most owe little to international missions" (p. 250). He notes that across Latin America there is a strong correlation between a community's poverty and its openness to religious change: "The needier the district is, the higher the percentage of Protestants" (p. 231, referring to Brazil; see pp. 239–40 for El Salvador). Cultural factors also play a role in the growth of Pentecostalism, which does best where institutional Catholicism is weak yet society itself remains fundamentally religious (p. 254). Pentecostals' "tendency to schism," so often decried by Catholics and even by their fellow Protestants, turns out to be an important key to their vitality in this context, as "competition stimulates innovation . . . and localized supply" (pp. 232, 255). David Martin's concluding essay, "Evangelical Expansion in Global Society," makes the same point in a broader context. Martin argues that the emergence of global evangelicalism and especially of its "potent Pentecostal mutation" is inseparably linked to "the emergence of a global society" (p. 273). Evangelical Christianity is both a manifestation of and a powerful response to modernity, "unit[ing] the despised peripheries of the North Atlantic to the poor and the ethnically marginalized groups of the South Atlantic and elsewhere" (p. 293).

This excellent volume is part of an important series, *Studies in the History of Christian Missions*, edited for Eerdmans by Frykenberg and Stanley. I have already added it to the list of textbooks for my course on global evangelicalism. If you teach such a course, you should do the same. If you do not teach such a course, perhaps you should.

George W. Harper  
Evangelical Theological Seminary, Osijek, Croatia

*The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective.* By Russell D. Moore. Wheaton: Crossway, 2004, 320 pp., \$15.99 paper.

Russell Moore's study provides an invaluable gauge on contemporary evangelical theology. It is well written and comprehensive in range. Though selective with respect to bibliographical sources, the book nevertheless contains an outstanding compilation of material, weaving together many strands of evangelical theological discussion in illuminating fashion. As a "traditional covenant theologian" reviewing this book (so the author has identified me), it would come as no surprise that I have significant differences with Moore's case for evangelical theological consensus. Even Moore is quite unsure what to make of the mosaic of contemporary evangelical thought. The book closes by questioning his opening thesis. Perhaps greater attention to and comprehension of the writings of Reformed covenant theology—and hence less attention to progressive

dispensationalism (if only to be more evenhanded!)—might have given the author himself more opportunity to rethink and refine his own position, commendable as it is in many places. Interesting is his system of labeling theological positions across a very wide spectrum of evangelical opinion. At times, Moore's assessment and categorization are too neatly drawn; in actuality, the issues are far more complex and far more convoluted than his analysis would lead his readers to think. Two examples: Moore's misreading of the Christian political theory of Edmund Clowney and his misreading of the amillennial covenant theology of Vern Poythress. As a consequence, Moore's argument for evangelical "consensus" becomes flimsy and somewhat forced. Much more distinction and refinement in statement are needed.

The author is a devotee of Carl Henry, a giant in twentieth-century (neo-) evangelicalism and a staunch defender of biblical authority. (Moore rightly laments Henry's failure to carry through his conviction by retaining the doctrine of biblical inerrancy as a theological nonnegotiable within conservative Protestant theology.) The heartbeat of *The Kingdom of Christ* is concerned with the intersection between evangelical theology and political engagement. In my judgment, American evangelicalism has inherited a quasi-Constantinian, and therefore unbiblical, understanding of the relationship between Christian ethics and social politics, a subject of intense, growing conflict, especially in recent years—ever since the Jimmy Carter presidency. Agreeably, all Americans, whatever their religious conviction, strive—or should strive—for peace in the world. In addition, evangelical believers seek—or should seek—peace in the Church. But Scripture clearly indicates that peace will not ultimately be obtained in this present (evil) age, not in the Church and not in the world. Discord and disharmony are the fruit of sin; they will not be fully eradicated until the consummation of history. What concord and harmony are reached is often short-lived. Peace is elusive; to think otherwise is delusive. (Only the coming Prince of Peace will achieve this blessing for time eternal.) One final observation before moving on: Peace in society and peace in the Church are two entirely different objectives. Peace in the Church requires unity in the (essential) fundamentals of Christian doctrine. Whole-hearted obedience to the Word of God in faith and in practice is basic to the Church's witness. Christian ethical behavior and church discipline are descriptive (and prescriptive) of life within the community of faith, not in society-at-large. But this takes us well ahead of our summary review of the argument in *The Kingdom of Christ*.

After introducing readers to his topic of study, "evangelical theology and evangelical [political] engagement," Moore treats us to an analysis of the three defining doctrines informing his book: eschatology, soteriology, and ecclesiology. Simply put, in Moore's words, "the failure of evangelical politics points us to something far more important that underlies it—the failure of evangelical theology" (p. 11). But things have changed dramatically, or so readers are led to believe in the opening chapter. The emerging consensus among evangelicals that Moore thinks he has uncovered is an acknowledgment that the eschaton, or the consummation of earth's history, "is to be understood as part of the overall goal of the history of the cosmos—the universal acclaim of Jesus as sovereign over the created order (Phil. 2:9–11) and the glorification of Jesus through the salvation of the cosmos (Rom. 8:29)" (p. 56). On first appearance, this prospect looks scriptural enough. But the question is this: How is the consummate Kingdom of Christ—the eschaton—brought into being? Do the cultural endeavors of Christians as the corporate embodiment of the church, the Bride of Christ, prepare the way? Do they lay the foundation for the new earth? Although it is this earth and this cosmos that will be renewed, how is renewal effected? Bottom line: What presently is the business of the Church in the world? This is the chief issue, with sundry other related ones.

