

## BOOK REVIEWS

*In Discordance with the Scriptures: American Protestant Battles over Translating the Bible.* By Peter J. Thuesen. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 238 pp., \$27.50.

This book came to birth as a doctoral dissertation at Princeton University. After an extended introduction that lays out the flow of his entire argument, Thuesen proceeds in five chapters. The first is devoted to the Reformation. Here Thuesen relies heavily on the analysis of Hans Frei. In some ways, the “pre-critical” Middle Ages have rightly been labeled a “culture of the Book.” Yet most people who at the time “read” the Scriptures did so through images and reenactments (not least the Mass). Even the intellectual elite, who could read the Bible privately in Latin, rarely did so apart from the broader context of the corporate ecclesiastical rule. More importantly, during this precritical period, “magnificent in its homogeneity” (the phrase is from Erich Auerbach), “the truth of the biblical stories was an assumed quality” (p. 6). Historical reality, present reality, and Scriptural reality combined to constitute one providential universe. Exegetically, this unitary view of history and the Bible fostered some form or other of typological interpretation. In some ways, this typological approach was encouraged by the Reformation, which to that extent made it a premodern movement. In one respect, however, the Reformation constituted a partial transition to the modern world, namely, the domain of authority. Here there was an overturning of the ecclesiastical and iconographic authority of the medieval church. The emphasis on the Bible substituted an authority that was iconoclastic and Bibliocistic. Nowhere, argues Thuesen, was this more strenuously the case than in the Anglo-Saxon world—more so, in particular, than in the world of Lutheranism.

The second chapter is devoted to the ideal of Bible revision in the late 19th century. The emphasis on truth, so characteristic of modernity, focused enormous energy on precisionism in lexicography. Newly discovered texts refashioned textual criticism. Increasingly there was a hunger to retrace what were later called the trajectories of the witnesses, in an effort to reconstruct the real history behind the Biblical stories. Out of this historical-critical world emerged the Revised Version (1881–85) and its American cousin, the American Standard Version (1901). Thuesen analyzes Protestant reactions to the new Bible, hailed in the press as “King Truth” (successor to King James). Most conservatives joined in the acclaim, but here and there some raised questions about the RV’s (and ASV’s) textual conclusions—harbingers of more fundamental controversies just over the horizon.

The third chapter treats the making of the Revised Standard Version (1952). The work began in 1937. A committee appointed by the International Council of Religious Education and headed by Luther Weigle, dean of Yale Divinity School, shared the modernist assumptions of the translators of the RV, but sought to go beyond them in several ways. They aimed for the exactness of the earlier work, but aimed to recapture some of the literary elegance of the AV. More importantly, perhaps, they “sought to dispel the unyielding biblicism that had so long characterized Protestantism” (p. 13). When the National Council of Churches (NCC) assumed sponsorship of the project in 1951, the drive toward ecumenical comprehensiveness received new impetus. The old historiography that equated Protestantism with the Word and

Catholicism with the image had to be repudiated, for here was an opportunity to produce a common Bible for English-speaking Christendom.

The fourth chapter charts the inevitable fury of conservative reaction, epitomized in Presbyterian Carl McIntire and Baptist Edgar Bundy. Though the issues raged over a wide range of issues, for both sides Isa 7:14 became the symbol of the debate. Thuesen argues that the controversy over the RSV was simultaneously a debate over authority and a struggle over interpretation. Many conservatives thought the NCC was usurping the authority of the Bible as the people's book. In this regard, the fact that these debates unraveled during the McCarthy era ensured that the NCC, like Communist regimes, was charged with attempting censorship over the printed word. Soon the label "Communist Bible" was attached to the RSV. As late as 1960, an Air Force training manual preserved the label.

In the final chapter, Thuesen traces some of the debates between conservative evangelicals and those he calls moderate evangelicals, many of the former drifting toward a "King James Only" stance, and many of the latter supporting the NAE in the production of the NIV. The developing debates were not pretty, and too complex to sketch here.

Thuesen ends his book with a brief epilogue that comments on the multiplicity of versions that have appeared since 1965. Although both liberals and conservatives are accused of being held in bondage by a modernist epistemology, undoubtedly Thuesen's most trenchant criticisms are aimed at the conservatives. For instance, he states, "Unfortunately, the realities of the critical context meant that even the most uncompromisingly conservative of Bibles would never fully settle the truth-question, for the biblical text would still be evaluated by modern standards of rationality. Fundamentalists who professed unswerving faith in every jot and tittle of Holy Writ still tended to subject the Bible's claims to the scientific criteria of 'evidence' and 'proof.' The very shibboleth of inerrancy presupposed a disjunction between the biblical story and real history. Conservative Bible-readers tended to find complete truth in the text, while liberals tended to find only partial truth; yet for both, history would always exist, to a greater or lesser degree, in discordance with the Scriptures. . . . It is this truth-obsessed reading of Scripture, not the Babel of Bibles per se, that deserves greater scrutiny. . . . The problem of modern Bible-reading is the problem of Isaiah 7:14 writ large—the confusion of textual with historical questions—and this exegetical indigestion is nearly impossible to neutralize, even by so potent a pill as Hans Frei's *Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*. Frei's is nevertheless a powerful case for a more literary, aesthetic reading of Scripture. This method does not exclude truth-questions but brackets them in favor of exegesis that treats the Bible as something like a realistic novel. For Frei, the biblical novel's individual stories are to be read not primarily for their external referents in 'real history' but for their internal relations as part of a large narrative. 'Narrative' reading is simultaneously literal and typological: the stories mean what they say, and they relate to each other by providential juxtaposition" (pp. 154–155).

