

BOOK REVIEWS

From Old Revelation to New: A Tradition-Historical & Redaction-Critical Study of Temporal Transitions in Prophetic Prediction. By Simon J. De Vries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xxiv + 383 pp., \$29.99 paper.

This volume is a sequel to the author's *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (1975), which explored the use of Biblical words for time in the prophetic literature. De Vries extends the previous discussion by exhaustively examining the use of phrases referring to the future in the prophetic corpus, phrases like "in that day," "after this" and "in the sequence of days." The study focuses on those futuristic phrases that occur at the seams of redactional activity. According to the author, these transitional phrases "offer the clue for understanding both eschatological tradition and redactional methodology" (p. xix).

In part 1 De Vries describes the meaning and use of each futuristic phrase in the prophetic corpus. These phrases are catalogued as "integral" (occurring within redaction) or "introductory" (introducing redaction), and a semantic value is assigned to each. De Vries is only concerned with the "introductory" phrases. The "integral" phrases are only used as a control over conclusions drawn about the "introductory" phrases.

Part 2 explores the function of temporal transitions in the individual prophetic books. Every use of a futuristic phrase is described for its effect on the book that it appears in, and general conclusions are drawn about the redaction of each book.

Part 3 outlines the resulting tradition-history of the prophetic books. The different temporal phrases are linked to individual levels of redaction, and developmental periods in the eschatological awareness of the Biblical writers are delineated. The redaction of the prophetic books is described as a sixfold process moving from individual oral utterance to final composition. De Vries is confident that the prophetic books, without exception, share the same six levels of redactional activity.

De Vries concludes from his analysis that prophetic redaction is typically "congruent." That is, the redactors merely extend the meaning of the text into the future. Salvation oracles remain salvific; judgment oracles remain judgmental. What this implies is integrity of meaning throughout the redactional process. The redactors shifted the reference of their texts from specific historical situations to an eschatological one but left the meaning largely unchanged.

De Vries draws the faulty conclusion that this eschatological future is not perceived as a specific point in future time but as a generic concern for history in general. De Vries does this because he takes the expression *bayyôm hahû*² as an example of the so-called "καρὸς" time mentality—that is, a view of time as opportunity rather than time as a sequence of days. Because De Vries takes this phrase to be the central redactional introduction in the corpus, he characterizes the redaction of the prophets as a move away from a specific "historical futurism" to a more vaguely defined eschatology that is concerned with the encounter between God and man rather than an attempt to (actually or fictionally) describe the future. James Barr debunked this dualistic view of time more than thirty years ago in *Biblical Words for Time* (SCM, 1962). Though he cites Barr in one endnote (without page reference), De Vries does not evidence any familiarity with Barr's discussion.

Without this fallacious concept of Israelite time-consciousness, the prophetic literature could be characterized as “eschatological” in the classical sense. That is, the prophets removed the salvific hope of Israel from the present and relocated it to a specific point in the eschatological future (*yôm Yahweh*). This agrees with what we already observe in the Pentateuch, where predictions of salvation are projected into the postexilic period (*bēʾahārit hayyāmim*—Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:29; cf. Isa 2:2).

Readers should recognize that De Vries does not intend independently to identify redaction. He assumes the accuracy of foregoing redactional studies and builds his analysis on them. Neither is the book user-friendly. Every futuristic phrase in the prophetic corpus is redundantly catalogued and described. Nevertheless, De Vries has collected and synthesized a massive amount of data and moved the discussion significantly beyond the classical model of redaction as a series of contradictory ideological reworkings.

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Daniel. By John J. Collins. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993, xxxvi + 499 pp., \$46.00.

This Hermeneia commentary is the culmination of two decades of research by Collins, who dedicates the volume to his former colleagues at Notre Dame. It is without doubt the most scholarly and thorough exposition of the mainstream approach to Daniel as a pseudonymous work, which was finally redacted during the Maccabean crisis in the second century BC. The ample bibliography (pp. 443–456) is not as extensive as that contained in John E. Goldingay’s *Daniel* (Word, 1989), which Collins praises as an indication that some evangelical scholars have turned from a rearguard defense of Daniel as an authentic prophecy of the Babylonian-Persian era (p. 26), a position that Catholic commentaries have long abandoned (p. 122).

The strengths of Collins’ commentary are numerous. An extensive general introduction (pp. 1–126) deals with the numerous problems of text, language and interpretation. Collins makes thorough use of the Qumran evidence; he makes the interesting observation that Dan 7:13, which was so crucial among Christians, was neglected at Qumran (p. 79). He also analyzes the textual variations in the Old Greek and Theodotian recensions.

Collins has been a leading scholar in analyzing the apocalyptic literature of the intertestamental era. He comments on the additions to Daniel such as Bel and the Serpent and Susanna (pp. 405–456). He is well acquainted with commentaries by Jewish, patristic, medieval, Reformation and evangelical scholars. There are illuminating excursuses on “The Four Kingdoms,” “One Like a Human Being,” “Holy Ones” and “Resurrection” and an essay on “The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament” contributed by Adela Yarbro Collins. In addition to a linguistic and historical analysis of the text, each chapter is related to its genre, setting and function.

Collins concludes that the Hebrew of Daniel “falls in the range of Second Temple Hebrew, as exemplified by Chronicles and the Dead Sea Scrolls” (p. 20). He believes that the Aramaic of Daniel “favors a date in the early Hellenistic period” (p. 17). As to K. A. Kitchen’s argument that the Persian loanwords in the Aramaic favor an earlier date, Collins responds: “However, while a late sixth-century date is compatible with the Persian loanwords, a later date is more probable, because extensive linguistic borrowing does not occur instantaneously” (p. 19).

Collins concedes that Greek words do not “necessarily demand a date after Alexander” (p. 254 n. 121). He is aware that “there is, of course, abundant evidence of

Greek influence in the East before Alexander, although evidence of Greek influence on Aramaic is sparse" (p. 20). He repeats S. R. Driver's century-old argument that *ψαλτήριον* is not attested before Aristotle and that *συμφωνία* occurs first in Plato. But as I have pointed out, the verbal root for the former occurs in Herodotus (5th century BC) and a cognate of the latter occurs in Pindar (6th century BC; see E. Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon* [Baker, 1967] 19). One should also note the fragmentary nature of our inscriptional evidence for musical terms. An important article overlooked by Collins is T. C. Mitchell, "The Music of the Old Testament," *PEQ* 124 (1992) 124–143.

To account for the puzzling mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic in Daniel, Collins posits the following scenario. He assumes that chaps. 2:4b–6 already existed in Aramaic in the pre-Maccabean period; chap. 7 was then composed in Aramaic in the Maccabean era. The Hebrew chapters (8–12) were added between 167 and 164 BC (p. 38). As both the author and the intended audience were bilingual, both languages were retained.

In conformity with the reasoning of the anti-Christian critic Porphyry (3d century AD), Collins interprets the remarkable correspondences of chap. 11 with the events of the Hellenistic era as most easily explained as a *vaticinium ex eventu*. An important article that challenges this reasoning—D. W. Gooding, "The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel and Its Implications," *TynBul* 32 (1981) 43–79—is cited by Collins in passing (p. 388 n. 173), but like other conservative scholarship (e.g. D. J. Wiseman, W. H. Shea) it is summarily dismissed.

Among the familiar objections to the historicity of Daniel that he discusses are the problems of "Darius the Mede" (pp. 30–31), the listing of Belshazzar as "the son of" Nebuchadnezzar (p. 33), and the date of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (pp. 130–131). Accurate references are viewed as touches of "historical verisimilitude" added to legends (p. 244).

Collins objects to the "anachronistic" use of so many Persian titles of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3. But inasmuch as the bulk of Old Persian texts such as the Behistun inscription and the Persepolis texts are from the 6th century and the early 5th century, why should the use of such titles be so anachronistic? Collins rightly rejects Persian influence as the background for the doctrine of resurrection in Daniel. But he is inconsistent in rejecting the Persian concept of the Gayomart for Daniel 7 (pp. 282–283) while arguing elsewhere that such late (9th century AD) Pahlavi materials should not be dismissed so facily as too late (p. 163).

Like many other scholars Collins hails the Qumran "Prayer of Nabonidus" as the basis of the story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness in chap. 4 (p. 32), despite the acknowledged differences between the two texts (p. 218). In contrast to other Jewish apocalyptic writings such as *I Enoch*, Collins concludes: "Daniel shows little interest in the movement of the stars, which was regarded as the primary expertise of the Chaldeans in the Hellenistic world, and there is no consultation of omens" (p. 139). See, however, Al Wolters, "The Riddle of the Scales in Daniel 5," *HUCA* 62 (1991) 155–177, for possible references to Babylonian astrological elements.

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Amos, Obadiah, Jonah. By Billy K. Smith and Frank S. Page. The New American Commentary 19b. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, 304 pp., \$27.99.

In differing ways the books of Amos and Jonah have attracted considerable scholarly interest and discussion. Much of this is reflected in Smith's treatment of Amos

and Obadiah and Page's study of Jonah. In keeping, however, with a commentary series intended primarily for pastors rather than professional scholars, their discussion majors on the exposition of the text of each book. To this end introductory issues are treated with relative brevity: Eleven pages are assigned to Amos, six to Obadiah, and twenty to Jonah.

While their discussion of the text is markedly conservative—Page, for example, argues that the book of Jonah reports historical events—it is not obscurantist. Both writers are clearly aware of alternative approaches to these books, although they limit their interaction with other scholars in order to concentrate on exegeting the received text. Their commentary is reasonably detailed and up-to-date, drawing on the best insights of recent scholarly writings in English in order to clarify the meaning of the Biblical text. Little attempt, however, is made to interact with those who discuss at length and in considerable detail the process by which the books of Amos, Obadiah and Jonah were composed. Rather, Smith and Page accept the unity of the books they discuss and interpret each section of the text in the light of the whole. Such an approach is methodologically sound, avoiding the dangers inherent in assuming that modern scholars can recover with some certainty the different phases thought to underlie the composition of a Biblical text. Many readers will be relieved that both authors focus on these books in their final form, rather than on hypothetical stages of composition.

Although Smith and Page offer brief observations regarding the application of the Biblical text to contemporary readers, the commentaries in this volume are much stronger on exegesis than application. Given the intended readership it is perhaps regrettable that further guidance was not supplied in order to help pastors and preachers expound the relevance of these ancient books to modern believers.

While this volume is generally very readable, it is somewhat unfortunate that the opening section on Amos, "The Historical Setting," should prove to be the exception. I hope that prospective readers will not be put off too quickly. As regards their discussion of the books of Amos, Obadiah and Jonah, only rarely did I feel that the treatment was inadequate or failed to give sufficient emphasis to some particular aspect of the text.

In a series designed to enable the Christian minister or Bible student to understand and expound the Scriptures the present volume must be judged an excellent contribution. While professional Biblical scholars are likely to look for much more from a commentary, for the busy pastor the overall depth of treatment is probably about right. Smith and Page are to be warmly commended for providing a volume that will clearly give interested readers a deeper understanding and appreciation of these Biblical books.

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The New Testament of the Inclusive Language Bible. Notre Dame: Crossroads, 1994, vii + 297 pp., \$19.95. *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University, 1995, xxii + 535 pp., n.p.

The publication of the New Revised Standard Version (1989) inaugurated a new era in Bible translation by endeavoring to produce a translation of Scripture without gender bias with regard to humanity. Two recent volumes follow suit but go beyond the selective policy of the NRSV by applying inclusive language to both divine

and human characters and by eliminating pejorative references to race, color and religion.

Crossroads' *Inclusive Language New Testament* is marked by thrift in both style and format. The translation is generally straightforward and economical, avoiding technical terminology. It falls short of high literary or poetic quality but remains clear and understandable, and the wording is not unfelicitous. As in nearly all modern translations, paragraphs are divided by theme rather than verse. Verse numbers are printed in superscript in the text and descriptive titles appear in bold print at the head of paragraphs.