To answer this question, argues Moore, we must deal substantively with basic Bible doctrine, specifically, the doctrine of things to come (grappling with the now burgeoning

literature on “inaugurated eschatology”), the doctrine of salvation (considering the redemption of the fallen cosmos as well as humanity), and the doctrine of the Church (understanding what it means to be God’s prophetic voice in the secular world). Curiously, it is the alleged rapprochement—the “new evangelical perspective” (or “consensus”)—among progressive dispensationalists and modified covenant theologians that has seemingly won the day. *Or has it?* Whatever convergence may be taking place, it is surely not all for the best. The battle between these two Protestant traditions has been around for a long time and shows no signs of diminishing. What Henry saw as mere “skirmishes”—occasions for “navel-gazing”—are much more than that (p. 21). Hermeneutical method, substantive doctrine, and careful exegesis of crucial biblical texts are what is at stake. George Eldon Ladd shared some of the same socio-theological aspirations held by Henry, but these two pivotal thinkers had their sharp differences, as Moore very clearly indicates. What Moore likes about Ladd’s analysis is the charge leveled against covenant theologians: “While dispensationalists severed the Kingdom from the present activity of the Messiah, Ladd argued, the amillennialists severed it from the goal of history by relegating the Kingdom to the arena of the human heart, the church, or the supra-temporal heavenly state” (p. 32). Adopting a “restorational eschatology,” Moore favorably cites Michael Williams’s critique of the eschatological views of Geerhardos Vos, another pivotal thinker prominently featured in this book. Where Ladd fell short, however, was in his failure to grasp “the essentially spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God” (p. 35).

This brings us to the second chapter that addresses the core doctrine in *The Kingdom of Christ*, namely, eschatology. Commendably, the impact of Vos’s work in contemporary Reformed theology is given proper recognition in these pages. But what Moore does not grasp is the (radically) new direction taken by the Westminster school as represented by systematicians Norman Shepherd and Richard Gaffin. (The former receives no treatment by the author, which may well explain why he misreads Gaffin’s place in the stream of contemporary theological development. Compare my *Gospel Grace: The Modern-day Controversy* [Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003]). Moore’s portrayal of the Westminster school—with comparison made to changes taking place at Dallas Theological Seminary—is simply inaccurate. Moore categorically states: “Richard Gaffin is correct to see that Kingdom eschatology reverses an older tradition within Western theology, at least as old as Anselm, which concentrates the work of Christ most heavily on the benefits of His death, rather than on *both* His sacrificial death and His resurrection from the dead” (p. 61, italics mine). Is it a matter of reversing or buttressing and enhancing the Western tradition? Where this debate becomes particularly contentious is with regard to the classic Protestant doctrine of justification by faith (alone). On the one hand, Moore commends “a reconsideration of a variety of problematic issues, ranging from the law/gospel relationship to the work of the Spirit in redemptive history, [where] nearly every eschatological question at issue is related to the ‘already’ and ‘not yet’ aspects of the reign of Christ” (p. 60). On the other, Moore questions the direction of contemporary theology, demurring “the growing reluctance within evangelical theology to speak of the ‘courtroom language’ of forensic justification” (p. 115). I wish more attention had been given to this wayward trend, including some analysis of the New Perspective on Paul and the Mosaic law and how that impacts the “new [eschatological] perspective” of evangelicals, what is, after all, the subject of this book. For Luther and Calvin, it is the *threefold use* of the law of God—the civil, normative, and pedagogical—that is the broad topic under discussion. Where does Moore stand on this issue—for or against the Protestant Reformers? If the latter, then he stands with Gaffin and New Westminster. Clarification, please.

Turning to some of the specifics of Moore’s eschatological panorama, he anticipates “a unique place for the fulfillment of geopolitical blessings to a reconstituted Israelite

nation" (p. 44). The new perspective, in Moore's estimation, "shields evangelical theology from perceiving the present nature of the Kingdom as merely spiritual or existential, or as languishing in suspended animation unto the eschaton. At the same time, these developments in evangelical eschatology remedy what theologian Adrio König has identified with precision as the 'eclipse of Christ' in contemporary eschatology" (p. 57). With this conviction Moore is so bold as to say: "[Anthony] Hoekema and other modified covenantalists place the future consummation within a 'new creation' model of fulfillment in the new earth. In this, they are in agreement not only with progressive dispensationalists but also with classical dispensationalists in finding the older amillennial view of prophetic promises to be *biblically bankrupt*" (p. 51, italics mine). I totally disagree. Another specific: the coming of the eschatological Spirit at Pentecost makes possible the *permanent* indwelling within new covenant believers. "Some Reformed theologians," observes Moore, "even do not hesitate to use the term 'dispensational' to describe the once-for-all character of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. This is a healthy development" (p. 61). Conducive for consensus, maybe, but bad for the articulation of a Reformed soteriology. At this point I raise a fundamental question regarding Moore's soteriological estimate of human ability. I do so, when I read him denouncing the Reformed doctrine of supralapsarianism, which our author seemingly equates with double predestination (the decree of election *and* reprobation). Championing the new consensus, he reasons: "This Christologically focused Kingdom soteriology therefore protects evangelical theology from a resurgent supralapsarianism that defines this glory theocentrically in terms of the supra-temporal glorification and reprobation of individuals" (p. 105). At the same time he castigates the open theists for their mitigation of God's sovereign control over all human affairs. Is God absolutely sovereign, or does the sinner have some limited, autonomous control over his future destiny? Divine reprobation, exercised in accordance with divine justice, includes God's act of passing by those who are not the objects of his discriminating love (preterition). "How can it be?" is the proper question to be asked by sinners—sinners saved on account of God's sovereign grace, chosen in Jesus Christ. As Moore himself rightly affirms, God "meticulously govern[s] the affairs of the cosmos" (p. 230, n. 57). So also the eternal destiny of every human being.