So what shall we make of this intensely interesting and well-written book? To evaluate it aright, one must abandon any thought that this is a book that seeks to evaluate select translations. It is not. It is a book of *Rezeptionstheorie*. The literature it cites and the focus of its interests belong to the debates over how certain Bible translations were perceived. There is virtually no serious wrestling with translation theory, developments in linguistics, lexicographical research, and the like. If we are to form a fair appraisal of the book, it must be in terms of the fairness and accuracy of its presentation of the data regarding the reception accorded the RV and RSV (in

all fairness, other translations are not much more than footnotes), and especially in terms of the overarching theory that seeks to explain these data.

But it is precisely in these arenas that I sometimes feel a trifle uneasy about this book. For all its strengths, and interest, it leaves me with questions in at least three domains.

First, has the narrow focus on the RV and the RSV skewed Thuesen's ideological assessment? Suppose he had also studied the reception afforded the J. B. Phillips paraphrase, the Living Bible, the NIV, the CEV, and so forth, *not least reflecting on how many copies of each version were published in each five-year cycle of its life*. I attempted just such a survey a few years ago, and was astonished by the result. (See D. A. Carson, "New Bible Translations: An Assessment and Prospect," in *The Bible in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Howard Clark Kee [New York: American Bible Society, 1993] 37–88.) At the very least the result hinted at just what communities were reading (or at least buying!) different versions of the Bible—and this gives a rather different picture of evangelical reception of new translations than the much narrower focus depicted here.

Second, one of the major arguments Thuesen advances is that virtually all of the disputes between liberals and conservatives over Bible translations stem less from concrete differences over translation theory than from the fundamental perspectives the parties adopted in their own "worlds"—worlds that owed far more to modern epistemology than either side acknowledged. Let us acknowledge considerable merit in this argument. Nevertheless it immediately raises another question: What world does Thuesen inhabit? How many of his criticisms arise from his own location—on the edges of postmodernism, very comfortable with Hans Frei's analysis—much more than from the data at hand? Would, say, the conservatives in Thuesen's book identify themselves in his analysis? Or would they say that several of his categories are so skewed that they feel they have not been fairly represented?

Third, that brings me to the heart of the issue. Thuesen's work does not, of course, attempt a dispassionate summary of the evidence and nothing more. The evidence he capably amasses is fitted into a frame largely dictated by the historiography of Hans Frei. Frei recognizes, as does Thuesen, that in the so-called "precritical" or pre-modern period, Christians lived comfortably in the world of the Bible, in a world where present reality and the reality of the Bible constituted one smooth, whole, providential universe. But they did this, of course, precisely because they were persuaded that what the Bible says *about* that reality is true, i.e. they presupposed extratextual referentiality, and the faithfulness of the textual description of that extratextual referent. After all, the Bible does not suggest that men and women are saved by ideas about God and Jesus and the cross; rather, we are saved by God and Jesus and the cross. Of course, Christians cannot think about God and Jesus and the cross (to go no farther) apart from what the Bible says about them. But what the Bible holds out is not salvation effected by thinking holistic thoughts about God and Jesus and the cross, whether or not there is any extratextual referentiality, but a salvation achieved by the God and the Jesus and the cross with existence independent of the Bible, to which the Bible bears witness. On the one hand, it is always refreshing to hear exponents from the Yale School urge more diligent and systematic reading of the Bible, so as to fill the Christian mind with the Biblical universe; on the other hand, it is always deeply disturbing to find the same exponents (I am thinking of Lindbeck at least as much as of Frei) either downplaying the importance of extratextual referentiality in the Bible, or flat out insisting that the affirmation of any connection between the Biblical text and extratextual reality is the product of modern

epistemology. On the one hand, it is good to be reminded of the Bible's different literary genres, for failure to develop sensitivity to such matters, and to the Bible's providentially ordered story line, undoubtedly wreaks exegetical havoc; on the other hand, to treat the bulk of the Bible's story line "as something like a realistic novel" is a position that must be argued and defended, not least because there are countless details in the Biblical text that call such a glib genre category into question.

Consider the extended quote above. Thuesen argues that the concern for truth is nothing but the product of modern epistemology, now more or less eclipsed. But there is a considerable literature, some of it informed and sophisticated, that has shown that concern for the truthfulness of Scripture is not dependent on a particular epistemological paradigm. One finds, for instance, correspondence between Augustine and Jerome on whether it is possible to imagine an error in the canonical gospels—and no one, I think, would be so bold as to charge the patristic Fathers with a nasty, modern epistemology. When Frei and Thuesen recognize that "precritical" Bible readers thought that the Biblical world and the present world constituted one seamless whole, they must surely see that this is possible only because such Christians thought the Bible describes things as they really were, and are.

We have noted above that Thuesen asserts that during the period he scrutinizes, conservative Bible readers "tended to find complete truth in the text," while "liberals tended to find only partial truth." But this is at best ambiguous, and at worst misleading. True, conservatives insisted that the Bible is completely true (in line with the great central tradition of all Christendom), but the best of them did not argue that the Bible tells *all* the truth, i.e. the *complete* truth, on any particular. True, liberals tended to find only partial truth in the Bible, in the sense that they also found partial error; it is not the case that the typical liberal scholar supported the view that what the Bible says is true, but that it provides only a part of the truth. The reason the conservatives reacted to liberal scholarship (sometimes, it must be admitted, with a considerable want of wisdom) was not because the latter held that the Bible was true, but only told part of the story. Rather, they reacted to liberal scholarship because liberals held that the Bible is frequently just plain wrong, but that it is sometimes possible to get behind the text to what *really* happened—something quite different from what the text said happened.