The volume is a no-frills NT. There are no "helps" common to most Bibles: no maps, charts or tables, no introductions to the various books of the NT, no footnotes, annotations or variant readings. Readers are given no information concerning why one reading is chosen over another, or even that variant readings are possible. "When in doubt, leave out" seems to be the rule with variant readings (e.g. the omission of John 5:4 or the doxology of the Lord's prayer in Matt 6:8). Occasionally, however, questionable variants are inexplicably included (e.g. Luke 22:43–44).

A one-page foreword justifies the translation along gender lines. The publishers accept the "imperatives that require us to change the language of the Bible" so as not to "perpetuate the inequalities between the sexes that existed in earlier societies" (p. vi). The foreword leaves unaddressed, however, the significant and subtle issues of language, culture and theology, and this is a serious omission given the agenda of the volume.

Oxford University Press' *New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version* is a finely bound volume intended for use in public liturgy. Not only does it include the Psalms in addition to the NT, but it also has a 15-page general introduction explaining its major differences from the NRSV and its rationale for inclusiveness. The text is handsomely presented with topic headings, variant readings where appropriate and superscript verse numbers in the text. Especially welcome is the sensitivity to hymns and creeds embedded in the NT, which are printed in verse format.

Like the Crossroads volume, Oxford's translation attempts to render negligible all references to gender, disabilities and racial differences. It not only attempts to anticipate developments in the English language but to accelerate them (pp. viii–ix). All language offenses, real or imagined, are drawn, quartered—and neutered. Jesus is no longer the Son (of God), but the "Child." References to "Lord" are severely diminished. Kingdom becomes "dominion"; King, "ruler" or "sovereign"; Son of Man, "the Human One." Devils and angels are emasculated to avoid either vilifying or glorifying men. References to darkness are translated out to avoid pejorative connotations to dark-skinned peoples. "Right hand" is rendered "might and power" to avoid injury to lefties or leftists. John's frequent references to "the Jews" as opponents of Jesus have been replaced by "the religious authorities" in hopes of undermining anti-Semitic uses of the NT. Children need no longer obey their parents (Col 3:20; Eph 6:1), only "heed" them; and wives should be "committed to" their husbands (Eph 5:22; 1 Pet 3:1, 5), rather than submissive to them. In a fair shake to parenting, the names of wives have been added to the genealogies, although happily names have not been invented where unknown.

The translators of both volumes follow their methodological presuppositions with puritanical zeal. Given the "political correctness" parameters, it is not surprising that the translations are straitjacketed with idiosyncrasies. Oxford's translation of John 5:26–27 reads: "For just as God has life in Godself, so God has granted the same thing to the Child, and has given the Child authority to execute judgment, because of being the Human One. Do not be astonished at this." Who could help but be astonished? The

language neuterers now make an additional step of exegesis necessary: The fixation with leveling out differences must first be decoded before the meaning of the text can be considered.

Under the goal of avoiding male-dominated language, some changes are of course understandable. Both translations render “the fathers [of Israel]” as “the ancestors” (Rom 9:5), which is a fair circumlocution. But at other points, particularly when applied to Jesus and God, the changes are invariably artificial and erroneous. At the head of the list is the dreaded “F”-word. To get around calling God “Father,” Oxford opts for a eugenic hyphen, “Father-Mother.” Whereas “Father” communicates God’s nearness to humanity, “Father-Mother,” a nonhuman hybrid, emphasizes God’s distance and otherness (as the translators intended). In the Crossroads version, Jesus and believers must address God as “My dear Parent” (e.g. Luke 22:42; Gal 4:6). That reduces a profundity to silliness. Not only does no one speak this way, but “parent” is too objective and sociological for the intimacy of Jesus’ (and believers’) relationship with the Father.

Sensitivity to supposed gender issues often results in insensitivity or indifference to theological issues. In the Crossroads version of Matt 28:19, believers are baptized “in the name of God and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Apart from the puzzle why “Son” is allowable but “Father” is not, it is a theological error to attribute deity to the Father and not to the Son and Holy Spirit. The Oxford rendering calls for baptizing “in the name of the Father-Mother and of the beloved Child and of the Holy Spirit”—which sounds more like a dysfunctional family than the Holy Trinity.

Similar changes flag down the reader on every page. Anyone with an ear for good English will find most of them contrived and trite. Those with a knowledge of the original languages will be alarmed by the revisionism involved. Such changes may appear innocuous, but the overall effect is a decidedly demoted Christology. Take the hymn of Col 1:15–20, where both versions resort to substituting “(Jesus) Christ” for “the Son (of God).” The translators effectively substitute a limited Christological title (“Christ”) for a fuller one (“Son”), resulting in an obvious error. Jesus Christ—an historical person—did not “create everything in heaven and on earth” (Col 1:16). That was the work of the preexistent Son—just as the original says. The translators are willing to sacrifice correct Christology rather than offend readers with a gender twitch.

Both versions are single-agenda translations, with all the narrowness that attends it. What, for example, is gained in the Crossroads version by substituting “Sovereign” for “Lord” in Romans 10:9 (“Jesus is Sovereign”)? “Sovereign” carries no less sense of domination, and perhaps no less sense of masculinity. Inevitably, the hypersensitivity to one issue results in blindness to others. One is surprised, for example, to continue to see *sarx* rendered as “flesh” in both versions. Would not “mortal life” (or some such) be a significant improvement over the conventional though inadequate “flesh”?

The attempt to satisfy every language bias is an endless treadmill. How parochial and timebound these translations will appear when the animal-rights folks take their turn with the Bible, and theirs will look the same when the pantheists have their day. Perhaps the greatest core of radical revisionism is the inevitable depersonalization of God. The resultant artificial renderings and concomitant theological errors augur that volumes such as these will be relegated to the curiosities of America’s pluralistic religious spectrum. It is hard to imagine them playing a meaningful role in the Church (remember *The Cotton Patch New Testament?*). Nothing promises to revive sagging enrollments in NT Greek courses as much as efforts such as these.

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Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism. By Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee. Studies and Documents 45. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, \$39.99.

Although some might quibble whether Eldon Epp and Gordon Fee are in a class by themselves regarding matters text-critical, it is indisputable that—as Bum Phillips once said of running back Earl Campbell—whatever class they are in, it takes little time to call the roll. These two North American scholars have followed in Colwell's train: They have both refined the methods employed (especially Fee) and have criticized the guild from within (especially Epp). Their presence in the field of NT textual criticism is ubiquitous, and deservedly so, for their judgments are consistently sober.

The book has 17 chapters (seven by Epp, ten by Fee) organized under six different headings: General and Historical Overview (two chapters), Definitions (two chapters), Critique of Current Theory and Method (six chapters), Establishing Textual Relationships (two chapters), Papyri and Text-Critical Method (two chapters) and Method and Use of Patristic Evidence (three chapters). A bibliography and complete set of indexes conclude the tome. The beginner will gain much from the introductory chapters, as well as the six chapters on theory; seasoned scholars will benefit the most from the latter chapters on method.

There is almost nothing new in this volume. Sixteen of the seventeen chapters have been published elsewhere (chap. 4, "On the Types, Classification, and Presentation of Textual Variation" [Fee], being the exception), though not all the original publications have been easily accessible. Chapter 10, "The Majority Text and the Original Text of the New Testament" (Fee), is the only chapter substantially reworked, being a collation and revision of four separate articles. Although the essays were published separately, the present volume is generally coherent with few lacunae.

The value of a book such as this can be measured in the classroom: In an elective course I teach on NT textual criticism, most of these essays have been part of the core reading material for years. No one can understand the current climate of textual criticism without reading Epp and Fee. To have several of their articles compiled in one place is a great convenience; that they are in the Eerdmans' Studies and Documents series is a testimony to their tremendous worth. This is a book both for the specialist and the interested *Neutestamentler*.

I do have a couple of niggly criticisms, however. First, the book could have been organized a bit differently. For example, although "P⁷⁵, P⁶⁶, and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria" (Fee) is in the section on Papyri and Text-Critical Method, it could just as easily have been placed under Critique of Current Theory and Method. This essay demolishes the early Alexandrian recensional view that is vital for majority-text theorists (namely, if P⁷⁵ is not recensional, then its high agreement with Vaticanus suggests that they both followed "a 'relatively pure' line of descent from the original text" [p. 272]). By placing the chapter where it is, many neophytes to the discipline will overlook a valuable contribution to theory. Second, some of the essays were dialogical originally and now we only hear one side (e.g. Epp on the interlude in NT textual criticism, Fee on the majority-text theory). The present format partially skews the debate and, to some degree, lacks continuity.

We conclude this review by noting an unusual feature of this work. One of Eldon Epp's most provocative essays is conspicuous by its absence: "New Testament Textual Criticism in America: Requiem for a Discipline" (*JBL* 98 [1979] 94–98). It is largely to Epp's and Fee's credit that this essay is no longer accurate.

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Wealth As Peril and Obligation: The New Testament on Possessions. By Sondra Ely Wheeler. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xviii + 158 pp., \$14.99 paper.

In a day when at least many American Christians have far more material possessions than they really need, when a “prosperity gospel” is being preached in some Christian circles and when many in the world are living at a poverty level, Sondra Ely Wheeler’s book on the teaching of the NT regarding wealth and material possessions is a much-needed contribution. Her book begins with a critical review of several approaches to the use of the NT in solving ethical issues generally. Then, following her own proposal for dealing with the text, she deals specifically and at length in separate chapters with Mark 10:17–31, Luke 12:22–34, 2 Cor 8:1–15 and Jas 5:1–6. In a separate chapter she deals briefly with the teachings regarding material wealth and possessions in the rest of the NT. She lists on pp. 118–119, along with the above references, the other NT passages that, in her estimation, have a “direct and specific” relevance to the issue of wealth and possessions.

Wheeler seems to take an undue amount of time to get to the main topic of her writing, but once one gets to chap. 3 and the material dealing with the specific texts of the NT, it is worth the waiting. At numerous spots throughout the exegetical part of her book there are “nuggets” of truth and applications of truth that deserve much meditation and application for the contemporary Church (see e.g. pp. 63, 66 and 85). She gives her reader an excellent exegesis of 2 Cor 8:1–15. I wonder why 2 Corinthians 9 was omitted from the discussion here. The author uses her own translations of the key passages with which she deals and indicates that they are “literal to a fault.” Actually they could have been even more literal, if literalness is an advantage to her work.

When dealing with the gospel narratives, it would have been helpful if she had utilized in a greater way the parallel passages in the other gospels. She almost implies at times that these are contradictory rather than complementary.

The author’s questions relating the NT’s teaching on wealth to contemporary church congregations and individual Christians specifically is worth the price of the book (pp. 138–142). One cannot read these thoughtfully without doing some serious personal heartsearching. With this stress on moral questions, however, one wishes that she had not played down “the moral rules” and also “the ethical principles” found in the NT. They are there and are intended to be taken as such.

Wheeler’s position can be summarized well by the following statement: Wealth, for the Christian, is not a sinful thing necessarily but a perilous one.

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A Guide to the Study of Greco-Roman and Jewish and Christian History and Literature. By Philip Walker Jacobs. Lanham: University Press of America, 1994, xi + 119 pp., \$24.50 paper.

Have you ever been in the middle of study and wondered about the dates for Epictetus or Melito of Sardis? If you want a simple chronology outlining a few pertinent facts about important persons and authors between Ben Sira and the emperor Valerian (200 BC to AD 259), this volume may be for you. The chronology’s format is consistent throughout: Pages on the left contain entries under “Jewish and Christian History and Literature.” People and authors from “Greco-Roman History and Litera-

ture" are on the right. This distinction sometimes appears more geographic (Palestine versus Rome) than religious or cultural.

A concise presentation of such a massive and diverse amount of material inevitably comes at the expense of certain oversimplifications. Examples include the sequence of events leading up to the Maccabean revolt, the founding of the Qumran community in 160 BC by Essenes and the order and dates of Paul's letters. It is disappointing to find neither some indication of controversial areas nor a footnote acknowledging which scholars Jacobs follows on these and other points. The brief outline also contains some misnomers. Antiochus III did not defeat the "Egyptians" but Ptolemy V in 200 BC. The "Latin rhetorician" Quintilian was from Spain. "1 Enoch, chapters 92–105" should appear as the "Epistle of Enoch," an extant work beginning at 1 Enoch 91 and perhaps written after 200 BC.