Then there is the question of the "millennium." According to the new perspective, "the Millennium is seen not as a separate dispensation from the eternal state, but as an initial phase of it" (p. 63). Here Moore confuses time and eternity, undercutting the "cataclysmic" nature of the end of the age, the radical in-breaking of the new heavens and new earth. This all-too-common misconception is repeated throughout the book. Moore takes exception to the "Augustinian 'spiritual vision' eschatology, with which it is impossible to reconcile the 'earthy' feel of the prophetic promises, not only of the Old Testament but of the New as well" (p. 62). All along the way Moore gives expression to a particular reading of the OT prophetic idiom; consistent with premillennial dispensationalism, Moore follows a literalistic approach to future, apocalyptic portrayals in the Bible. This school of interpretation is still very far apart from amillennial covenant theology. And Moore is well aware of that fact.

Given his eschatological reading of the Bible, Moore proceeds in the third and fourth chapters to reformulate the doctrines of salvation and the church in accordance with this newly-formulated evangelical perspective. Salvation is Christological—and it is *holistic*. Although Moore commends Henry for recognizing that humanity's problem is fundamentally spiritual, not political or economic, he nevertheless seeks to make a stronger case for evangelical political engagement than his mentor did. Following the argument of Robert Saucy, Moore faults covenant theologians for failing to grasp the national and political character of the new covenant Church "as a multi-national Spirit body," a feature that is "impossible to relegate to the eternal state" (p. 96). This brings

into play, again, important and complex issues in biblical hermeneutics, issues that sharply distinguish dispensational and covenantal systems of interpretation. While Moore rejects the position of Louis Berkhof, “arguably the most influential American Reformed theologian of the twentieth century” (p. 97), I contend that amillennial covenant theologians have for the most part correctly understood the vital and essential distinction between cult (worship and ministry as practiced by the community of believers) and culture (what is, broadly speaking, the carrying out of the creational mandate to exercise dominion over the earth, an enterprise shared by believers and unbelievers). Related to this is the important distinction in Reformed theology between the “common” and the “holy,” a distinction largely missed by premillennialists and, more broadly, neo-evangelicals. What Moore identifies as “new earth” amillennialism (p. 100) is a repudiation or—at the very least—a reformulation of covenant theology that is inherently inconsistent with its own principles of interpretation, i.e. with Reformed theology’s distinctive hermeneutical/typological methodology.

“The cosmic extent of salvation,” writes Moore, “is seen as the Second Adam offers up to the Father a created order in which He has subdued every enemy (1 Cor. 15:24–26), and there is nothing unclean in the garden over which He rules (Rev. 21:1–8)” (p. 106). Viewing the arrival of the eschaton as beginning in the millennium, what Moore sees as the initial stage of the (final) kingdom of Christ, how does this interpretation really differ from postmillennialism? He posits: “If redemption is the restoration of the creation order, not its repudiation, then evangelical theology must take seriously a creation mandate that values human culture as an aspect of human viceregency over the earth” (p. 122). He further clarifies: “In the emerging ‘new earth’ understanding of the salvific transformation of the cosmos, human cultural endeavors are not simple temporal concerns, which will be consumed and forgotten in the static, timeless salvation enjoyed at the eschaton. Instead, creation is to be redeemed, albeit not by human effort, but by the cataclysmic coming of Christ, the Messiah, for whose inheritance the universe was created in the first place. . . . Furthermore, the New Testament seems to imply that some cultural human endeavors from within the stream of human history will be sanctified and will continue in the new order of the everlasting Kingdom of God (Rev. 21:26)” (p. 122). Among Reformed interpreters this point of view is more reflective of the tradition of Amsterdam than that of Princeton. No consensus here.

What is the practical import of the new evangelical perspective on social engagement? Moore explains: “Political solutions are first implemented within the community of the local church. When political solutions are offered to the outside world, they must always be couched in language that recognizes the futility of cultural reform without personal regeneration and baptism into the Body of Christ” (p. 172). This nicely sums up the principal argument in *The Kingdom of Christ*. Only the Church—as the redeemed people of God, the new humanity—can make a lasting impact in society as God’s instrument working to establish the eternal kingdom in this present order of things. The Church’s sanctified political theory and practice serve to usher in the eschaton. In this increasingly pluralistic world (post September 11) this is not what needs to be said. And more importantly, Moore’s viewpoint, in my estimate, does not have the support of Scripture. Even so, Moore’s book should provoke thoughtful, ongoing dialogue and debate. Whereas the book opens with the prospect of genuine evangelical consensus, it closes by seeing the real threat of evangelicals “splintering apart” (p. 175). Moore warns: “the long-term ramifications of this debate cast uncertainty on the prospects of ever developing an evangelical theological consensus” (p. 182). Quite a reversal on the part of our author—and without a doubt, a cause for rethinking the issues. I submit that what we find in amillennial covenant theology is realism, not pessimism. The dawning of the kingdom of Christ comes with the present reign of God in the hearts of the redeemed, as Berkhof correctly understood. The business of the Church is the proclamation and defense of the gospel, not the drafting of a political agenda or the implementation of a

social program (not even the establishment of medical clinics at home or abroad). It is the role of the common grace institution of the state to maintain the well-being of her citizens and to exercise justice and equity in all human affairs. This Reformed conviction *in no way* absolves Christians of their duties and responsibilities in the political and social arenas. No grounds for abdication or non-engagement—except in the case of those called to preach the Word!