Undoubtedly both liberals and conservatives were far more dependent on modern epistemology than either side fully recognized, but it does not follow that the questions with which they wrestled can be "bracketed out" or "paradigmed out" by appealing to the postmodern epistemology Thuesen presupposes when he adds that "for both [conservatives and liberals], history would always exist, to a greater or lesser degree, in discordance with the Scriptures." At one level, of course, that is a mere truism: there is always more to an event or to a series of events than can ever be captured by any description, by any text, however short of long or holy (save the "text" in the mind of Omniscience). But that does not mean that any particular description of the event or series of events *must* be mistaken or in error or untruthful. It certainly does not provide any obvious warrant for treating the Bible "as something like a realistic novel."

In short, as stimulating as Thuesen's book is, its analytical categories are tendentious and flawed.

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*From The Mind of God to the Mind of Man.* Edited by James B. Williams. Greenville: Ambassador-Emerald, 1999, 243 pp., \$14.95 paper.

The purpose of this book is to give a general overview of how we got the Bible. It is also clear that the authors seek to show that King James Version Only (KJVO) positions are not correct and that the historic understanding of Bible translations is the only accurate view. This historic position rightly holds that every accurate translation of the Bible is indeed the Word of God.

The sections and their authors are as follows. The introduction, "The Issue We Face" (pp. 1–11), is by James B. Williams. Chapter 1, "Our Final Authority" (pp. 13–29), is by Randolph Shaylor; chap. 2, "Canonization and Apocrypha" (pp. 31–64), by Paul W. Downey; chap. 3, "Let's Meet the Manuscripts" (pp. 65–98), by Mark Minnick; chap. 4, "The History of the Textus Receptus" (pp. 99–108), by John E. Ashbrook; chap. 5, "English Translations Before the King James Version" (pp. 109–127), by John K. Hutcheson, Sr.; chap. 6, "The Making of the King James Version" (pp. 129–145), by John C. Mincy; chap. 7, "The Changing King James Version" (pp. 147–167), by Mark R. Simmons; chap. 8, "Printed Greek Texts" (pp. 169–184), by William H. Smallman; chap. 9, "English Versions Since 1880" (pp. 185–209), by J. Drew Conley. The conclusion, "The Response to These Facts" (pp. 211–218), is by Keith E. Gephart. Eight of the nine chapters were written by the members of a group called "The Committee on the Bible's Text and Translation." One is a former missionary and the rest are or were pastors.

Their research was examined by several others in academic fields. Overall the book is well done, accurate, and enjoyable to read. The subject matter of the book is controversial, but the authors keep a Christian attitude, which is commendable. Several features make this a good book. For example, a 12-page glossary is helpful for those with little knowledge about manuscripts and translations of the Bible. All the basis areas are covered: inspiration, preservation, copying, texts, printed editions, the English Bible, and contemporary controversies. Most chapters have a short but useful bibliography at the end. The introduction says, "Many who are strong advocates of the KJV Only position believe that they are heroically defending the faith, when, in reality, they are defending false assumptions" (p. 4). This seems to be the problem that caused the authors to produce the book. The current Bible translation controversy is presented as the fourth major Protestant controversy since the Reformation, the others being liberalism, neo-evangelicalism and the charismatic movement.

The KJVO people specifically mentioned include Benjamin Wilkinson, J. J. Ray, David Otis Fuller, Peter Ruckman, D. A. Waite, E. L. Bynum, Jack Chick, Walter Beebe, and Gail Riplinger. These are "unqualified proponents of the KJV Only view" (p. 4). While this is true, the writings of these people are not adequately refuted in this book; indeed, very little at all is said about any of their publications. After the introduction, the section entitled "Our Final Authority" argues that the original-language texts, not any translations, are the authority we must all recognize. Inspiration and inerrancy of the original writings are strongly held. The next section, "Canonization and Apocrypha," is a good general survey, but is perhaps too long, considering the purpose and size of the book. Also, some of the best works on the canon are not mentioned, such as Beckwith's *The OT Canon in the NT Church* (Eerdmans, 1985).

The next section, "Let's Meet the Manuscripts," has more details and is a good introduction to textual studies. Many important details are necessarily omitted, but the basics are present. In "The Making of the King James Version," the beginner will learn enough to realize the KJV is a wonderful monument to God's grace, yet it has shortcomings, many of which are explored in "The Changing King James Version,"

the next section. There is limited information, but enough is given to dispel any perfection theories of KJVOs. Most of the important works are noted in "Printed Greek Texts," the next section. The last section is "English Versions Since 1880." The conclusion contains a challenge for all to admit to facts and follow truth. A plea is made to work for our Lord in unity rather than disunity.

There are some shortcomings that need to be noted. One general weakness is that there are no chapter titles with the page numbers. This makes referring to the sections difficult. There also are several typographical errors, inaccurate details, misleading statements, or other weak points in the book. Williams says "many" of the KJV translators were "baby baptizing" Anglicans (p. 4); he should say that all, not many, were Anglicans. He also maintains that the KJV was revised in 1612, 1613, 1616, 1629, 1638, 1659, and 1769 (p. 6), but the important 1762 revision of Thomas Paris was not mentioned. Downey says "the earliest English Bibles, being based on the Latin Vulgate of Jerome, had included the Apocrypha with disclaimers" (p. 44). However, only one, the Wycliffe Bible of the 1380s, actually fits this description. Erasmus' manuscripts are listed as "four or five" (p. 74) and "no more than five" (p. 103), but these are now recognized as seven. Minnick states that the Gospels section of "Codex Alexandrinus" is "the oldest existing Majority Text manuscript" (p. 82). However, manuscripts W, C, and Q are also dated to the fifth century by textual scholars. On p. 93, Charles Spurgeon's quotation "translations are not inspired" should be "translators are not inspired." Ashbrook states that Tyndale went to Cambridge University "about 1510" because Erasmus "taught there from 1509-14." However, it is almost certain that Tyndale arrived at Cambridge in 1515, after Erasmus had gone. Also, he says that Erasmus' Greek NT had 672 pages. However, this was only for vol. 2 (Romans-Revelation and notes) and there were page number errors so it had approximately 632 pages; vol. 1 had 333 pages, so the whole NT had close to 1,000 pages. Hutcheson says of Tyndale's work, "the NT appeared in 1525 and parts of the OT followed in 1534" (p. 113), but the NT was not likely printed until 1526 and parts of the OT were printed in 1530. He also says, "the 35 years after Tyndale's death [1536] saw a number of new English translations and revisions. At least seven Protestant versions were published and one Catholic version" (p. 114). However, it was 46 years before the first Catholic effort, the 1582 Rheims-Douay NT. It may be that 85 years (from Tyndale to the KJV in 1611) was meant. Mincy claims that the KJV was printed "in America not until 1752" (p. 138). To my knowledge this did not happen until 1782, the NT having been printed in 1777.