Bibliographies of "References" and "English Translations" list mostly older works and editions. Indexes of literature and persons are carefully done and add to this volume's usefulness. All in all, this *Guide* is a good place for students to get their bearings in the ancient world before journeying further. As such it can assist students, pastors and scholars alike.

A final comment is for the publisher. When more complete narrative histories sell for about the same price, how can one justify handicapping a short paperback with such a steep price? It is unfortunate that Jacobs' *Guide*, being similar in size and purpose to Metzger's *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek* (still \$5.65), is not more accessible to its intended student audience.

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Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament. Edited by M. Eugene Boring, Klaus Berger and Carsten Colpe. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995, 633 pp., \$69.95.

Some commentaries provide little more than the author's opinions *vis-à-vis* those of other authors, rendering such works of little value for those outside their particular theological traditions. Most users of commentaries already read the Bible and (one hopes) can read texts in context, trace themes through Biblical books, and so forth. Where most readers find themselves more dependent on other sources is in the relatively unfamiliar terrain of ancient language and culture. Especially where such readers are NT students, they will find the *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* an invaluable tool.

One important advantage of this commentary is that it includes a breadth of sources that most NT scholars, even those proficient in Greco-Roman antiquity in general, have not read. While many NT scholars read Apuleius, Aristotle, Diogenes Laertius or Epictetus, for example, how many read what remains of Alciphron, Apollodorus, Callimachus or Eunapius?

Pace Crossan *et al.*, the NT clearly arose in a distinctively Jewish environment. Nevertheless, Judaism in the time of Jesus and the apostles was part of the larger Greco-Roman culture and even the least Hellenistic streams of early Jewish thought (e.g. the Dead Sea scrolls or 1 Enoch, versus Josephus, Aristeeas or Philo) bear some relation to the larger Mediterranean world of which they are a part. Those accustomed to the older paradigm (Greco-Roman versus Jewish) might expect this work to include little Jewish material, but while that is not its central focus, the commentary does include significant Jewish material.

An inevitable weakness of the commentary's use of sources is the question of where to stop. Scholars will inevitably disagree as to which texts are most relevant (especially in the gospels, I would have preferred more Jewish sources than appear). Comparing my own research file of perhaps 80,000 index cards, I find hundreds of sources that the commentators could have reproduced and did not (for which those frightened by the already high price of the book might be grateful), sources that in many cases I think illumine the text more fruitfully than sources they have reproduced. At the same time, I find in this volume many sources that I do not already have and I appreciate the book providing not only the citations but the translations (generally with sufficient context for basic comparisons), which I can peruse and evaluate directly.

Another possible weakness of the work is its focus on texts rather than background in general, which limits other available sources of background; an excavation report would hardly be appropriate in such a volume. This weakness stems not from a lack of sensitivity to other sources, however, but from the limitation of the chosen genre, a limitation that is more than matched by the breadth of sources it allows the editors to provide.

The commentators also expect the reader to be familiar enough with the ancient sources to make essential decisions as to their relative value. Thus, while conceding that a particular Persian text is late, they suggest that the traditions may reach to the first century (*Left Ginza* 3.19); many of us will find that suggestion of its antiquity unpersuasive. Most American scholars will probably question dating the *Corpus Hermeticum* to the first century AD (e.g. p. 374). Some later texts probably do reflect little direct Christian influence, but Nock, Yamauchi and others have shown the precariousness of treating gnostic, Manichean and similar texts as indicating primarily pre-Christian traditions. Abundant citations from earlier philosophers, Philo, Plutarch, the Wisdom of Solomon and other relevant sources, however, far outweigh these more questionable texts, and most readers familiar enough with the sources to know how to use them will also be prepared to evaluate the relevance of these sources.

The editors provide important disclaimers and qualifications in their introductions that can help guard the reader against abusing the sources for what Sandmel and others have called "parallelomania." They plainly acknowledge that some sources reflect merely language common to the milieu, some may reflect coincidence, others reflect a common source and only a few necessarily reflect direct dependence (see most fully the helpfully nuanced survey on pp. 23–32). The editors append notes to their quotations evaluating the degree of relevance (usually also providing sufficient data for those with different theological or exegetical presuppositions to evaluate their evaluation). After providing appropriate cautions, they leave the final decisions of relevance to the reader, which makes the volume useful regardless of one's personal theological or exegetical proclivities.

This work presupposes sufficient competence in critically applying cultural context to the Bible; thus it would not prove directly useful to a popular audience. In contrast to my own *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, however, which could include few of my sources because of its more popular focus, this work will provide sources and translations for scholarly work. Other commentaries can warn readers when to consult additional texts not cited here, but this commentary provides an invaluable resource. Although the price of the book may deter many individuals from purchasing it (the price is unavoidable in view of permissions necessary for translations), at bare minimum it unquestionably belongs in Bible college, Christian college and seminary libraries.

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Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine. By Tal Ilan. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, 270 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Only rarely does one find a book that fills a niche and makes a distinctive contribution to any subject that has generated much ink; Tal Ilan's book, however, is such a work. This Israeli scholar provides a fresh analysis of the sources, including the most current archaeological data from Israel, and she avoids imposing modern ideological prejudices on the texts. She covers fairly all the central issues discussed in the sources (Jewish women as daughters, wives, virgins, menstruants, bearers of children, objects of male desire; plus issues like head coverings, adultery, divorce, inheritance, women's occupations, women's learning of Torah and prostitution).

Ilan opens with an excellent survey of previous scholarship, helpful both for those familiar and for those not yet acquainted with scholarship in this area. She critiques those who misrepresent Judaism as a foil for Christianity, including not only the earlier writings of Swidler but, to a lesser extent, even Schüssler Fiorenza in this category. (Her critiques are gentle but to the point. Although my conclusions from the data were roughly similar to Ilan's, after reading her work there are a few paragraphs in my own book on Paul and women I wish I could rewrite.) But Ilan is evenhanded in her rejection of all polemic; she rejects the anti-Christian polemic of other scholars no less insistently.

Her discussion of the sources reveals considerable methodological rigor on date and geography, though in practice she proves much more willing to use later rabbinic sources than some North American NT scholars who (fearing their date) ignore rabbinic sources altogether. I would have preferred a broader geographical context that put the narrower issues into their Mediterranean context (e.g. Boaz Cohen's comparison of Mishnaic and Roman law), but her method is important for separating the distinctly Palestinian from Diaspora practices; without this, one could not even determine which elements were genuinely common to both.

She cites rabbinic texts much more than her methodological introduction would lead one to expect (e.g. pp. 105–107), but this preponderance of rabbinic material is probably inevitable given the sheer bulk of that corpus *vis-à-vis* our other sources. Still, she probably assumes too much about the rabbis at points—for instance, treating the “reforms” of first-century Pharisaic schools as if they changed society's practices (pp. 90–91) when in practice even second-century rabbis were often ignored. She often cites later texts, sometimes for illustrative value, sometimes because no earlier evidence is available or sometimes to supplement arguments established from earlier sources. Her approach in this respect is reasonable; she has introduced the dates of her sources earlier in the book and can expect her readers to recall the respective weight of various sources. Her methodological caution carries into her conclusion: The dominant extant sources of the period reflect a more Pharisaic bias and the perspectives of people of means. Thus after representing our extant sources as accurately as possible, Ilan admits that some questions still remain unanswered.

One may question some of her interpretations of data. For instance, she affords greater credibility (albeit cautiously) than many scholars allow to the rumor that Agrippa II was having an incestuous affair with Berenice. She attributes Josephus' negative views of women partly to his own bias; yet while Josephus certainly is more negative than many (including the rabbis), some of his statements (“as the law also says”) indicate that he expected many fellow Judeans to agree with him. That Josephus mentions prominent women particularly in connection with Nicolaus' source concerning the royal court may in fact be partly because women in the royal court did exercise more freedom than most other women. But in the end, such concerns in matters of detail are minor and easily swallowed up by the fair perspective and balanced conclusions of the book as a whole.

Orthodox Christians will bristle at some of her interpretations (e.g. her openness to rabbinic tradition's explanation of the virgin birth story—i.e. that Jesus was illegitimate), but these moments are rare and almost always dependent on the arguments of secondary sources—usually liberal Christian NT scholars. Those of us who disagree on such points will nevertheless find the book a valuable source of information. NT scholars will be especially interested in her conclusions on women's study of Torah: Women in educated households knew basic *halakah* on domestic matters but did not display the formal Torah training available to men.

Ilan's work is the most thorough and nuanced work on the subject, excellent in its command of the primary and secondary sources. She rightly critiques both NT scholars and Talmudists for the comparatively narrow fields of data with which they feel comfortable; but for all those whose competence in the early Jewish sources is less than what it should be, Ilan is the best place to start.

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Luke: Interpreter of Paul, Critic of Matthew. By Eric Franklin. JSNTSup 92. Sheffield: JSOT, 1994, 414 pp., \$63.00.

The present work is a continuation of Franklin's positions as elaborated in his 1975 book, *Christ the Lord*. In that book he countered Conzelmann's conclusions regarding the delay of the *parousia* and Luke's scheme of salvation history. Franklin argued that the *parousia* was imminent and that Luke's understanding of salvation history was not three separate periods but rather one continuous period consisting of three interrelated stages. In *Luke*, Franklin expands and clarifies his understanding of these topics. In addition he addresses other issues from his earlier work—namely, the importance of the ascension, the Church as the renewed Israel, the incorporation of Gentiles into the Church and the continuation of Jewish pervasivity.

An important concept that clearly comes to the forefront in reading this book is continuity. Franklin emphasizes that Jesus' coming fulfilled Judaism and its institutions (e.g. the Law). The idea of continuity influenced the creative manner in which the evangelist used his sources and was the basis on which he sought to promote unity between the Jewish and Gentile sectors of the Church.

The book is divided into three main parts: (1) Luke and Paul, (2) Luke and Matthew and (3) Luke's use of Matthew. The first part is devoted to demonstrating how Luke "reinterpreted" his hero Paul so that the apostle could speak to the evangelist's generation. The apostle we see in Acts is not the real Paul (as found in his letters). For instance, the historical Paul would not have accepted the apostolic decree as found in Acts 15 (p. 62). The coming of Christ demanded the leaving behind of a large part of his Jewish identity (p. 74). For Paul, the cross (which Franklin believes Luke downplays) is a point of discontinuity between Israel and Christianity (p. 78). The newness of the age of salvation led Paul to see no real significance in the Law. Franklin concludes that for Paul it is either Christ or the Law (Gal 2:19).

On the other hand is Luke, probably a God-fearer (p. 159), who did not have nearly the degree of emotional investment in Judaism as Paul. He understands the Christ event as simply the fulfillment of OT expectations. As Franklin discusses in chap. 2, the Law signals that the Church had its origin in the people of Israel and while the Law was not needed regarding the matter of salvation, it should not be considered as obsolete (p. 54). The Church is the renewed or eschatological Israel and must treat

Israel's traditions with respect. Franklin's Luke saw continuity in Jesus' coming and sought to use Paul as a means of drawing Christians together (chap. 6).

Part 2 consists of comparisons Franklin makes between Luke and Matthew. The author's main thesis in this section is that both evangelists address similar life settings (possibly the same setting, chap. 18) but offer different responses to the issues and problems. One of the main challenges confronting both communities was Jewish rejection of Jesus the Messiah. Franklin views that Matthew perceives his Church as the new Israel, an entity that replaces Israel in salvation history and excludes this people from future redemption (p. 223). In contrast the third gospel at least leaves the door "ajar" (p. 222) so that there is hope that Israel will again partake of God's covenanted promises.

This irenic spirit of Luke is also found in Franklin's discussion of the Pharisees (chap. 8) and the Law (chap. 9). Luke's Pharisees are much less hostile to Jesus than the sect as described in the first gospel (p. 194). As such, Luke affirms his position that Israel is not permanently excluded from the kingdom of God. Moreover, while Franklin understands that Luke attaches some importance to the Law, the third evangelist stops short of Matthew's "higher righteousness" (p. 202). The Law, as interpreted by the Messiah, continues to influence Matthew's Church. This Matthean position declares the Jewish understanding of Law to be illegitimate, a thought quite contrary to Luke's beliefs.