Mark W. Karlberg  
Warminster, PA

*The Theology of the Cross for the Twenty-First Century.* Edited by Alberto L. García and A. R. Victor Raj. St. Louis: Concordia, 2002, 254 pp., \$15.99 paper.

In today's therapeutic culture, unbelievers and even some Christians find the cross less important than techniques of personal growth and empowerment. Narcissism and consumerism fuel a "theology of glory," where human beings try to make themselves acceptable to God or to be gods themselves. Especially in *The Heidelberg Disputation*, Luther rejects this man-made theology in favor of a theology of the cross. The current volume, edited by Alberto García and Victor Raj, is unique in showing how an authentically cruciform perspective transforms a wide variety of contemporary issues facing evangelists and missionaries.

The volume contains thirteen essays arranged into three sections. The first and foundational section shows how the theology of the cross provides signposts for contemporary witness. The second section locates the cross in the prevailing worldviews of East Asia, the Islamic Crescent, India, Africa, and post-Marxist Russia. The last section applies a cruciform perspective to America's multi-cultural reality, addressing the Hispanic and African-American experience, the bioethical revolution, postmodernism, and the New Age movement. This review selects several of these essays for comment.

Alberto García's foundational essay does an excellent job of explicating four key links between Luther's theology of the cross and effective Christian witness in a global context. First, the cross is countercultural. An effective witness is aware of how his or her biases get in the way of the gospel. To suggest that the gospel is Western (or Eastern) is to replace a heavenly message with cultural idolatry. As García rightly notes, such idolatry obscures the true "vulnerability of the cross." We must begin with a recognition that all cultures are vitiated with sin and fall short of the glory of God. We do not have a division between sick cultures and doctor cultures; in C. S. Lewis's phrase, we are "fellow patients in the same hospital." Second, the cross is incarnational. Although God's word can never be reduced to a culture, it stands in solidarity with all cultures: "It is a call to call worthy those who are despised or considered unworthy because of our human pride and idols of power" (p. 23). However, we are called not only to speak, but to live the word. As Luther so colorfully put it, "one becomes a theologian by living, by dying, by being damned" (p. 24). Third, the cross is eschatological: "The key to Luther's understanding of the atonement is that he finds God decisively loving us for all times in the person of Jesus Christ" (p. 28) so that we know our sickness and suffering has a final end in glory. Fourth, the cross is sacramental, the basis for a common life: we are not called to witness only as individual to individual, but to draw people into the body of Christ. These four themes are taken up and developed by other contributors throughout the volume.

Robert A. Kolb provides a careful examination of Paul's theology of the cross and its practical implications. First, the cross reveals who God really is. Kolb emphasizes the paradox that God is a resident alien. God is an alien who "comes from outside our

experience” but also a resident who “bridges the gaps constructed by every individual and society between themselves and their Creator” and “makes Himself and His people at home in every culture because they all belong to Him” (p. 42). Second, the cross is the means by which people know God. The cross signifies that it is not through mental constructions that we come to know God, but through what God has done for us (p. 46). Third, the cross reveals who God’s people are. God’s people are dead people marked by a new life. “Dead, having a life hidden with Christ, they will put to death every kind of disruptive behavior” (p. 49). Fourth, the new life leads to actions of love: we help and suffer for and with our neighbor without any illusions that this saves us because we know this has all been accomplished on the cross.

Robert Scudieri shows how this theology of the cross vitally transforms our understanding of missions work. Scudieri begins by asking a fundamental question: Should we see mission work as commanded? Of course, it is commanded, yet Scudieri points out, the command itself is not the proper motivation or the goal: “all mission flows *from* the cross” and “all mission flows *to* the cross” (p. 56). The fact that mission starts with the cross means that a triumphalist emphasis on the numbers in churches is less important than whether there are “disciples formed into faithful, sacrificial, loving Christians” (p. 57). The pressing question becomes, “How can we encourage the growth of mission churches . . . sacrificial congregations that put the needs of the unchurched neighbor ahead of their own?” (pp. 57–58). We cannot do this by law, by making people feel guilty and despairing over their evangelistic failures. We can only do it by so expressing God’s love for people on the cross that they feel compelled to share it with others.

It is often said that the best way to witness is to express the Gospel in terms familiar to the recipient culture. Along these lines, Wong Yong Ji’s essay explores “an intriguing similarity between Luther’s paradoxical way of thinking and the classical T’ai-Chi cosmology” (p. 69), both of which are “relational and ‘both/and’ oriented” (p. 71). Thankfully, the author does not follow such mystics as D. T. Suzuki, who understand the both/and as embracing outright contradictions. Rather, Ji argues that the paradoxical poles of yin and yang, or saint and sinner are “in reality in harmony and balance”: they “do not contradict each other but require each other” (p. 73) to fully express reality. However, the author does not clearly show how relativism and syncretism can be avoided. At one point, he laments the strife between religions and suggests a better solution to religious pluralism is “not my truth-claim at the expense of others but my witness among them as my unique contribution” (p. 76). The idea is to witness without giving undue offense, but to say that Christianity is only a contribution to the religious dialogue risks either relativism (there are lots of equally valid religious perspectives) or syncretism (the truth about salvation is something of which Christianity is at best an element). This cannot be sustained because crucial to Christian proclamation are not only both/ands, but some very clear either/ors. If Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, then this excludes the denial by other religions that Jesus is required for salvation.