On pp. 170 and 230, the publishers of the *Textus Receptus* (TR) are called "the Elzevir brothers." This should be "the Elzevirs" (Abraham was Bonaventure's nephew, not brother). A note on p. 170 says that uncials other than Aleph were designated with letters of "the alphabet." It would be better as "the Latin and Greek alphabets." Smallman maintains that P45, P46, P47, P66, P72, and P75 are "all very significant witnesses of the Alexandrian Text type." This is misleading, because most of these are very mixed textually. P75 is practically the definition of the Alexandrian Text-type, but the others are not so clear. Conley states that the KJV and NKJV rely "on the traditional Greek text." This is true, but somewhat misleading. These two are based on the TR. The traditional text (as used by Burgon) refers to the majority text or Byzantine text, not just the TR. There are considerable differences.

The last item in the book is the glossary. It is helpful, but I wondered why the writers included items like Charismatic movement, incarnate, and third wave. These have little to do with a work of this sort.

The above shortcomings detract from the quality of this book, but it is still valuable for general readers. I do recommend it as a corrective to some of the misinfor-

mation being circulated today. A future edition could address the problems that have been noted and deal more specifically with the errors of the KJVO movement.

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*Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible.* By Jack Finegan. Revised edition. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998, xxxvii + 426 pp., \$34.95.

This is an extensive revision of Finegan's magnificent work published in 1964. It is not a work one normally reads from cover to cover but is rather a reference tool that one uses to solve a particular chronological problem.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1, "Principles of Chronology in the Ancient World," is further divided into three sections. The first section occupies only three pages discussing Hebrew, Greek, and Roman numerals. The second section (pp. 6–138), entitled "The Reckoning of Time in the Ancient World," discusses the following issues: units of time (day, week, month, year), calendars (e.g. Egyptian, Babylonian, Israelite, Greek Roman), official and regnal years, eras (Olympiads, Roman, Seleucid, Jewish, Christian), and sabbatical years, Jubilees, and priestly courses. In order to do any serious work in chronology, one needs to be familiar with how various nations and eras reckoned time, and Finegan provides a good working knowledge on these matters. The third section (pp. 139–192), entitled "Early Chronologies and Chronographers," discusses Greek, Roman, Jewish, and early Christian chronicles and chronographies and more specifically the chronologies of Africanus and Eusebius.

Part 2, "Problems of Chronology in the Bible," is naturally divided into two sections: OT and NT. The first section (pp. 195–269) addresses chronological problems in the patriarchal period, the exodus, the kingdom period, and the exilic and post-exilic times. Regarding the patriarchal period, Finegan discusses both the early date (migration of Abraham before 2000 BC) and the later date (migration of Abraham around 1900–1800 BC). The later date would put the patriarchal period between the 20th and 17th centuries (MB II), the position that Finegan considers the most convincing. Regarding the Exodus, he discusses both the early date (1446 BC) and the late date (1250 BC) and opts for the late date. Although in the last century there has been considerable discussion surrounding the kingdom period, Finegan accepts the system established by Thiele and the modifications by McFall.

The NT section (pp. 270–402) is divided into four subsections, on the lives of John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter, and Paul. The lives of John the Baptist and Jesus are interrelated and after discussing the priestly courses for John the Baptist's father Zechariah Finegan concludes that John the Baptist was probably born in 3 BC. Most of this section is devoted to the life of Jesus (pp. 279–369), where he discusses Jesus' birth, public ministry, and death followed by a summary of chronological schemes of the life of Jesus. In discussing his birth Finegan opts for a mid-January 2 BC date, accepting the 1 BC date for the death of Herod the Great. Regarding Jesus' public ministry, he thinks the commencement of John the Baptist's ministry mentioned in Luke 3:1 occurred in the "fifteenth year of Tiberius," that is, AD 29. Hence, the beginning of Jesus' public ministry would have occurred in the fall of AD 29 and the first Passover of his public ministry described in John 2:13–21 would then be dated in the spring of AD 30. Finegan concludes that the duration of Jesus' ministry was more than the one year that some suggest; more likely it was a period of more than

three years. As to the death of Jesus, he points out that the two most accepted dates are AD 30 and 33. After some discussion he concludes that Jesus was crucified on Friday, April 3, 33.

With regard to the life of Peter, Finegan agrees with Schwartz that Herod Agrippa I returned to Israel in early AD 41, persecuted the Christians and imprisoned Peter in the spring of 41, and died in 43/44. In light of the writings of the early church Fathers, he suggests that Peter left Israel in 41 and arrived in Rome in 42 but returned to Israel in 45, attended the Jerusalem Council in 49, shortly afterwards went to Antioch (where Paul confronted him) and remained there until his return to Rome in 56 (time of Nero's reign), and suffered martyrdom on June 29, 67. Finally, with regard to Paul's life, Finegan places Paul's conversion in AD 36, his missionary journeys in 47–55, the Jerusalem Council in 49, his Caesarean imprisonment in 55–57, his Roman custody in 58–60 and his martyrdom (along with Peter) on June 29, 67. The book is concluded with two short appendixes (pp. 403–407) concerning Usher's chronology and Faulstich's chronology based on modern astronomy and the use of computer technology.