Unlike Matthew, Luke does not see Jesus indwelling the Church (p. 275). The ascension is the key event of redemption for Luke, for it establishes Jesus as both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), demonstrates the fulfillment of God's promises (p. 250) and promotes the hope of an early *parousia* (p. 259). However, Christ rules over the Church only in an indirect manner, through the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the ascension proves Jesus' coming brought Israel's hopes to completion and extended God's purpose (as realized in the renewed Israel) to include the Gentiles.

Franklin expands his argument in part 3, where he offers that the gospel of Matthew was actually a source of Luke. By arguing against the traditional acceptance of Q and showing how Luke could have freely reworked the first gospel in order to promote his own theological viewpoint, Franklin strives to convince his readers that Luke was aware of the gospel of Matthew. Simply put, the third gospel is only a "revision" of Mark but a "reaction" to the first gospel. Mark was Luke's primary source, one that was freely handled yet highly respected (p. 313). Matthew, on the other hand, was a secondary source of Luke, a "recent find" and the impetus for the publication of the third gospel (p. 314). The third evangelist had not liked Matthew's response to his (or their) community, especially regarding the latter's view that the Jewish people were excluded from salvation and the Law was to be understood contrary to the beliefs of Paul. Such conclusions led Luke to rework and redirect much of Matthew's outlook.

Franklin endeavors to demonstrate that Luke's sermon on the plain (6:17-49; chap. 14), his central section (9:51-19:27; chap. 15) and his infancy narrative (1:5-2:57; chap. 16) reflect the content and order of the gospel of Matthew (p. 341). We are led to see that Luke is not a slave to his sources, but rather exercises creative freedom in writing. Franklin's findings culminate in the position that the third gospel was not only a reaction to Matthew (chap. 17), but was in fact written to the same community as the first gospel (chap. 18). Though Luke was probably no more than an outsider to Matthew's Church (p. 388), he writes his gospel as a correction to Matthew's response to the community.

Franklin offers us a clearly written and well-thought-out book. His arguments are presented in an orderly fashion and one of his strengths is his anticipation of and

response to the many counterarguments that arise in critical studies of the Bible. I applaud his use of the historical-critical method (p. 33) as a means of attempting to place Luke's theology well within the bounds of his day.

Moreover, Franklin provides a fresh approach to understanding Luke as one who handles his sources creatively. Franklin's conclusions confront those who are reluctant to see Luke as no more than an evangelist who simply passes on material he receives (p. 282). Franklin's understanding of Luke is helpful, especially in his incisive discourse on the evangelist's reworking of Matthew (part 3). I find this section to be the most beneficial, forcing me to at least reconsider some of my positions regarding the synoptic problem.

However, with any work of this size there are some concerns that need to be addressed. Stylistically, the reading would have been more pleasant had the chapters been subdivided into sections headed by subtitles. More importantly, Franklin has come up short on two main points. First, he is not convincing regarding the distance between Luke and the historical Paul on the question of the Law. Galatians 3:19, taken together with 1 Cor 9:23–25, suggests to me that the apostle, while not thrilled with the apostolic decree, would have stopped short of denigrating Israel's covenantal self-consciousness (p. 71). This is an important point to consider since Franklin's understanding of Paul and the Law undergirds section 1 and parts of section 2.

Second, Franklin's conjecture that Luke's gospel was also addressed to Matthew's Church goes too far. I remain skeptical of Franklin's insistence that Luke—not Matthew—saw the Church as the true Israel. Matthew 10:5; 15:24 lead me to view Matthew's Church as calling Israel to come into the fold of salvation. In addition, Jesus' words in 23:39 leave open the door for Israel to come in and suggests that the Church considered itself the true Israel. Why seek Israel if you indeed are the new Israel? Better to have stopped at seeing Luke use Matthew in addressing a different community than that of the first evangelist.

These criticisms, however, should not prevent one from reading and digesting Franklin's book. While he may have overstated his case on Paul, Franklin has advanced Lucan studies in several areas, not the least which is Luke's redactional skills. In addition, his third section throws some interesting light on the question of the sources lying behind the synoptic gospels. Such discussion will provide material for future debate. Lucan studies owes a debt of gratitude to Franklin for such an insightful work.

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A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles. Vol. 1: Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts I–XIV. By C. K. Barrett. ICC. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994, xxv + 693 pp., \$69.95.

This magisterial volume on the first half of Acts crowns a life of erudition. It reveals a breadth of learning from ancient and modern sources and a depth of exegetical insight that we have come to expect from this consummate practitioner of the historical-critical method. As the first volume in this series, Cranfield's *Romans*, immediately established itself as the standard of reference in the English-speaking world for the exegesis of Romans, so this work is destined to do for Acts.

After a 25-page section filled with abbreviation lists for bibliography consistently cited throughout the text and climaxed with a map of the eastern Mediterranean

world listing all the provinces with boundaries, ethnic regions and places relevant to the events in Acts, Barrett presents a 58-page "Preliminary Introduction." The writer immediately tells the reader he intends to deal with traditional introductory matters after he has dealt exegetically with Acts. What he does evaluate in detail is the manuscript evidence for the text of Acts and the external evidence for authorship. He asserts that Acts' internal evidence calls into question the traditional identification: Luke, the physician, the traveling companion of Paul. His positive conclusion is that Acts was probably known in the first half of the second century.

Returning to Acts itself, Barrett discusses the author's sources and plan in writing. He asserts that because of narrative inconsistencies and historical inaccuracies the writer was not an eyewitness to any of the events of Acts 1–14, but received them second- or third-hand. He did use sources and always tried to rely on information to write up his account. Any composing he did should not be viewed as a production of fiction, but rather a filling in of details necessitated by the nature of his sources. Chapters 1–7 and 13–28 present one strand of narrative, while chaps. 8–12 give us four. The "Preliminary Introduction" concludes with an outline of Acts 1–14, which has nine major sections containing a total of 37 continuously numbered subsections. The former are repeated in the body of the commentary only as headings, while the latter are the commentary units.

Each commentary unit contains the writer's English translation; a list of bibliography, mainly periodical articles and essays, keyed by abbreviation either to the master list or to other commentary sections; an introduction to the unit as a whole and then a verse-by-verse, even word-by-word or phrase-by-phrase, commentary on the text. Following his longstanding practice, inspired by his Durham forebear, J. B. Lightfoot, Barrett's verse-by-verse commentary uses not footnotes but incorporates all primary and secondary references into the text itself.

Barrett's translation stands midway between the freedom of the idiomatic translation (e.g. NIV) and the discipline of a formal correspondence rendering (e.g. NKJV). He footnotes other major ecumenical and Roman Catholic English translations, though not versions commonly used by North American evangelicals: NIV or NASB.

The introduction to each commentary unit discusses matters of literary structure and analysis, then considers sources, the historicity of the content and finally Luke's theological purposes. The commentator's assessment of the evidence stands squarely in the mainstream of the historical-critical method, building on its "assured results."

The ample space allotment means that the verse-by-verse commentary sections give consistent attention to the full range of exegetical concerns: text-critical, grammatical and literary, historical and lexical, theological and sometimes applicational via the history of interpretation. No issue of even minor importance for a full and precise understanding of Acts escapes Barrett's exacting hold on things ancient and modern.

The commentary's strengths and weakness should be discussed in three areas: preliminary introduction, documentation and methodology/results. The commentator is to be commended both for the comprehensive way the external evidence is presented and for the desire to develop the conclusions to introductory matters inductively from the exegesis. What mars the approach, however, is the basically skeptical stance adopted concerning the author's connection with or access to detailed information about events (pp. 50–51). This grows out of the discovery of a nest of historical difficulties that the Acts narrative allegedly generates. Many of these difficulties show themselves to be more apparent than real, if a "hermeneutics of goodwill" and a legitimate practice of harmonization is pursued.

The commentary contains ancient source documentation with text when discussing background parallels and historical problems. The reader has what he needs for

assessing the commentator's analysis of such material. The only drawback is the consistent rendering of the sources in their original language, especially Latin, which is not very serviceable for North American readers, who generally lack a classical education. Secondary source documentation is also ample. What other commentary contains a listing of eleven explanations of the significance of the Son of Man's position: "standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:59; pp. 384–385)? Both the twentieth-century scholarship on Acts up to the 1980s, as well as key figures in the history of interpretation (Augustine, Bede, Calvin) are consistently and appropriately cited. Again the purposeful retention of quotes in Latin, German or French means that they are lost on many North American readers. British evangelicals such as F. F. Bruce and I. H. Marshall are consistently referenced. The commentary, however, enters into less dialogue with North American evangelical scholars, e.g. Richard Longenecker. There is little or no interaction with North American Lukan studies, particularly volumes produced over the years by the SBL Luke-Acts Seminar and its members.

Barrett's rigorous, yet deft, application of the historical-critical method to Acts produces a curious mixture of results, some supportive of, some antithetical to a conservative evangelical inerrantist understanding of Acts. Many times he is quite moderate, even appreciative, in his estimate of Acts' historical value. Concerning Acts' report of Paul's conversion he says, "In essentials, the three Acts narratives agree with one another and with evidence of the epistles" (p. 443). He eschews a use of reason in dissecting the text that leads to a mechanical understanding of Luke's redactional procedure. On Acts 6:8–15 he comments, "It would be a mistake to suggest that Luke has combined sources in the manner of a jig-saw puzzle so that they may be disentangled and rearranged so as to produce two distinct stories" (p. 321). The commentary reflects many times a judicious, common-sense approach to the probability of an event's authenticity and Luke's method of composition.

What consistently mars the commentary, however, is the skeptical approach, a "hermeneutics of suspicion," which the practitioner of the historical-critical method believes the modern reader demands. The commentator views this stance positively as the demand for objective critical rigor in assessing the material (pp. 306–307). Though such rigor is indeed welcome and necessary, it can not fulfill its proper function when it is combined with a consistent refusal to view "harmonizing" of Biblical data with each other or with extra-Biblical data as a legitimate procedure (e.g. Matthew's and Acts' accounts of Judas' demise, p. 92; "Judas and Theudas" in Gamaliel's speech, p. 295). In the latter case, Barrett observes that "the simplest explanation of Luke's text, and the only one that does not involve him in some kind of error, is the view that there was another Theudas, otherwise unknown, who did take up arms at some point before Judas. This is of course possible; it does not seem probable" (pp. 294–295). He does not go on to explain why such a solution cannot be raised to the level of possibility. Maybe it is the lack of independent confirmation of the existence of that other Theudas. In the end he goes on to another "simple solution": "Luke, writing Gamaliel's speech (for the Christians can hardly have had inside information of what was said in the Sanhedrin after v. 34—unless Gamaliel's pupil, Saul of Tarsus, was present!), made a mistake either unaware of the true date of Theudas or confusing him with some other rebel. An author who could misread a plain passage in Josephus could mistake any other source of information" (p. 296).

Indeed, Barrett's reconstructions consistently involve so interposing Luke's compositional hand, sources, and traditions between Acts and the events that often very little is recoverable of the actual detail of the historical events themselves (e.g. Pentecost, p. 109). He does exegesis on the assumption that supernatural features are beyond the ability of the historical-critical method to assess (p. 422). They are assigned either

to the tradition or to Luke's desire to present an idealized picture of the Church of the first generation (pp. 478, 305).

In the end, Luke has only sources with scanty information (pp. 50–52) and is possessed of a temperament and outlook of a historian/theologian. This does not permit him to distinguish critically between the views of his subjects, the apostles and those of the Church in his day (p. 132). He cannot seem to avoid inaccuracies as he develops his idealistic edifying picture of the early Church (p. 258). He lacks the profundity of a Paul when it comes to articulating the great truths of the Christian faith (p. 132). It appears to me that this picture owes more to the historical-critical method's skepticism and limits that the commentator has embraced than to the character of Acts' internal evidence.