C. George Fry provides a timely essay on Islam. Fry was one of the first observers of the Muslim world to suggest that Islam (not some other religion or humanist philosophy) would emerge as Christianity’s greatest challenge. He notes that Islam is unique in being the only major world religion (1) “to rise since the birth of Christianity”; (2) “to claim to reform Christianity”; (3) “to use many of the same Scriptures”; (4) “to which Christianity has lost vast provinces”; and that is (5) “poised for a significant missionary offensive during the third millennium” (pp. 85–86). In light of this, Fry underscores the urgent need for Christians to reach Muslims with the gospel. Effective witness depends on understanding the teachings of Islam and exactly how they challenge Christianity. Though each has some merit, Fry argues persuasively against the views that Islam is simply a Christian heresy or a stepping stone to Christianity, or that Muhammad is the antichrist or that Islam is one of several ways to God. He also cautions against

a monolithic understanding of Islam that overlooks its internal diversity and calls for a complex engagement between Christians at many levels with their Muslim counterparts.

Gene Edward Veith, a well-known Christian cultural critic, examines the challenges and opportunities of postmodernism for Christian witness. He notes that the preceding modernism "can be seen as a secular embodiment of the theology of glory" (p. 164), which died when its promise of a scientific utopia was discredited by world wars and failed social engineering. This created a postmodern time "ripe for the theology of the cross" (p. 164). Yet in fact, postmodernists have replaced reason with personal preference as their idol. They "tend to be cynical, ironic, skeptical of all overarching ideologies" and "apply the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' to all philosophies, institutions, and artistic creations, seeing in them mere 'constructions' in need of deconstruction" (p. 167).

Although the world-weariness of postmodernists might lead them to the cross, they often conclude that life is just a struggle for power. It then seems that "the only change possible . . . is which group is doing the oppressing" (p. 168). Postmodern leaders (in society and in the church) often sit in Pilate's seat, beholden to consumer preferences and pressure groups. "The new modes of thinking turn not only raw materials and manufactured goods but ideas, morals, and religion into mere commodities to be bought and sold" (p. 169). Even Church liturgy is judged by the canons of entertainment rather than by Scripture. Veith argues that "it is the ostensibly conservative evangelical churches, those that resisted modernist theology, that have become most open to postmodernism" (p. 170). He also notes that while the Western use of marketing to attract people to the Church has failed, there is enormous growth in the persecuted Church; "the church is at its best when it faces cultural hostility, that it is strongest when it is weakest, when it follows the way of the cross" (p. 174). So, paradoxically, there is hope for the Western Church in its failures and even in the increasing hostility to Christian proclamation.

Richard C. Eyer shows the vital need for cruciform thinking in bioethics. "Bioethics" is not a special set of ethics, but an attempt to understand the ethical implications of biomedical technologies. In a sense, ethics has become harder because we have developed more choices. Unfortunately, many also think that ethics themselves need to change, opting for some form of relativism. From this, Eyer points out, the law is no protection. On the contrary, "To ensure what might now be called the virtues of ethical relativism, privacy and informed consent, bioethics has been moved into the judicial sphere, where rights rather than the right is paramount" (p. 180). When Christians argue for absolutes, they are seen as making claims only relative to their faith. Yet God's law needs to be upheld as objective, defended not merely by special revelation, but also by natural law (as J. Budziszewski and others have argued).

There are also rich but neglected resources in Christian thought for addressing bioethical issues, including image of God theology and the theology of the cross. The latter serves to humble our pride in biotechnology. The technological imperative seduces us to think that if we can, we must, forgetting we are not the creators but only stewards of our lives. There is a crying need for pastoral counsel in bioethical decision-making because "modern medical ethics does little more than protect the rights of the patient to privacy and informed consent" (p. 183). In one of Eyer's case studies we see how the demand to overcome infertility artificially can lead to frustration and further problems (divorce), while the suffering of hardship can lead to new life. More generally, the cross shows us that "humility must grow in proportion to the capability of our technologies so, in gaining the world, we do not lose our souls" (p. 188).

It is well known that Hispanics are the fastest-growing demographic group in North America. Many Hispanic-Americans are Catholics with a variety of symbols and practices that are troubling from an evangelical perspective. In his essay on the Hispanic-American experience, Alberto García does not deny the dangers of syncretism and Mariology, but looks for more evangelical interpretations. Although devotion to a gory

crucifix can be “interpreted as a fatalistic or masochistic symbol” (p. 190), it can also be a symbol of hope, showing how Christ “stood on behalf of His people. The servant suffers because He identifies with the suffering of His people to overcome it” (p. 192). This is poignant for Hispanic-Americans who suffer from an uncertain identity and discrimination. Their experience is “a borderland experience,” (p. 193) and they are a mixed people (*mestizos*) who strongly identify with a dark-skinned, *mestizo* Christ. García argues this is something that Jesus understood in his humanity because he came from Galilee, a borderland peopled by an “impure” blend of Jews and Gentiles. Yet the “pure” Jews in “Jerusalem must hear the message from those who were considered to be . . . *mestizos*” (p. 200).