Finegan presents the various views succinctly and fairly. At the beginning of each section he cites the relevant literature. There is excellent interaction with the primary and secondary sources. As mentioned above, this is a revision of his work published in 1964. It is a major revision with entirely new sections including, for example, "Sabbatical years, Jubilees, and Priestly Codes" (pp. 116–138), "Jewish Chroniclers and Chronographers" (pp. 140–152), "Life of John the Baptist" (pp. 274–279). He has also rewritten parts, most notably his chapter on the OT (pp. 194–269), which in the 1964 edition consisted of only 20 pages. He has updated his bibliography and included more tables. Much of his revision is due to more recent discussions on Biblical chronology. In places his conclusions differ from those of the earlier edition; for example, he now prefers 2 BC instead of 5/4 BC for Jesus' birth and AD 33 instead of AD 30 for Jesus' crucifixion.

The criticisms are minor. The letters of his outline for "The Life of Peter" and "The Life of Paul" should have been "C" and "D" (there is a duplication of "B") both in the Table of Contents (viii) and text (369, 390). His outline is inconsistent in the subpoints: normally he uses capital letters as the major subpoints under Roman numerals, but in the chapter on the OT he uses Arabic numbers under Roman numerals.

This work is exemplary scholarship and makes a valuable contribution to Biblical chronology. It should be seriously considered by anyone attempting to understand or solve a major problem in Biblical chronology. It is a book that should be in the library of every student of the Biblical text.

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*A Review and Reference Grammar for Biblical Hebrew.* By Malcolm J. A. Horsnell. Hamilton: McMaster University Press, 1998, 464, pp., \$41.95 paper.

With more than 20 years of experience teaching Semitic languages and interpretation, Horsnell is well qualified to write a "systematic grammar . . . for intermediate level students . . . to be used alongside regular reading in the Hebrew Bible" (p. iii). *A Review and Reference Grammar* is intended to fit into the "middle ground of more

detail than introductory grammars but not the overwhelming detail of the exhaustive [reference] works" (p. iii), such as GKC, *IBHS*, or Joüon-Muraoka.

The overall outline is typical of most introductory Hebrew grammars. Orthography (e.g. alphabet, vowels, *shewa*) is followed by a glossary of grammatical terms (e.g. "finite verb," "noun," "adverb"), which reflects an aspectual approach to the conjugations/tenses (p. 40). Lesson 7, "Survey of the Hebrew Verb," essentially defines terms such as "theme" and "fientivity"; the doubled stems are explained as "intensive" (a footnote allows that "intensiveness alone is not an adequate description" of their function, p. 45).

Having established a basic vocabulary, the next 85 pages (Lessons 8–22) introduce the morphology of the strong verb, followed by three lessons on syntax ("Vav Consecutive," "Nominal Sentences and Clauses," "Word Order"), which present a traditional understanding of clause- and sentence-level syntax. The rest of the first "part" (designed for the first semester of the students' second year of Hebrew) addresses matters of largely nominal syntax (e.g. prepositions, adjectives). After the paradigms of pronominal suffixes (Lesson 39), Lesson 40—at 75 pages the longest chapter in the book—addresses "Further [verbal] Syntax," beginning with verbal sequences and concluding with the idiomatic use of *hlk* and hendiadys. Three chapters designed to help students work with the Biblical text then precede the weak and guttural verbs.

The grammatical coverage is thorough. Horsnell presents an enormous amount of detailed morphological analysis (e.g. paradigms of ten major classes of nouns, and many subclasses), and his paradigms are nicely labeled and laid out, as well as accurate (the English text contains numerous typographical errors). Although it is not quite as exhaustive as the reference grammars, it is more complete in some cases, as, for example, when separate descriptions are given for, *inter alia*, suffixes with each verbal stem (except hithpael). The book contains a great amount of detail, but no exercises or vocabulary (Horsnell suggests using it in conjunction with regular translation assignments). Some of the syntactical discussions—especially that of the infinitive absolute—are outstanding, perhaps the best succinct presentations available.

A half-dozen chapters cover material often not part of first-year Hebrew (e.g. Lessons 36, "Accents," and 37, "Ketib & Qere"). The book's thrust, however, is grammar, not syntax or interpretation (despite Lessons 41, "Literary Types," and 43, "Reading and Translating the Hebrew Bible"). More than a third of the book consists of annotated paradigms (e.g. 50 pages of pronominal suffixes appended to various nominal and verbal forms; 100 pages of guttural and weak verbal roots).

The book seems to have been written apart from the insights of textlinguistics. The discussion of "Word Order" (Lesson 25) is thus—in my view—flawed by a mere sentence-level approach, which also affects the discussion of the meanings and functions of independent personal pronouns ("emphatic" in verbal clauses), verbal aspects (which "do not, strictly speaking, specify time, . . ." so that "time (tense) is determined by the context," p. 44), even though Horsnell accepts the existence of the "preterite," based on Akkadian parallels (p. 129). I have found both first- and second-year students greatly helped by basic discourse analysis, which explicitly views the verbal conjugations within the larger framework (cf. e.g. Andrew C. Bowling, "Another brief overview of the Hebrew verb," *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 9 [1997] 48–69; Randall Buth, "The Hebrew verb in current discussions," *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 5 [1992] 91–105). I also have a number of quibbles with scattered statements—e.g. *piel* as intensive, which is the first meaning listed (p. 98) or the passive meaning of *hithpael* as "rare" (p. 108)—but on issues like these Hebraists hold a variety of views.