This commentary is now the premier technical—exegetical and critical—commentary on Acts in English. It supersedes F. F. Bruce's *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text* for documentation of primary sources. It is the first summary in English of the historical-critical discussion of Acts through the mid-1980s. Other critical commentaries—Haenchen, Conzelmann (*Hermeneia*), and Luke Timothy Johnson (*Sacra Pagina*)—will be challenged by the more moderate approach taken to historical matters. The challenge to conservative evangelicals is to assess and respond to the arguments and negative judgments concerning Acts' historical accuracy and the authenticity of reported events. The value of Luke as a theologian is also in need of rehabilitation. I hope that Ward Gasque (NIGTC), Scott Bartchy (WBC) and Darrell Bock (*Baker Exegetical Commentary*) are not too far along in their commentary projects in Acts to interact with it.

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Adolf Schlatter: En Leben für Theologie und Kirche. By Werner Neuer. Stuttgart: Calwer, 1996, xviii + 939 pp., DM 68.

This massive study comes hard on the heels of a much shorter English-language biography of Schlatter (1852–1938) by the same author (Baker, 1996). Readers of the short biography lament its brevity: Neuer's fetching prose and insightful commentary whet more than satisfy the appetite, and readers want to know more about Schlatter, his thought and his times than a small paperback permits.

No one who tackles this first and only critical biography of Schlatter will complain of brevity. Neuer has spent the better part of two decades researching Schlatter, interviewing some who knew him in their younger days. At one point he spent three years doing nothing but archival reading, gaining a feel for the treasures contained in dozens of unpublished lectures and manuscripts and over 8,000 letters. He also wrote and published a doctoral dissertation on the connection between theology and ethics in Schlatter's thought.

All that work has now paid off. With clear organization and thoroughness Neuer effectively and exhaustively treats each major phase of Schlatter's life. Chapters are devoted to the following time periods: (1) childhood and youth (1852–70); (2) university training (1871–75); (3) five years of pastoral service (1875–80); (4) university post in Bern (1880–88); (5) professor of New Testament in Greifswald (with Hermann Cremer; 1888–93); (6) professor of systematic theology in Berlin (alongside Adolf von Harnack; 1893–98); (7) high point and completion of life's work in Tübingen (1898–1938). Chapter 7 is, in turn, broken down into five periods.

There is no need to recount particulars of Schlatter's life and thought here, since these are available both in the shorter English-language biography and in at least two sizable articles on Schlatter in recent handbooks on Biblical interpreters, one edited by Walter Elwell (Baker) and the other by Donald McKim (InterVarsity).

What should be underscored are the following. First, Neuer's German is lucid and relatively free from the crabbed convolutions of normal German academes. This makes reading a joy rather than toil (as does the book's price, reasonable given its size).

Second, this is Neuer's third book on Schlatter, in addition to numerous articles. He is clearly in relaxed command of the vast subject matter he treats. So while his tome is dissertation-like in scope and depth, it is literary in style and creativity. Combined with his accessible prose, he has produced a study that is esthetically and not merely informationally gratifying. The handsomely bound hardback format and fourteen pages of photos add to the pleasing effect.

Third, all of Schlatter's major works, and many minor ones, are summarized in smaller type within the text, a convention common in scholarly German-language works. Casual readers know that this means they can skip the small print, if they wish, and move immediately to normal-sized type and the broader story line. But for readers wondering what is contained in Schlatter's monographs on faith, or the history of philosophy, or ethics, or dogmatics, or metaphysics, or NT theology, etc. (he published some fifty works of over 100 pages), Neuer provides the service of a succinct review of each book's contents and significance. What we have, then, is not merely a biography but a running annotated bibliography of virtually all sizable primary sources. It goes without saying that Neuer includes a comprehensive listing of secondary sources, with many of which he interacts in footnotes as the book unfolds.

Fourth, we are not forced to rely solely on Neuer's assessment of Schlatter's major works. On pp. 841–848 he lists published reviews of them. So, for example, regarding Schlatter's celebrated monograph on faith in the NT, we are given nine reviews to consult, authored by the likes of Bultmann, Holtzmann, Kittel and Stuhlmacher. Neuer's generous forthrightness regarding important resources signals an attitude of inviting the reader to join him in research and reflection. Readers who would rather be given help in their own thinking than exhortations to hew to someone else's viewpoint will welcome Neuer's collegial approach.

Fifth, three crucial subsections (pp. 725–780, about 7% of the book's total text) go far toward setting the record straight regarding Schlatter and National Socialism. In certain circles one occasionally hears warnings against the allegedly sinister implications of Schlatter's high view of creation (*Schöpfungstheologie*), which is said to have made his followers susceptible to Hitler's machinations. This overlooks the fact that the first Protestant minister martyred under the Nazis was Paul Schneider, who converted from liberal to Biblical faith as the result of intensive study of Schlatter's volume on dogmatics. It is also to ignore a further point Neuer establishes: Schlatter's unambiguous, consistent and outspoken objections to the Hitler movement and their lackeys, the German Christians, extending as far back as the late 1920s. Neuer does not argue that Schlatter saw everything with perfect clarity. In those troubled years, who did? But the suggestion that Barth and Barmen got it all right and that Schlatter was a de facto Nazi sympathizer by comparison is now seen to be quite untenable (and it was never a suggestion with much substance to begin with).

Sixth, Schlatter's importance for contemporary Biblical interpreters and especially evangelicals comes clearly to the fore. Without in any way succumbing to precritical or antiintellectual thought modes, Schlatter's historical observation and theological synthesis yielded a Jesus and gospel message of classic Christian proportions. Whereas his peers, from Wrede to Bousset to Bultmann, could be charged with smothering the

NT's message with a Troeltschian hermeneutic of suspicion augmented by an anti-supernaturalist philosophy of religion, Schlatter models a hermeneutic that hovers between exhaustive analysis (an aspect of his celebrated *Wahrnehmung*), unusual creativity, Gadamerian consent, and reverent submission. The probably apocryphal story of Schlatter saying that he stood under, not over or on Scripture, comes to mind. Eschewing simplistic or ahistorical Biblicism, Schlatter nevertheless plausibly argued that Jesus understood himself to be, and was, the Messiah of OT promise and future world regnancy. Modern interpreters seeking to do full justice both to modern thought and Biblical testimony will find few prototypes more suggestive than Schlatter.

These are but some of the ways in which Neuer highlights Schlatter's contribution to both scholarship and Church. That contribution was largely ignored in his own day and has been too seldom appropriated since. We may be grateful for a second chance now through this important volume.

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Romans: The Righteousness of God. By Adolf Schlatter. Translated by Siegfried S. Schatzmann. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995, xxiv + 287 pp., n.p.

On the vanguard of a Schlatter renaissance in America that is slowly gaining momentum, this is only the second book-length translation of one of this Swiss-German author's works. Adolf Schlatter (1852–1938), who spent most of his scholarly career at Tübingen, published his commentary on Romans in 1935 at the age of eighty-three. As an independent, he was attacked by liberals and fundamentalist-leaning pietists alike. Schlatter wrote outside the German Lutheran tradition, contending that Reformation categories were insufficient for an adequate understanding of Paul's theology. In particular, he replaced the Reformers' anthropocentric point of departure with a theocentric understanding that focused on the revelation of God's righteousness in Jesus Christ. Likewise, the Lutheran dichotomy between the law and the gospel was rejected by Schlatter as an inaccurate reading of Paul's thought. The English translation of this work comes with a foreword by the Tübingen professor P. Stuhlmacher, who provides a helpful (and largely positive) assessment of Schlatter's interpretation of Paul. Generally, Stuhlmacher is doubtless correct when he judges Schlatter's primary contribution to lie in his overall perspective rather than in exegetical details.

In many ways, it is deplorable that sixty years had to pass before Schlatter's commentary was made available to an English-speaking audience. How much better if it had been translated prior to the recent explosion in Pauline scholarship, in time to be integrated into the work of more recent interpreters. It remains to be seen how many will care to pause and ponder Schlatter's insights in the midst of the frantic pace of contemporary scholarly endeavor. Nevertheless, the publication of this work on Romans is a cause for measured gratitude, "measured" in part owing to the less-than-fully-adequate translation. Generally, the translator's clinging to German word order and diction wherever possible makes for a multitude of curious English renderings that frequently can be unraveled only by recourse to the German original. Of greater consequence is Schatzmann's purging Schlatter's writing of all noninclusive gender language. This has the effect of overturning authorial intent, which surely exceeds the proper role of the translator. For instance, on p. 8 Schatzmann translates the German "daß er *Männer* [men] zu Propheten machte" by "through *those* whom he made prophets." The translator's revisionism even extends to Scripture itself. On p. 126, Rom 5:12

is rendered as follows: "As sin came into the world through one *individual* and death through sin, so death came to all *humans* . . ." As a result, Paul's analogy between the *man* Jesus Christ and all *men* is completely lost (I am indebted for this example to E. Earle Ellis, who shared it in a personal correspondence with Robert W. Yarbrough). It is necessary to reject this subtle yet transparent agenda as an attempt to domesticate Schlatter, which also results in misleading readers whose only access to Schlatter's thought is through Schatzmann's translation. Moreover, one misses a preface by the translator dealing with questions such as: Which philosophy of translation was used? Why was Schlatter's work on Romans singled out for publication rather than any other of Schlatter's writings? How can the release of this work still be justified, when research on Romans has virtually revolutionized contemporary thought on Paul? Answers to these questions can doubtless be given, but the reader is left completely in the dark regarding these.

On the positive side, it must be admitted that translating Schlatter is a challenging task, and Schatzmann should be commended for his willingness to tackle this project. Reference has already been made to the nascent Schlatter renaissance in the English-speaking world, of which this publication is a part. Robert Yarbrough's recent translation of Werner Neuer's popular biography provides American readers with a helpful introduction to Schlatter's life and thought, and the present reviewer is preparing an English translation of Schlatter's two-volume *New Testament Theology*, arguably one of Schlatter's major works. All those engaged in the project of making Schlatter's work available to a contemporary English-speaking audience are united in the conviction that those readers stand to benefit significantly from an exposure to Schlatter's thought. As a result, God's Word will be more accurately understood and Jesus and Paul liberated from current domestication. And Scripture, in the present case the book of Romans, will once again change the lives of individuals as it did in the cases of Augustine, Luther and Barth.

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Romans. By Robert H. Mounce. The New American Commentary 27. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, 301 pp., \$27.99; *Romans: God's Good News for the World*. By John Stott. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994, 432 pp., \$19.99.

Following in the wake of two expansive and technical two-volume commentaries (by Cranfield and Dunn), several one-volume treatments of Romans are emerging (besides the two covered in this review, see most importantly J. Fitzmyer's submission in the AB series [Doubleday] and the NICNT [Eerdmans] volume by D. Moo). Able, experienced and widely-known interpreters, Mounce and Stott have produced commentaries on Romans that eschew most of the highly technical discussions in order to focus on the theological and applicational significance of Paul's most important epistle.

Though Mounce writes within the space guidelines imposed by the New American Commentary series, his work on Romans is even shorter than what readers might expect. The commentary section itself comprises only 225 pages, versus, for example, 369 pages for the volume on Galatians in the same series. This is perplexing, given the crucial nature of this pivotal letter.

The brief introductory section includes the standard items: authorship, destination, date and place of origin, occasion and purpose, the original form of the letter, and an overview of the themes of the letter. No surprises surface. That is, none unless one

wishes to keep abreast of one of the most volatile discussions among contemporary Pauline scholars: Was the rabbinic Judaism of Paul's day characterized by legalism—the attempt to earn or merit salvation through keeping the law? Or was it essentially a more benign “covenantal nomism” (the description coined by E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*)—a religion of obedience to God's grace in establishing a covenant with Israel? A discussion of this debate is beyond the scope of this review, but it strikes me as strange that so crucial a concern is never mentioned either in the introduction or in the potentially relevant texts in Romans. The introductory pages also lack any bibliography, merely citing a list of abbreviations. Several indexes conclude the book.