Hispanics venerate the Virgen de Guadalupe and saints such as Lázaro (Lazarus). The former could lead to Marianism, but it could also serve as a model of faithful humility: “In the Magnificat, Mary embodied for Luther a humble servant of God’s unconditional love in Christ. In fact Mary [is] a theologian of the cross who affirms the paradox of calling worthy what is unworthy and unworthy what is considered worthy through human eyes” (p. 205). Likewise, while evangelical Christians reject saint worship, they can learn from the salvation of Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) that “the despised ones are affirmed by God” (p. 206). García ends with some constructive proposals for dialogue with Hispanic-Americans, although I think he goes too far in saying that “we should celebrate All Saints’ Day Latino style . . . The non-Hispanic community must join and affirm these acts of celebration . . .” (p. 210). While such joint celebration has great value, I think it should arise through voluntary collaboration; otherwise, the cultural imperialism that has hurt Hispanics might seem to be reversed.

African-Americans have witnessed to their oppressors through their patient endurance of suffering. They know what it means to be “the wounded healer” (p. 218). And yet, in recent times, John Nunes complains that “popular black Christianity has veered toward a theology of individualism and glory at the expense of the preaching of the cross for the sake of the community” (p. 218). This theology of success “militates against . . . the chronically feeble, the inordinately fearful, and the vulnerable” (p. 219). Nunes argues that African-Americans should return to their roots to recover the true meaning of the cross. They might begin by considering the wonderful legacy of their spirituals, where “glory is located in the midst of, and despite, suffering and outward circumstances” (p. 221) and by noting how earlier generations “recognized the extraordinary insight into human frailty that runs through the Old Testament” (p. 222). What God wants is wholly integrated living, but our age tends to focus on individual performance, which means at its worst “a self-congratulating façade of illusionary service without excessive personal sacrifice” (p. 226). However, the alternative to a theology of glory should not be a “victimology” that perverts the cross into an excuse for stagnation and laziness. According to Nunes, a better understanding arose during the civil rights movement: theological personalism, “the truth that all people and cultures, by virtue of their creation by God and the objective reconciliation won by Christ, are the proper focus of the church’s mission” (p. 226). This dispenses with both self-worship and despair, encouraging God’s children to recognize the dignity and worth of everyone, and therefore to fight for social justice. For “God is Lord of both civil and secular society” and “good works . . . flow freely between the kingdoms of the Gospel and the world” (p. 228). Nunes shows significant similarities in the thought of Martin Luther King and Martin Luther. Both men had a healthy suspicion of spiritual abstraction and believed in a spirituality of ordinary life oriented to service within vocation.

Roland C. Ehlke explores the origin and teachings of New Age thinking and locates some footholds for the cross. While modernists put their trust in reason, the New Age Movement has a more primitive “theology of glory, disseminating the notion that human beings are their own gods and saviors” (p. 246), the original lure of Satan (Gen 3:5). Fundamentally, there is nothing new in the New Age. In its teachings, however,

there is a blend of new and old elements, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Gnosticism and, optionally, Gaia worship, astrology, magic, crystals, and channeling. There is a tendency to appropriate a relativized Jesus Christ: “the New Age Jesus is a guru, enlightened master, or avatar and Christ is a universal spirit or cosmic force that guides the spiritual evolution of humanity” (p. 239). New Age beliefs are typically Eastern: pantheism, reincarnation, and consciousness of the divine. Ironically, although everyone supposedly is God, they must do all sorts of spiritual exercises to overcome their lack of knowledge of divinity: “Why, if we are God, do people need to spend several hundred dollars for a weekend seminar with New Age luminaries to learn this?” (p. 241). There is also a Gnostic emphasis on special knowledge that utterly contradicts God’s making himself known through his Son. Obviously, New Age religion appeals because it denies sin, affirms self-worth without admitting a need for forgiveness, and allows religious consumers to choose their preferred means to the divinity within. Moral rules and logically consistent theology are not needed, as there is a Romantic emphasis on self-validating feelings. Nonetheless, there are ways to dialogue with New Age thought. For example, if the appeal of pantheism is completeness and community, Christianity shows this cannot be found without the healing acts of Jesus’ incarnation. Reincarnation offers new life but there is a loss of identity and continued fragility, while the resurrection retains and perfects our identity.

In a self-obsessed age, this book is refreshingly different and urgently needed. It does not cover every competitor to Christianity, and it omits some ethnic/geographical groups (e.g. European). However, it does show the relevance of the cross to a very diverse range of cultural and religious groups, and supplies general themes for church workers to develop further applications for themselves. These essays will certainly encourage Lutherans and other evangelicals to consider whether their ministry involves an undue emphasis on glory.

Angus Menuge

Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, WI

*An Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives.* By Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, 372 pp., \$29.00 paper.

The reality of religious pluralism raises some perplexing questions for the church: In what sense is Jesus Christ the universal Savior? How are adherents of non-Christian religions to be viewed? What role, if any, do non-Christian religions play in the divine economy of salvation? To what end should Christians enter into dialogue with adherents of other religions? Discussion of these questions takes place within an emerging field of study—the Christian theology of religions. The theology of religions involves the attempt, on the part of Christian theologians, to reflect upon the meaning and significance of non-Christian religious beliefs and practices from the standpoint of Christian revelation. In *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions*, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, a Finnish theologian who teaches systematic theology at Fuller Seminary, attempts to survey recent developments in this field. His purpose in this work is not to present his own constructive interpretation of religious diversity but rather to offer a neutral overview of current discussion in the theology of religions. To this end the book is divided into four sections.