Surprisingly, in a work intended for students' reference, there are no indexes, and bibliographic data is largely in the footnotes. Lesson 43 does contain a number of brief, annotated bibliographies—on Hebrew Bibles, Teaching Grammars, Lexicons/Dictionaries, Vocabulary Lists, Parsing Guides, English Translations, Interlinear Translations, Computer Software—which will prove helpful to beginning students.

Other concerns are largely pedagogical. For example, to include paradigms of conjectural forms (pual and hophal imperative and cohortative), and to provide rules for their formation and use (e.g. "The above positive imperative forms cannot be negated," pp. 102, 116) seems only likely to confuse students, since the forms themselves do not occur in Biblical Hebrew. By the same token, to tell students to wade through 50 pages of nominal paradigms seems more like to provoke despair ("I have to learn all this!"). My own experience teaching first- and second-year Hebrew suggests that students are ready to plow through the text, noticing—but not getting bogged down in—morphological anomalies, and letting their teacher point them to the most appropriate resources in order to answer their questions.

This volume represents a tremendous labor of love, undertaken to help students; it is, however, neither fish nor fowl. Students who are ready for more depth in their study of Hebrew should use the intermediate works on syntax, such as Williams, or go directly to the standard reference works, such as GKC, Joüon-Muraoka, or *IBHS*. Second-year students who need all the material in *A Review and Reference Grammar* probably need instead to repeat their first year of study.

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*Learn Biblical Hebrew*. By John H. Dobson. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999, 310 pp. and audio tape, \$33.50.

The methods of language pedagogy typically depend on whether the language is classical or modern. Classical languages (e.g. Latin, Koine Greek, Biblical Hebrew) have no living native speakers. Their introductory grammars typically emphasize rote memorization of paradigms and extensive translation exercises, and prepare the student to read ancient texts. Modern languages are intended to be spoken, not just read and written. Their texts emphasize the social context of language (e.g. a French grammar might have a chapter entitled, "Taking the train to Paris"), and make extensive use of spoken drills, either with a teacher or in a language laboratory. Dobson's introduction to Biblical Hebrew (BH) approaches a classical language as though it were modern. Dobson fully appreciates the significant differences between BH and Modern Hebrew, but he also appreciates that language is intrinsically behavioral rather than visual. He instructs students to review each lesson with the accompanying audio tape, which contains the exercises read aloud in a pronunciation close to Israeli Hebrew but with distinctions between long and short vowels that the modern language has lost. So strong is the aural emphasis that students are urged to work through the entire book before attempting to write Hebrew. The book is rich in mnemonic hints, such as miming words, singing along with songs on the tape, learning and using simple greetings and other interactions with fellow-students, sketching pictures to illustrate Hebrew phrases and sentences, and acting out a sentence while speaking it aloud.

The emphasis is not on decoding each sentence fully before moving to the next, but rather on trying to capture the gist of the text, using the parallel English translation given alongside each selection, and on moving quickly through the first thirteen chapters to build a broad overview of the language before delving into details. The first chapter, introducing the alphabet and pronunciation, is the only early chapter that attempts to treat a topic thoroughly. The other early chapters frequently introduce bits of several topics that enable the student to read realistic sentences. Systematic summaries are deferred to later chapters, where they have the effect of reviewing and systematizing phenomena that the student has already encountered repeatedly. For example, the student reads Deut 6:4 (containing a noun in construct with a pronominal suffix) and Gen 1:5 (using *waw*-consecutive) in chap. 1, through the construct is not discussed until chap. 7, nor *waw*-consecutive until chap. 19. The student learns BH first by encountering it holistically, giving the mind the opportunity to induce its structure, and then only later reinforcing these intuitions with structured grammatical rules and paradigms. In fact, many details are deferred to the last 30 pages, which by their heading (“The Grammar of Biblical Hebrew”) imply that the rest of the book is not to be considered a grammar.

The book is an introduction, suitable both for classroom use and for self-study, but it goes into some subjects not usually discussed until a second course. These include an extensive discussion of uses of perfective and imperfective aspects that are orthogonal to English instincts based in a tense system (chap. 21), the use and meaning of various clause sequences (chap. 22), a sensitive discussion of the differences between Hebrew prose and poetry (chap. 23), and a survey of idioms (chap. 25). Such an emphasis is expected from a member of the world’s preeminent community of field linguists, but this expectation does not lessen the novelty of the approach or diminish its effectiveness.

Happy the class whose teacher is bold enough to take this unconventional but humane and scientifically sound approach to learning BH.

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*The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: Introduction and Annotated Glossary.* By Page H. Kelley, Daniel S. Mynatt, and Timothy G. Crawford. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, xiv + 241 pp., \$26.00 paper.

Although Page Kelley (1924–1997) died shortly before the completion of this book, his collaborators—Daniel Mynatt (Anderson College) and Timothy Crawford (Bluefield College)—were able to “complete the volume without his guiding hand” (p. xiv), since the bulk of the work, which represents the fruit of more than a decade of study in a graduate seminar, was done.

Chapters 1–4 provide necessary background for chap. 5, introducing the topic of Masorah and giving students the basic skills necessary to reading Mp (chap. 1), such as recognizing the *circule* and its significance, distinguishing Mp notes with and without index numbers, and reading *Qere/Ketib* notes. The information in chaps. 2 (“History of the Masorah”) and 3 (“The Proto-Masoretic Text”) is widely available in various sources (as the authors admit); these may be, however, the best brief pedagogic presentations of this material in print. The material in chap. 3—“Orthographic Peculiarities” (e.g. large and small letters, suspended *nun*) and “Irregularities Mentioned in Oral Tradition” (e.g. *tiqqune* and *itture sopherim*)—is often found

in introductory discussions of textual criticism, but is here described with special clarity, and well illustrated. Chapter 4, "Working with Masoretic Notes," is another outstanding discussion, describing different types of notes (e.g. "frequency notes," "qualitative notes," "notes giving parallels"), and ending with a narrative interpretation and explanation of 14 Mp notes.