The format of the Mounce volume includes an outline of each section, the NIV text of the section, and the author's verse-by-verse analysis. Technical matters, particularly those dealing with the Greek text, occur in footnotes. The envisioned readers are pastors who require practical help to prepare their weekly sermons. Mounce's goal is to help pastors see the relevance of what Paul has written.

Mounce interacts with many key works on Romans, and the footnotes amply document his reading. As he admits in the preface, his favorite commentators are Cranfield, Morris, Dunn, Moo and Fitzmyer.

The strength of Mounce's work lies in its clarity and conciseness. Readers can rely on his conclusions and can see them simply and clearly expressed. Yet brevity often comes at the expense of sufficient explanation and defense. For example, in explaining 1:4 Mounce uses three phrases interchangeably: “designated Son of God,” “declared to be Son of God,” and “installed as Son of God” (pp. 61–62). “Declare” and “designate” convey a different meaning than “install.” Did the resurrection *declare* Jesus to be divine or did the resurrection *install* Jesus in the position of Son of God? Mounce provides no defense of his view (which seems to be the former). We need better analysis of the verb *horizō*.

What about Mounce's understanding of some other texts? A small sampling must suffice. “Righteousness” (1:16–17) describes humans' righteous status resulting from God's activity of justification (with Cranfield), though it includes, as well, components of God's righteous character and his action of making people righteous. “Homosexuality, as a perversion of God's intended relationship between man and woman, carries its own destructive penalty” (on 1:26–27; p. 84). Appeasing God's wrath (propitiation) is the best way to understand *hilastērion* (3:26–27). The baptism of 6:4 is the ritual act of water baptism. Christ assumed our fallen nature (though he never sinned) in order that God might condemn sin in the flesh of Jesus (8:4). Prior to God's foreknowledge (which is equivalent to “choosing beforehand”) came God's decree or determination of whom he would save (8:29–30). Yet the sovereign freedom of God to elect whom he wills does not set aside human responsibility (9:14–18). Mounce merely asserts this without any attempt to explain how Paul can hold these positions. In addition, Mounce makes no attempt to reconcile what he concludes from his study of 10:16–21: Although God sovereignly elects (presumably only some) Israelites, yet he holds his outstretched arms pleading for Israel to turn to him in faith. All ethnic Israel will come to be saved after the full number of Gentiles are saved—immediately prior to Christ's return (11:26).

Mounce is a trustworthy guide through this letter. Though the explanations are sometimes too brief and the defenses of his views often minimal at best, his conclusions are usually sound, in my estimation. He may not always show the reader how he has arrived at his conclusions, but one gets the clear impression that Mounce has struggled with the issues, consulted wise counselors and fashioned his views responsibly. The reader obtains a clear sense of what Paul sought to convey.

Stott's volume contains 361 pages of actual commentary plus a 25-page preliminary essay and a study guide to the entire book written by David Stone added at the end. He includes a bibliography at the outset, but the book contains no indexes at all, a serious drawback shared by the other works in *The Bible Speaks Today* series. The preliminary essay traces the influence of Romans as a letter and responds to new challenges to the old traditions—in which he takes up the challenges of Sanders (and Stendahl and Dunn) about the nature of rabbinic Judaism mentioned briefly above. He concludes that Paul did hold the view that the Judaism of his day taught that one could attain righteousness through keeping the law (p. 30). Stott, further, considers Paul's purposes for writing the letter and he concludes the essay with an overview of the letter itself.

As one comes to the commentary, there is no inclusion of the Biblical text of the section for discussion, allowing more space for comments. The chapters proceed with Stott's section-by-section discussion of each passage. Compared to Mounce, Stott provides fuller analyses and defenses for his interpretations, though his footnotes and interactions with other sources are considerably less expansive. Citing other scholars only sparsely, Stott more frequently uses the footnotes to adduce Biblical texts parallel to points he makes. To return to the first text we examined in Mounce, in 1:4 Stott shows that the verb *horizō* does not mean "declare," though that would make the translation easier to accept. He helps the reader struggle with the meaning "appoint" coming to attach the phrase "with power" to Son of God. Thus the best sense is: "Through the resurrection he becomes the Son of God in power" (citing Nygren, p. 50).

What about the other texts we sampled? On the righteousness of God (1:16–17) Stott rejects any attempt to decide among the normal options affirming that it, at once, conveys the thoughts of a divine attribute, activity and achievement (conveying on humans a righteous status). Responding more explicitly to the arguments of the modern gay lobby, Stott concludes (1:26–27) "that a homosexual partnership . . . is 'against nature' and can never be regarded as a legitimate alternative to marriage" (p. 78). Stott agrees that "propitiation," not mercy seat nor expiation, is the correct understanding of *hilastērion* (3:26–27). God's wrath does require averting. Baptism means water baptism unless the context demands a contrary understanding (6:3–4). No such contextual evidence exists here. Stating it differently than Mounce, on 8:4 Stott believes that Christ did not assume a fallen nature, for his humanity was sinless; rather, his humanity was both real and sinless simultaneously. This, it seems, fails to explain the wording of how Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh or how, therefore, in putting Christ to death God condemned sin in the flesh. Mounce is clearly better here. Parallel to Mounce, Stott takes "foreknow" as equivalent to "forelove" (8:29–30). It is God's decision before ours when one becomes a Christian; this is predestination. God's salvation depends upon his mercy and has nothing to do with the concept of justice (9:14–18). "If therefore God hardens some, he is not being unjust, for that is what their sin deserves" (p. 269). Also as does Mounce, Stott affirms that God acts like an inviting parent pleading with Israel to return (10:16–21). God feels great dismay and grief that they are so stubborn. And like Mounce, Stott never attempts to reconcile God's dismay with the fact that God, apparently, failed to elect these stubborn ones and so they cannot respond to his initiatives (p. 289). As to the statement "All Israel will be saved" (11:26), "Israel" means ethnic Israel, "all" refers to the great mass or the bulk of the Jewish people, and "saved" refers to spiritual salvation through faith in Jesus, not a national return to the land or any salvation apart from Christ (pp. 303–304).

Stott rarely, if ever, leads one astray. His analyses are judicious, well-defended (more thoroughly than Mounce's) and clearly stated. On balance, were I forced to choose

between the two, I would pick Stott. For a manageable one-volume treatment of the message of Romans, one could hardly do better than listen to this Anglican brother.

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1 Corinthians. By Craig Blomberg. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, 352 pp., \$21.99.

This volume is the first release in Zondervan's new NIV Application Commentary series. The primary goal of the series is to model for the reader how to bring "an ancient message into a modern context" (p. 7). The format to achieve this goal is to divide each textual treatment into three sections: Original Meaning, Bridging Contexts, and Contemporary Significance. The first section provides the commentator's exegetical treatment, the second demonstrates the process of moving original meaning into contemporary significance and the third contains the writer's application of the significance of the two to concrete contemporary situations. Blomberg methodically pursues this agenda in the commentary.

The goal and format of the commentary is its major strength. The scholar-author who often merely dispenses factual data and leaves the reader to draw conclusions is released to pursue almost anything he or she would deem appropriate. Blomberg does not hesitate to promote his personal views of texts. For example, he comments freely on areas such as the *charismata* (nature of gifts, pp. 248–251; cessationism as a "major theological error," pp. 262–263), divorce and remarriage (pp. 138, 142), women's issues in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, degrees of reward in heaven (p. 78), and the "lordship salvation" debate (p. 83). The author dismisses political correctness and boldly comments on Campus Crusade (pp. 82–83), the soteriological and eternal punishment debate (pp. 81, 304, 312), masturbation (p. 130) and homosexuality (pp. 121–123). I do wonder, however, why Blomberg's negative comment about "inspiration" in reference to 1 Cor 2:6–16 does not contain a note citing a key article by Walter Kaiser on this text (cf. p. 67). One could also wish for some treatment of the Jesus Seminar when Blomberg clearly supports traditional Christology in 1 Corinthians 15. Whether the reader agrees or disagrees with Blomberg's views, it is refreshing to see current issues engaged without reservations.

This kind of commentary is particularly subject to the competence and writing skills of the author. Blomberg's composition is user-friendly and in touch with what is on the mind of the pastor and the person in the pew. He leads the reader from the past to the present with skill. Reference to first-century historical backgrounds keeps the Biblical world in front of the reader. Allusion to the history of doctrine frequently makes the reader sensitive to how the Church has thought about texts. Abundant footnotes provide the more ambitious reader with paths for further study. Correction of the linguistic misuse of the NT is also provided (e.g. giving a proper understanding of synonyms such as "another/other" or the different words for "love").

The strength of this volume is also a weakness. The exegetical section is obviously abbreviated to allow for the other two sections. Blomberg does well under such restrictions, but the reader is often teased with exegetical comments that are not unpacked. Overall, the commentary does not advance the interpretive literature on 1 Corinthians. But that is not its purpose.

A major flaw relates to the publisher's failure to provide a subject index (a Scripture index is provided). In an age of computer composition, this is a particularly disappointing omission. Pastors and church members will look to this kind of publication as a quick reference to current questions but will find themselves frustrated in their attempt to retrieve the information they seek. The reviewer notes that this need has not been addressed in the recent release of the Galatians volume in the series.

This commentary, and the series it introduces, serves several needs. It enables the modern reader to watch a skilled craftsman pursue the meaning and significance of an ancient text and render the results in a readable format. It also provides teachers of English Bible courses with a commentary that addresses the needs of that level of student while providing adequate exegetical content and sections that certainly stimulate discussion of the significance of the text for today.

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Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians. By Ben Witherington, III. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 492 pp., \$34.99 paper.

Among commentaries on 1–2 Corinthians, Witherington's is unique for its gathering of Greco-Roman background material relevant to the exegesis of the letters. I can highly recommend it for the pastor interested in gaining easy access to such material. It is a gold mine.

The standard format of a commentary is followed: introduction, bibliography, comments on the text, indexes. The bibliography, however, is anything but standard. It is extensive and annotated, a real plus. Especially enlightening are Witherington's digressions called "A Closer Look." Titles for these include "Pagan Views of Salvation"; "Rhetors, Teachers and Imitation"; "Honor and Shame in the Roman World"; "Dining in Roman Corinth"; "Headcoverings and Religion in Roman Cities." These, as well as other background information brought in at the appropriate point, provide the reader with a wealth of useful information.

These comments show the strengths of this commentary. The background materials are well chosen, well presented and very interesting. Most pastors will find that the social backgrounds Witherington mentions will help them in transferring the message of the passage to their social context.

Some weaknesses of Witherington's work are as follows. First, though Witherington provides exciting and enlightening background, he does not always make clear how it helps or changes our interpretation or application of texts. Perhaps he does well not to display the dogmatic certainty of some exegetes. Unfortunately, however, I often found his conclusions vague or ambiguous.

Second, and related to the above, since Witherington's purpose is to provide a background commentary of two letters in one volume, he is not able to take the space necessary for extended theological reflection or for lengthy interaction and wrestling with the actual text of Scripture.

Third, since this socio-rhetorical commentary seeks to demonstrate how Paul used or rejected the rhetorical practices of his day, it needs to be especially clear on what Paul meant when he said he did not preach with eloquence or with persuasive words (1 Cor 2:1, 4). Unfortunately, Witherington is unclear in his answer.

The question is, Did the apostle reject rhetoric? Witherington says no, he only rejected sophistic or ornamental rhetoric in his preaching (pp. 121, 125). Sophistic rhetoric emphasized eloquence over content (p. 103). Instead, Paul deliberately chose to present the gospel in an unpolished manner (p. 124). He did so in order not to distract his audience from the power of the gospel message (p. 123). "Thus, it is not merely skill in rhetorical form that is at issue, but also the content of wisdom" (p. 104). In his letters, however, the apostle crafted passages of "real rhetorical skill and polish" (p. 123). Furthermore, Witherington sees that each letter follows the classical rhetorical pattern: *exordium*, *propositio*, *narratio*, *probatio* and *peroratio*. Witherington demonstrates that Paul does not sacrifice content when he uses real rhetorical skill and polish in his letters. If this is so, it seems reasonable to assume that Paul felt written rhetorical polish did not necessarily distract his audience from the power of his letters' message. On the other hand, it logically follows that Paul did not have to sacrifice content in order to use real rhetorical skill and polish in his preaching. So, the question is, What rhetorical practice did Paul reject and why? Witherington's answer needs more clarity.