In part one Kärkkäinen briefly surveys biblical testimony regarding non-Christian religions. According to Kärkkäinen, the Bible offers no clear solution to the question of Christianity’s relationship to other religions. Two themes run through the biblical

material—exclusivity and universality (not to be confused with “universalism”). With regard to the former, the Bible clearly presents Yahweh as the one true God and universal creator demanding nothing less than unequivocal devotion to him. Other religions are evaluated in light of “Jewish-Christian standards” (p. 50). Alongside this exclusivity, “a universal orientation also forms a strong strand of thought, especially in the beginning chapters of the Bible, as well as in some Old Testament prophetic passages and elsewhere” (p. 50). Although pagan religions are frequently condemned, one sometimes encounters commendable representatives of these religions in Scripture.

In part two Kärkkäinen traces historical developments regarding the relationship of Christianity and other religions. Although the Church fathers categorically rejected polytheism, several of them (including Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria) exhibited a “limited openness to other religions.” Alongside this openness, an exclusivist attitude eventually emerged which limited salvation to those who identified with the visible Church. Although this perspective can be seen in Ignatius, Cyprian, and Ambrose, it came to fullest expression in the theology of Augustine. Augustine’s exclusivism quickly became the dominant view and was ratified by subsequent Church councils in the form of the axiom: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. Despite their break with the Catholic Church, Luther and Calvin continued to affirm the Augustinian position. Although exclusivism represented the dominant position within the Church, dissenting voices occasionally arose. On the Catholic side, Pope Gregory VII, Peter Abelard, Ramon Lull, and Nicholas of Cusa expressed openness to salvation outside the Church. On the Protestant side, Ulrich Zwingli, Jacob Arminius, and John Wesley voiced similar openness to those outside the purview of the Christian witness. Kärkkäinen argues that one of the decisive factors with regard to the development of the theology of religions was the Enlightenment. Traditional Christology was questioned and revised, giving rise to classical Liberalism (Schleiermacher, von Harnack, *et al.*). Ernst Troeltsch, arguably the ideological “father of religious pluralism,” emphasized the historical relativity of all religions, and Arnold Toynbee emphasized the oneness of all religions. Christianity was increasingly viewed as one religion among others. Kärkkäinen brings his historical investigation to a close with a discussion of “fulfillment” theories that shaped Christian reflection regarding other religions from the end of the nineteenth century up to the middle of the twentieth century.

In part three Kärkkäinen surveys ecclesiastical approaches to religious pluralism among the following groups: (1) the Roman Catholic Church; (2) Anglicans/Episcopalians; (3) mainline Protestants (Lutheran, Reformed, and Methodist churches); (4) “free” churches (including Mennonites, Anabaptists, Baptists, Pentecostals, and charismatics); (5) the evangelical movement; and finally (6) the modern ecumenical movement. Several conclusions emerge from his survey. First, in light of the varying degrees of “ecclesiastical loyalty” one encounters among contemporary theologians, it is important to distinguish the teaching of various ecclesiastical groups from the teaching of its individual representatives. (Comparing parts three and four of this book, one is left with the impression that a rather sizable gap exists, in many cases, between the positions of the individual theologians surveyed and the ecclesiastical bodies they represent.) Second, in light of the ecclesiastical diversity that exists within the Christian Church, it is difficult to speak of a (singular) “Christian” theology of religions. Finally, the primary divide within the Church exists between those who hold an “inclusivist” view (“by far the most widely held, ranging from Roman Catholics to Anglicans to mainline Protestants”; p. 160) and those who affirm an “exclusivist” view (evangelicals, Pentecostals, charismatics, and independent churches). These two positions represent the “numerical giants.” While “pluralism” may reign in the academy, “exclusivist” and “inclusivist” views dominate the pews.

In part four Kärkkäinen explores the response of individual theologians to the question of the relationship between Christianity and other religions. Rather than categorizing thinkers according to the exclusivist-inclusivist-pluralist paradigm, Kärkkäinen

employs the following typology: “ecclesiocentrism,” “Christocentrism,” and “theocentrism.” “Ecclesiocentrism” represents the position that salvation is found only through Jesus Christ and that apart from the preaching of the gospel no salvation is available. Salvation is “ecclesiocentric” for this position inasmuch as it is dependent upon the preaching of the church. “Christocentrism” affirms that salvation is available in and through Christ—yet not in such a way that one must explicitly respond to the preaching of the gospel. “Christocentrism” exists in a great variety of forms. In some “Christocentric” proposals, God’s saving action is limited to the individual adherents of other religions; in other cases, God’s saving action is viewed as taking place through religious traditions. “Theocentrism” represents a pluralist viewpoint that denies any claim of superiority on the part of one religion over another. The twenty-one theologians Kärkkäinen surveys in this section are grouped according to the following typology: First, he examines early twentieth-century representatives of “ecclesiocentrism” (Karl Barth, Hendrick Kraemer, and Paul Althaus). Next, he explores Roman Catholic thinkers who embrace “Christocentrism” (Karl Rahner, Hans Küng, Jacques Dupuis, and Gavin D’Costa). Third, he examines “Christocentric” positions among mainline Protestants (Paul Tillich, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Lesslie Newbigin, and M. M. Thomas). Fourth, he surveys evangelicals who espouse a “Christocentric” approach (Norman Anderson, Clark Pinnock, and Amos Yong). Fifth, he examines several proponents of a “theocentric” approach (John Hick, Stanley Samartha, Raimundo Panikkar, and Paul Knitter). Finally, he explores evangelical proponents of “ecclesiocentrism” (Millard Erickson, Harold Netland, and Vinoth Ramachanda). Although he precinds from identifying which proposal(s) he finds most adequate biblically and theologically, Kärkkäinen identifies several critical questions to be considered in relation to these proposals.