The heart of the book, however, is chap. 5, "A Glossary of Masoretic Terms," which contains an alphabetical list of nearly every term found in Mp of *BHS*, an explanation of the term, alternate forms, and several examples of its use, which are fully and accurately explained (with the very rare confession that the precise meaning or significance of a particular note is unknown). This section is easy to use and written clearly enough to benefit students just beginning to read the Hebrew Bible.

Pedagogically, the book would be strengthened by examples of how the choice of, e.g. *qere* or *ketib*, affects the reading of the text (or, even better, where different translations have followed one reading or the other), which might help motivate students to learn more about the Masorah. That is, granted the presence of Mp in *BHS* (and, presumably, *BHQ*), why should students learn [about] this apparently pedantic material? Any teacher can address this need, but some examples would strengthen an already most impressive *tour de force*.

This work is not intended to displace Ginsberg (which does not address the interpretation of the Masorah) or Yeivin (which seems to be designed for those who do not really need it), but it will encourage students, not frighten them away, and should draw them into the study of this fascinating field.

With an extensive bibliography (including a list of thirteen reviews of *BHS*), and a Scripture index, this book will be a most useful tool that fulfills its authors' goals. I am delighted to recommend it most highly.

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*All Things New: The Significance of Newness for Biblical Theology.* By Carl B. Hoch, Jr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995, 365 pp. \$19.99.

The late Carl Hoch, Jr., NT scholar, Th.D. with highest honors from Dallas Theological Seminary, ETS member and professor at Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, has produced a work worthy of wide reading by Biblical theologians and NT scholars and students. The work is a carefully constructed, yet interesting treatment of the new covenant, but it also elucidates the meaning of new wineskins, new teaching, new commandment, new creation, new man, and several similar items.

Hoch's exegesis and theological insight are exceptional. His expression is lucid, his research thorough. I learned much and recommend this work wholeheartedly. Hoch interacts with the latest and best sources from broad contexts—evangelical, liberal, and Catholic, including non-English writings. The bibliography—twenty-five pages and over six hundred entries—boasts the most recent research.

One reason this volume claimed my interest was the way it bridges so many theological topics. Ecclesiology, eschatology, and Christian ethics all depend, as Hoch notes, on whether one sees much "newness" in the NT. Should we identify Israel and the Church, equate the OT priesthood and Christian clergy, replace circumcision with infant baptism, call Sunday the Christian Sabbath, and use the Mosaic law as the rule of life for Christian believers? Not seeing newness tends to that end. Hoch

believes “a continuity does exist between the testaments and needs to be spelled out carefully” (p. 54). He asks, “Did Christ come to patch up or to change?” The parable of the new wineskins demonstrates the latter. “Newness is centrally important to the New Testament. That is why the New Testament is called the ‘new testament’ or ‘covenant’” (p. 55). In one chapter, Hoch gives seven reasons for holding that the new covenant is *actually* a new covenant and not a renewed old covenant. He gives a studied look at the contexts of each of the major new covenant texts—Ezekiel 11 and 36, Jeremiah 31, Luke 22, 1 Corinthians 11, 2 Corinthians 3 and Hebrews 7–13—and treats the problem of Paul and the Law. Hoch is fully abreast of the best scholarship on each topic and is able to evaluate and integrate it into all his arguments.

Many practical lessons accompany Hoch’s superb exegesis. Each chapter also includes a brief annotated bibliography suggesting further study. Each aspect of Hoch’s presentation is extensive. For example, he shows how Christ’s teaching is “new” with regard to fifteen different issues, an exposition of the observation that Christ’s teaching was “new doctrine” with authority (Mark 1:27).

Hoch includes a much-needed emphasis on the ethical implications of the new man. He does not hold that “ethics are nice but not necessary” (p. 178). Church unity will only be experienced as believers practice certain virtues: they “experience the unity subjectively that Christ has created objectively” (p. 178). These virtues are humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance, and love. As a practical application, Hoch chides the church’s emphasis on externals, criticizing it for “preaching against practices such as smoking, drinking, dancing, and card-playing, but ignoring greed, slan-der, backbiting, strife, and enmity” (p. 183). It was refreshing to find such practical notes in a theological treatise.

After detailing the distinctiveness of newness as seen in salvation history, particularly in Luke-Acts and the Pentecostal events, Hoch devotes nine chapters to expound the ways this newness is referenced in the NT. Hoch’s final part of the book deals with the practical aspects of newness and the individual Christian, then newness and the Church. Citing Robert Gundry, he points out that for Paul, works are never instrumental for salvation but are certainly evidential of salvation. Calvin similarly said that man is saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves will never be alone. Hoch’s treatment is excellent as he expounds on life in the Spirit and warfare against the flesh. He teaches sanctification in incremental steps over time. “Maturity in Christ,” he notes, “develops from growth multiplied over time” (p. 224). He contends, “The focus of ministry within the body of Christ must constantly be upon Scripture, prayer, and fellowship. These are the means of grace that God has given his new covenant people to produce maturity” (p. 224). Hoch’s two emphases for the Church are edification and extension, and he very practically portrays four models frequently followed in churches today: lecture room, theater, large corporation, and fellowship. His emphasis would be to take the good points of each and then immerse them into servanthood.

Hoch has two appendices: “The Israel Problem: Is the Church the New Israel?” and “The Use of the Term *Israel* in the NT.” His answer is that the church is not the new Israel and his arguments are the most cogent and clearly reasoned I have seen. Hoch’s exposition covers the material fully, fairly, and clearly.

Subject and Scripture indexes cover twenty pages, but for some reason these are sketchy; that is, some entries are not referenced for particular individuals, and strangely even the bibliography with over 600 sources omits some that are cited in the text. Hebrew and Greek words are used plentifully, but the reader needs knowledge of those words because they are rarely transliterated and in many cases not even translated in the text.