In summary, Witherington's commentary is a quite valuable and useful addition to Corinthian commentaries. When read in conjunction with others (such as Fee on 1 Corinthians and Barrett on 2 Corinthians), it provides much needed insight into the social context of these letters.

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Galatians. By Scot McKnight. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995, 320 pp., \$21.99.

Scot McKnight's new commentary on Galatians has some serious contenders for the ever-shrinking space on the shelf of my study wall. Already there are the older works of Lightfoot, Burton and Ramsay as well as the established works of Longenecker, Bruce and Fung, and not one, but two new works by James Dunn of Durham University. So, why give an inch for a commentary such as this? Well, here are two reasons.

First, this commentary, and the series of which it is a part, needs to be given full marks for what it is attempting to do. This is to provide a commentary for the English reader that takes exegesis seriously and still has space left for considerations of what the text is saying in today's world. As the series editors point out, "the primary goal of the NIV Application Commentary Series is to help with the difficult but vital task of bringing an ancient message into a modern context" (p. 7). Each section of Galatians has the NIV text, followed by concise sections of exegesis. Then there are two additional sections that address the issue of application. One is entitled "Bridging Contexts" and the other "Contemporary Significance."

A word of caution at this point. This reviewer finds it hard to distinguish between these two sections, and questions the necessity of having both. Such a concern is anticipated by the editors themselves. Of the "Bridging Contexts" section they write: "Because this section prepares the way for discussing the contemporary significance of the passage there is not always a sharp distinction or clear break between this section and the one that follows" (p. 9). The format of these two application sections following the exegesis section leads, in the reviewer's opinion, to an undue wordiness on the part of the author. This may well pervade the commentary as a whole. Perhaps

readers, writers and publishers alike will need to get beyond the idea that in order for a commentary to make a significant contribution, it must first be of a certain size.

The second reason for finding space for this commentary comes by way of McKnight's experience as a teacher of the NT. His concise exegesis is well worth the space on the ever-proverbial shelf. His footnotes (and thanks to the publishers that they are footnotes and not the ever-tiresome endnotes) are of great value. In them, one finds not simply the sources of McKnight's thought but guidance through the literature written on Galatians. His introduction skillfully yet gently leads the reader into the technical and obscure world of covenantal nomism in the Galatians context. His interaction with the text throughout the commentary is commendable and competent, as well as concise.

In conclusion, this commentary reminds me of an anecdote from the life of the popular preacher Harry Ironside, who was apparently told that he could not possibly be a great preacher, since, said the listener, he understood everything the preacher said. In a similar fashion, one may be tempted to say that this commentary does not belong on the same shelf as those worthies mentioned earlier, for the simple reason that one will understand everything that one reads. May its tribe increase!

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Paul's Letter to the Philippians. By Gordon D. Fee. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xlvii + 497 pp., \$34.99.

Fee's commentary on Philippians is the first volume to appear in the NICNT under his editorship and the second to appear with the new format and design. The larger pages and margins make the commentary easier to handle and more likely to stay open on a desk.

More significantly, Fee's commentary is a much-needed and welcomed addition to the NICNT, replacing the volume by Müller done in 1955, thus bringing us up to date with recent literature on Philippians.

Some of the strengths and advantages of Fee's commentary are as follows. First, Fee is one of the first commentators to read Philippians in light of recent research into Greek and Roman social practices regarding friendship and money, in particular the practice of social reciprocity. Greco-Roman social reciprocity basically worked this way: If someone gives you a gift or does you a favor, you now have a special relationship with them and are obligated to repay them. Since Paul has received financial help from the Philippians, this background is helpful to illumine our understanding of his relationship with this congregation. In explaining Greek and Roman practices, however, Fee makes several references to Cicero, Plutarch, Seneca and other ancient authors without identification or dating. Some readers might find this information heavy and opaque.

Second, and despite the shortcomings of the Greek and Roman material, Fee's introductory section is longer than one might expect, and enlightening. He covers Philippians and ancient letter writing, Paul's use of rhetoric and of the OT, and matters of vocabulary (not found in many commentaries). In short, if one studies Fee's introduction, it can help one to read Philippians in a new light.

Third, although the recent commentary by O'Brien in the NIGTC is more thorough and superior in theological discernment, Fee's work for the NICNT is better for most pastors since only the notes are technical.

Fourth, Fee writes well, is easy to follow and shows a concern for application. His sections on 1:18–26 and 2:5–11 are full of well-reasoned and practical insight. I found his reflections at the end of these passages (and many others) to be insightful, pastorally sensitive and helpful for the pastor who asks, “What should be my theme as I preach this passage?”

Fifth, Fee does not lose sight of the big picture while he is in the midst of exegetical details. His analysis is strong on contextual concerns, on themes and on understanding the purpose of the letter as a whole.

There are some unexpected weaknesses in Fee’s work. First, his choice and use of the NIV as the basis for the commentary is a bit frustrating. Hawthorne (WBC, 1983), O’Brien (NIGTC, 1991) and Silva (WEC, 1988) provide their own translations. Certainly Fee’s fresh approach to the letter would have made his own rendering very helpful.

Second, and following on from the above, although Fee uses the NIV, he alters it at least thirteen times. He does not alter the NIV when it leaves untranslated a connective in 2:1. He does not alter the unnecessary epistolary aorist in 2:25 or the unwanted paragraph break at 3:12. After the first couple of alterations the reader can see the rest coming: When Fee alters the NIV, he does so only to make it gender neutral. Perhaps I might be forgiven for thinking Fee displays his egalitarian bias here.

Also, his alteration of the NIV is not consistent. His first alteration (at 1:12) adds sisters to the text in brackets. Then at 3:17 he puts sisters into the text without brackets, then at 4:8 he puts both brothers and sisters in brackets even though brothers is original to the NIV. In my view, either Fee should have stayed with the NIV and made alteration suggestions in the footnotes or he should have provided a gender-neutral translation.

Third, and still on the gender issue, Fee departs from his otherwise careful exegesis in his treatment of 4:2–3. It seems clear that Euodia and Syntyche exercised some sort of leadership in the Philippian congregation. Fee asserts that “to deny their role in the church in Philippi is to fly full in the face of the text” (p. 398). He is correct, but only because we cannot deny a role we cannot define. Moreover, we cannot conclude on the basis of 4:2–3, as Fee does, that the Holy Spirit is “gender blind” (p. 398). His statement is inappropriate for a commentary, which must draw conclusions from the evidence found in the letter being expounded.

Fourth, Fee introduces us to the concept of Greco-Roman social reciprocity in his introduction, but he has not fully grasped its working nor let it inform his exegesis of the whole letter as much as he could. For example, Paul gives thanks for the Philipians’ partnership in the gospel (1:5). We would have been better served if Fee had told us at 1:5 that partnership (*koinōnia*) was a common subject in the first century and that it was always considered on a human level: It involves mutual obligations between two parties. God or gods do not enter Greco-Roman partnership. Paul, in contrast, says that his giving and receiving with the Philippians has established them in an enterprise far bigger than the two of them, an enterprise with God. To his credit, Fee does begin to draw out some of the implications of this partnership, and the resulting three-way bond, in his treatment of 4:15–17. Even there, however, his statement that Paul accepted patronage while in Philippi (p. 444) is misleading and fails to take into account the nuances of Greco-Roman reciprocity as well as Paul’s own practice.

Also, Fee misunderstands Greco-Roman gratitude, a concept important for our understanding of 4:10–20. He asks how Paul could express a genuine thank-you so reluctantly in 4:10–20. Despite the fact that scholars have recently shown that an expression of gratitude would have been inappropriate from a first-century perspective, Fee still seems eager to rescue Paul from the charge of ingratitude. He says that Paul

gives thanks for the Philippians' gift at 4:10a, 14 and 18. But we should ask: Thanks by what standard? Twentieth-century western standards for gratitude (which it appears Fee is using) are inappropriate standards by which to judge Paul's thanks.

Fifth, in his recent commentary O'Brien argues cogently that Phil 1:3 should be rendered: "I thank my God for all your remembrance of me." The compelling support for this rendering is the fact that, in the extant Greek literature, every time the verb *eucharistein* is followed by the preposition *epi* with the dative case, the dative gives the reason(s) for thanks. Fee waters down this evidence and dismisses it in a footnote. We do not expect such neglect from a scholar of Fee's caliber.

Despite these shortcomings, I can highly recommend Fee's commentary for the pastor or layperson. It is more exegetically sound than Hawthorne, more thorough than Silva and less technical than O'Brien. It fills a needed gap in Philippians commentaries. As a final note, for a similar approach to this letter one should also consider the recent commentary by Ben Witherington, III (*Friendship and Finances in Philippi*, Trinity Press, 1994).

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Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity? By David Wenham. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xvi + 452 pp., \$21.99 paper.

David Wenham has made an important contribution to contemporary scholarship in this book. In this work he examines the complex question of the relationship between Jesus and Paul. Traditional Christianity has assumed that Paul was a faithful follower of Jesus. However, this assumption has not gone unchallenged. Some liberal scholarship has sought to drive a wedge between Jesus and Paul. Some believe Paul distorted the simple message of a Galilean carpenter and that he was uninterested in the historical Jesus. As evidence they point to this apparent lack of interest in Jesus' life and teaching. Wenham's desire is to examine the evidence and determine the truth of the matter.

Wenham believes the issue has far-reaching implications. First, if it can be proven that traditional Christianity has been built on Paul's misinterpretation of Jesus, the results would be ruinous to the Christian faith. Second, if Paul was not interested in the historical Jesus and knew little about him, then the historical foundation of the Christian faith is in danger. Historic Christianity believes that God's salvation came to humanity through historical events. Wenham's work is the first substantial work on the subject in some time. His thesis is that Paul is best characterized as a follower of Jesus rather than the founder of Christianity. Wenham narrows the issue down to two key questions: (1) How much did Paul know of Jesus' teaching and ministry? (2) How far did Paul agree or disagree with him theologically?

Wenham carefully sets out his approach and presuppositions in the first chapter. The author's approach to three multifarious problems reveals something of his perspective. The scholarly world is currently debating again how much we can know of the historical Jesus. Wenham approaches the problem from the perspective of a self-proclaimed moderately conservative critic. He focuses his attention on the synoptics (without assuming a particular solution to the synoptic problem), leaving John aside. A second area is the contents of the Pauline corpus. Wenham uses Romans, 1 Corin-

thians and 1 Thessalonians most frequently and refers to the pastorals only in passing. The third problem is the methodological concern of recognizing Pauline allusions to Jesus' teachings. Here Wenham goes to great effort to clarify how he will avoid "parallelomania" on the one hand, and complete pessimism on the other. He builds on the work of Michael Thompson's *Clothed with Christ: The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1–15.13*.

Wenham suggests three distinctives about the book. First, the book is distinctive in its approach to the problem. Much of the recent work done on the Jesus–Paul relationship has been narrow and specific in focus. Wenham takes a broader approach to the subject. This approach enables a fuller look at the issue, while at the same time providing less detail as to the specifics. Another distinctive is that it takes into account the recent scholarly debate concerning Jesus and Paul. The most distinctive quality of the book, however, is the attention focused on the question of the Jesus traditions in Paul's letters. This may be the author's most significant contribution to the subject. Here the discussion is more technical and interactive with other views. Wenham challenges scholarship's pessimism about the possibility of locating echoes of Jesus' teaching in Paul.

The book consists of nine chapters. In chap. 1 Wenham introduces the question, states what is at stake, and carefully delineates his methodological approach. Chapters 2–7 are devoted to the examination of the teaching of Jesus and Paul. In these chapters Wenham compares Jesus and Paul's teachings on the kingdom of God, the person and death of Jesus, the Church, Jesus' return and his life and ministry. The first part of each chapter examines Jesus' teaching on the subject and then an examination of Paul's teaching on the same subject, comparing the two. The second part of the chapter is more technical and the material is examined to see if there is any evidence to show that Paul knew or was influenced by the traditions of Jesus. In the ninth chapter Wenham reviews, analyzes and draws conclusions concerning the evidence. His bibliography of works cited runs 17 pages long. These include a few non-English language works and a significant number of journal articles. The author's own expertise on the subject is seen by his fourteen entries.