As an introduction to the theology of religions, this text is quite helpful. Of the three perspectives from which Kärkkäinen surveys developments in this field, it is the contemporary one that receives the greatest attention (about two-thirds of the book). Under this heading he concisely summarizes the proposals of twenty-one different theologians who represent a wide variety of ecclesiastical orientations. These summaries average about eight pages in length. Thus, by reading just under 170 pages, one can receive an excellent overview of the primary proposals currently under discussion. In keeping with his explicit purpose in offering a “neutral” exposition, Kärkkäinen intentionally relates these twenty-one proposals with little critical evaluation. Although one might question his categorization of certain theologians, Kärkkäinen generally succeeds in offering an even-handed account of the twenty-one proposals he outlines. Occasionally his own views emerge through his exposition. (For example, it is clear that he finds Hick’s form of “theocentrism” highly problematic.) Another helpful feature of this book is the way Kärkkäinen underscores the pivotal role of the Enlightenment in developments in the theology of religions. He rightly claims that one should not underestimate the impact of the Enlightenment. For those wanting to do further research in the theology of religions, Kärkkäinen includes a ten-page bibliography with recommendations of texts that would be helpful for beginning students. In light of these features, *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions* represents an excellent classroom text.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of this book relates to its “neutrality.” After considering twenty-one contemporary proposals, the reader cannot help but ask, “Biblically and theologically, which of these proposals is most adequate?” In chapter thirty-nine, Kärkkäinen raises a number of critical questions regarding the proposals he has just outlined; however, given his commitment to neutrality, he does not attempt to answer them. Apart from some larger theological framework, these questions will be of limited value to the primary audience for this book (e.g. students being introduced to this field). In my judgment, Kärkkäinen could have offered his readers more guidance in evaluating competing proposals without abandoning his commitment to a descriptive stance. One way would have been to outline a list of the dozen or so most crucial theological

issues that distinguish competing proposals. The beginnings of such a list can be found early in the book when Kärkkäinen highlights two central theological axioms: the boundless mercy of God and the biblical claim that salvation is found only through Christ. Echoing a claim Gavin D'Costa made a number of years earlier, Kärkkäinen suggests that the way "one puts these two affirmations together and accounts for the built-in tension between them largely determines one's theology of religion" (pp. 26–27). Although these two axioms are important, it is clear from the discussion that follows that the differences between the twenty-one positions he outlines cannot simply be reduced to differing ways of relating these two axioms. (For example, on the basis of these two axioms one cannot account for the difference between "Christocentric" proposals that claim that non-Christian religions represent vehicles of salvation and "Christocentric" approaches that deny this claim.) In addition to these two axioms, the following factors also shape differences between competing proposals: differing views of general and special revelation, differing views of Scripture, differences in theological method (a particularly important point in light of Jacques Dupuis's claim that the theology of religions employs a new method of "theologizing"), differences in trinitarian theology (e.g. the relation between the Son and the Spirit *ad extra*), differences in soteriology, differences in anthropology (e.g. differing ways of relating nature and grace), differences in ecclesiology (e.g. relationship of the church and the kingdom), differences in Christology (e.g. "low" vs. "high" Christology), and differences in pneumatology. If a second edition is produced in the future, it might be helpful to reorganize chapter thirty-nine around these themes.

Although Kärkkäinen rightly intends to move beyond the exclusivist-inclusivist-pluralist typology, it is not clear how the ecclesiocentric-Christocentric-theocentric typology (ECT typology) he utilizes represents a substantive improvement upon the former. Insofar as one cannot be "in Christ" without also concomitantly being incorporated into Christ's body (the Church), the labels "ecclesiocentric" and "Christocentric" do not seem to be particularly helpful. Moreover, the "Christocentric" category seems too broad insofar as one can group someone like Lesslie Newbigin (whose affirmations of the possibility of salvation apart from the preaching of the gospel were quite guarded) together with Jacques Dupuis (who affirms that non-Christians religions *qua* religions represent abiding means through which God's grace and salvation are mediated). It is only by grouping such disparate positions under the "Christocentric" label that one can claim that inclusivism/Christocentrism represents "the most widely held position." To his credit, Kärkkäinen does offer some sub-groupings that attenuate this problem (e.g. distinguishing the "ecclesiocentrism" of Karl Barth from the "ecclesiocentrism" of Millard Erickson). Inasmuch as the ECT typology does not originate with Kärkkäinen, my criticisms of this typology represent more of a commentary upon problems in the broader discussion of the theology of religions than a direct reflection upon Kärkkäinen's analysis. These limitations notwithstanding, Kärkkäinen has provided us with a helpful classroom text to introduce students to this important field of study in contemporary theology.

Keith E. Johnson  
Duke University, Durham, NC