Wenham has made a pivotal contribution to this very important area of study. He has produced a work that is scholarly in its use of modern Biblical criticism, evenhanded in its presentation of differing views, judicious in its evaluation of the data, and persuasive in its defense of his thesis. One need not agree with Wenham's assessment at every point to be convinced of his argument. For example, is the phraseology used in 1 Thess 1:6 reminiscent of the parable of the sower as Wenham seems to suggest (pp. 86–87)? It is the cumulative weight of the evidence that is crucial. Here the author's case is convincing. Wenham is successful in defending Paul from charges that he made Christianity into a different religion than the one intended by Jesus. Paul was a faithful follower of Jesus rather than the founder of Christianity. Wenham will receive justifiable criticism at two points. The first is his failure to clearly define his terms "founder" and "follower." This distinction leads to the second point: that in stating his case, he fails to do justice to Paul's unique contributions to Christianity. Many differences in their approaches and wording can be explained by different settings and issues. But Paul's unique contributions are downplayed or ignored. This volume will have to be consulted by any who attempt to write on the Jesus–Paul question in the future.

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The End of the Age Has Come: The Theology of Paul. By C. Marvin Pate. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995, 256 pp., \$17.95 paper.

Rarely does anyone combine scholarship with clarity as well as Pate has done in this book. Packed with patient comment on classic and contemporary Pauline thought, from Baur and Ramsay to Sanders and Thielman, Pate provides the student solid footing for future, more exotic treks through the Pauline jungle. Remarkably, he accomplishes this without failing to challenge the seasoned reader with his thesis that the heart and soul of Paul's theology is the "already/not yet" eschatological tension expressed in the book's title.

In his opening chapter, Pate sketches the landscape for understanding Paul's writings. He discusses Greek and Jewish influences on Paul and the impact of Christianity. Cogently he traces "the quest for the center of Paul's thought" from the Reformation through the Tübingen school to the history-of-religions school, which leads him to the Jewish apocalyptic theories of Schweitzer, Dodd and Cullmann. Pate views his book as an attempt to "confirm" that the inaugurated eschatological approach of Cullmann offers the best backdrop for uniting the images of Paul's theology.

The ensuing eight chapters approach Paul's theology systematically under familiar categories of God, Christ, salvation, man, the Spirit, the Church, society and end times. In each chapter, relying on judiciously selected secondary literature, he introduces the main issues at hand. Then he proceeds to discuss matters in detailed sections, involving key Pauline passages as they are relevant. He does a good job of providing balanced treatment in his discussion of texts and prevailing views while maintaining his focus on the dominance of the two-age worldview in Paul's thoughts.

Pate anticipates negative reaction to his reliance on Jewish apocalyptic in his reading of Paul, his systematic categories rather than exegetical and his inclusion of all thirteen letters that claim Pauline authorship. Candidly he defends these issues in his conclusion and justifies his positions throughout. Some may indeed question whether in fact "an increasing number of scholars are arguing for the Pauline authorship of the 'questionable' letters" (p. 25). However, *JETS* readers will applaud his resolve on this point and will appreciate his orderly review (pp. 37–41) of the case supporting the genuineness of these letters.

As one who teaches undergraduates, I consider all three of these potential negatives to be positives. My students need introduction to the powerful influence of Jewish apocalyptic on early Christianity, are helped by categorized results of exegesis, and consider treatment of all Pauline letters normal. Frankly, I am relieved to be able to offer them a book on the theology of Paul that leaves critical evaluation of the pastorals, for example, for later study.

Pate calls the book "a primer on Paul" (p. 235). Not only is the content and approach ideal for undergraduates and beginning graduates; its outline format, strong selected bibliography and Scripture index will appeal to them too. The extremely brief subject index will not be very useful, however. Students I teach in a senior-level Romans class who read and reviewed this book commented that they appreciated its generous use of Biblical references and its readability, but felt that Pate overemphasized his apocalyptic thesis. One student particularly enjoyed Pate's comparison of Paul's understanding of the Law in Rom 7:13 to Darth Vader in *Star Wars*, created for good, overcome by the "dark side of the force," in need of deliverance. So did I.

Pate has given us an outstanding book. I recommend it highly.

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Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics. Edited by Robert D. Bergen. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994, 560 pp., \$40.00 paper. *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature: What It Is and What It Offers*. Edited by Walter R. Bodine. SBLSS. Atlanta: Scholars, 1995, \$29.95 paper.

Biblical scholars have long studied the Bible through the lenses of outside disciplines, ranging from the folklorist studies of the brothers Grimm to which Gunkel was indebted to the myth-and-ritual approaches of Frazer and others that informed the work of many Biblical scholars early in this century to the "new archaeological" approaches so influential today to the sociological approaches of Weber and others influencing Gottwald to Derridá's deconstructionist approach, which informs the work of too many Biblical scholars today. Happily, the field of general linguistics is now making its presence felt in Biblical studies as well, with considerably more profit than many other approaches offer. After all, Biblical texts consist in the first place of words, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and texts, the relationships among which are accessed directly by linguistic approaches. This is one area where evangelical scholars—both Biblical and otherwise—are among the first-rank scholars in their disciplines; the field lends itself well to holistic analyses of texts, which evangelicals are prone to welcome.

Both volumes reviewed here are mere entrees into various linguistic approaches as they are useful in Biblical studies. Both are valuable starting points for exploring the great potential of linguistic study of Biblical texts. Unlike another valuable volume edited by Bodine, *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (Eisenbrauns, 1992; reviewed in *JETS* 39/2 [1996] 343–345)—which contains essays on all the major aspects of linguistics: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse analysis, historical/comparative linguistics and graphemics, but which does not venture into any great depth in any one area—these two volumes attempt to introduce the reader to only one sub-discipline of general linguistics: discourse grammar, which is the study of language units larger than the sentence. Essays in the first volume originated in a Summer Institute of Linguistics conference in 1993 and those in the second in the SBL's Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Section in 1988. Both are able to accomplish much in terms of displaying the theory and practice of a particular linguistic approach. The most valuable theoretical essays in these two volumes are Bodine's introductory essay in the volume he edited and K. Lowery's in the same volume. Here, they both lay out the landscape and rationale of discourse grammar and show its relevance to Biblical studies. These essays should be persuasive to Biblical scholars with little exposure to this approach.

Bergen's *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* is a rich resource of 22 essays that ranges widely across the Hebrew canon. It includes broad theoretical essays, such as C. H. J. van der Merwe's "Discourse Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Grammar" and A. Niccacci's "On the Hebrew Verbal System" and "Analysis of Biblical Narrative." It also includes specific essays on linguistic phenomena, such as C. L. Miller's "Introducing Direct Discourse in Biblical Hebrew Narrative" and R. E. Longacre's "*Weqatal* Forms in Biblical Hebrew Prose." It also addresses specific Biblical texts, although with larger linguistic interests in view, such as H. Kuhn's "Is Genesis 27:46 P or J? And How the Answer Affects Translation" and J. Callow's "Units and Flows in the Song of Songs 1:1–2:6." A significant flaw is that the book has no indexes.

Bodine's *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature* offers only eight essays, but it very self-consciously introduces the discipline of discourse analysis and attempts to win converts to its methods. It contains three theoretical essays (plus the excellent survey essay by Bodine), two essays on specific texts, and two on grammatical phenomena.

JETS readers will benefit from either of these works. *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* is the more valuable volume, if only because it contains more essays.

However, *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature* contains more valuable theoretical essays. *JETS* readers should also be aware of two very readable introductions to general linguistics aimed at students of the Bible by evangelical Biblical scholars: P. Cotterell and M. Turner's *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (IVP 1989) and M. Silva's *God, Language, and Scripture: Reading the Bible in the Light of General Linguistics* (Zondervan 1990). Since these are not collections of essays, they lead readers step-by-step into the often bewildering world of linguistics, with many illustrations from the Bible showing the application of linguistic methods. *JETS* readers will also want to be aware of another work with similar focus: David A. Dawson, *Text-Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (JSOT 1994, reviewed below).

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Text-Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew. By David A. Dawson. JSOT Sup 177. Sheffield: JSOT, 1994, 241 pp., \$55.00.

Discourse (or text-) linguistics, a relatively new branch of linguistics that rigorously analyzes post-sentence-level language features, is generating a growing level of interest among Biblical language scholars who hope to find in it a powerful new tool for analyzing and understanding the sacred text. Reflective of this is the fact that dissertations and theses treating discourse linguistic issues of Biblical languages are being generated at both evangelical and nonevangelical institutions. I am aware of ones either completed or now being written at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the University of Chicago and the University of California, and there are doubtless others. David Dawson's recent work, the outgrowth of his 1993 dissertation at the University of Edinburgh, takes its place among these other works.

Dawson attempts in this book "to form a bridge between the rarified works of the ultra-trained linguists and the minimally trained (in linguistics, that is) Hebrew scholars" (p. 7). To accomplish this task he (1) examines and evaluates discourse linguistics works authored by A. Niccacci, M. Eskhult, F. I. Andersen, G. Khan and R. Longacre; (2) distills from them (particularly from Longacre) methodological principles and hypotheses useful for the study of Biblical texts; and then (3) applies these principles in the analysis of five different Biblical texts.

While accomplishing the first of his three tasks, Dawson concludes that the discourse-linguistic work most helpful for Biblical Hebrew scholars is that of R. Longacre. After carefully analyzing Longacre's *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence*, he concludes that "the book represents the most significant advancement in Hebrew text-linguistics seen to date; it contains much of near-revolutionary value to the student of Classical Hebrew syntax" (p. 56). The degree of Dawson's appreciation of Longacre can perhaps be measured by his bibliography: In it he includes ten works by Longacre—more than three times more than those by any other author. Nevertheless, he faults Longacre for "leapfrogging over too many steps in the theoretical logic [underlying discourse linguistics], thus leaving behind all but the most astute reader, and fellow linguists" (p. 57).

Thus Dawson proceeds to his second task, that of introducing the reader to the fundamentals of discourse linguistics. Such abstruse terms as "deep structure," "surface structure," "slot/class," "filler/set," "constituent structure," "tagmeme," "syntagmeme," and "exponence" are carefully discussed. Longacre's three greatest contributions—

(1) his matrix of text types, (2) clarification of mainline versus offline information patterns, and (3) verb-rank clines—are given due treatment (pp. 94–103, 115–116).

In proposing a methodology for analyzing Biblical texts, Dawson suggests that the Hebrew version of the passage be laid out in chart form “one clause per line,” with syntactically subordinated materials being placed in a separate column, and quotations be separated from nonquotational materials (p. 119; cf. appendix 1 charts, pp. 220–236). He emphasizes the use of the Hebrew data, since they “are only independently existing, and in that sense the only truly real element of language description” (p. 113). Though he does not use the term, he is essentially advocating the use of Longacre-Levinsohn charting techniques.

Dawson’s final task is to apply his interpretation of Longacre’s analytic method to specific Biblical texts. The texts he has chosen are primarily narrative in nature: Exod 36:8–38:20; Judg 2:1–23; 10:6–12:7; Ruth 1:1–4:22. Two are nonnarrative: Exod 25:10–27:19; Lev 14:1–32. Dawson uses these analyses to affirm the validity of Longacre’s discourse linguistic insights and to demonstrate how Hebrew scholars who have received no formal linguistic training might proceed in undertaking original discourse linguistic research on Biblical texts.

Dawson’s work is helpful, but surely not the last word. It was not written with an awareness of the discussions or published results of Summer Institute of Linguistics’ 1993 Seminar on Discourse Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew (published in 1994 as *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* [reviewed above]), which went beyond the work presented in Dawson’s work in some areas. His work does not convincingly answer his plea for “solid linguistic study of the language, written in such a way that it makes a difference to those who use the language on a day-to-day basis” (p. 216). Even so, it is a step in the right direction.

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