In spite of these minor items, I commend Carl Hoch for a fine, challenging and enlightening volume on such a crucial and current topic of Biblical theology, and I urge Baker Books to reissue this important work.

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*Introduction to Christian Theology: Contemporary North American Perspectives.* Edited by Roger A. Badham. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1998, 278 pp. \$28.95 paper.

North American Christian theology in the twentieth century has provided a place at the table for many diverse theological voices. Sometimes diversity has arisen from within a particular school of thought and has helped to develop new ways of doing theology (liberation theology, for example). Roger A. Badham, former chaplain at Cornell University and current doctoral candidate at Drew University, has compiled an introductory text that allows many of the formative voices of twentieth-century theology to speak for themselves. From evangelicals to process theologians, a wide range of God-talk is represented in the pages of this book.

Badham begins by succinctly surveying the theological landscape of the twentieth century, citing modernism, pluralism, and the Holocaust as the three major formative movements/events that have shaped (and continue to shape) current theological thinking. In the final two chapters of the introduction ("The Contemporary Setting For Theology"), John Hick and Clark M. Williamson discuss the effects of pluralism and relations between Christians and Jews respectively. The introduction leaves little doubt that current theological thinking, perhaps more than ever before, has been obliged to become truly global in perspective and context.

Badham has included chapters in each section of the book written by innovative and influential thinkers in their various theological paradigms. Evangelicalism or "conservationist" theology is the first theological area discussed. This is done by Carl F. H. Henry, Thomas C. Oden, and Clark Pinnock. One would be hard pressed to find a more diverse threesome of scholars within the same discipline. Their diversity reminds the reader that evangelicalism is more than a static set of beliefs; rather, it is a dynamic movement embracing certain core values that have helped shape the theological landscape of the twentieth century. One wonders, with Clark Pinnock, if this influence will continue in this century in light of the three challenges facing theology mentioned in the introduction.

Next, Badham enlists James J. Buckley and Stanley Hauerwas to speak for "Postcritical and Cultural-Linguistic Theologies." Buckley lends a Catholic perspective to postliberal theology in which crucial issues like Protestant-Catholic relations, Vatican II, and pluralism are addressed. Buckley sees postliberalism's emphases and approach as a positive contribution, not only to Catholic-Protestant relations, but also to the voice of North American and world theology. He cites in his conclusion that the greatest contribution of postliberal theology comes from the fact that, while it may not provide a fully comprehensive vision, it points "like a crooked line" beyond merely liberal or modern theology and therefore may provide a theology "for Catholic and evangelicals, open to Israel and the nations in humble trust that God can make all things work for the good" (p. 100).

Hauerwas, an ethicist, writes not only of the flourishing and development of his discipline, but also of the "present exhaustion" of the discipline of Christian ethics;

Hauerwas's chapter is therefore subtitled "A Promising Obituary." This chapter is important not just for its tracing of the timeline and emphases of ethics as a discipline in America, but also for its inclusion of several overlooked ethicists and theologians whose work has contributed to the ongoing discussion of ethics and its future as a discipline.

Part four, entitled "Liberal and Progressivist Theologies," clarifies the positions and contributions of Roman Catholic moral theologies, correlational theologies, and process theology. These theological movements, which have largely been characterized as "academic" theologies (especially due to the University of Chicago Divinity School), remind us that at very least these theological paradigms have caused most of Christianity to question inherited categories. The names and emphases associated with Roman Catholic moral theology, process theology, and empirical theology make necessary study areas for evangelicals and others who may not be as informed with these important voices (especially in the academy) on the North American scene.

The next section, "Liberation and Feminist Theologies," reminds the reader that rumors of the demise of liberation theologies have been greatly exaggerated. Liberation and feminist theologies are expanding their boundaries to seek to address more specifically the diverse voices that are arising in North America and questioning the Western tendency to polarize. Noticeably absent from this section is a chapter on ecological and homosexual theological movements; however, throughout the book, these two areas of theological consideration are mentioned as factors in the "doing of theology" in the twentieth century and beyond.

The book ends with a chapter by a theologian. Taylor writes that fundamentalism or foundationalism (the search for secure foundations of thought and action) should be vigorously resisted. The foundationalists, Taylor claims, are only right about one thing: something has gone terribly wrong with modernity. For those new to post-modern theology, this chapter, although an excellent introduction, may seem a bit confusing at times. Taylor's conclusion is that the "end" of theology is near, meaning that theology as seen through modern or foundationalist paradigms will soon end.

For professors, theology students, and pastors seeking a text with concrete examples of the most influential movements in North American Christianity, one would be hard-pressed to find a one-volume work with as much information. Because of the great diversity of some of the chapters, students would be advised to read the arguments with a "suspended disbelief" so as to more fully appreciate the perspective of each author. After reading this introduction to contemporary North American Theology, one sees that theology, like the nation itself, has become more of a salad bowl than a melting pot, and all Christians must recognize the rather large theological table at which many diverse voices have gathered in this new millennium.

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*Restoring the Center: Essays Evangelical & Ecumenical.* By Gabriel Fackre. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998, 179 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Gabriel Fackre, emeritus professor of theology at Andover Newton, describes himself as an evangelical ecumenist, or perhaps an ecumenical evangelical. In this work he offers readers a series of articles, essays, book reviews and lectures that are

loosely held together by the theme of movements in both ecumenical and evangelical circles toward a common center. After an introductory essay sketching theological developments over the past fifty years, the book is divided into three parts: "Signs of Recentering," "Ecumenical and Evangelical Explorations," and "The Search for the Center in Ethics and Institutions."

Because each chapter originated as an independent, stand-alone essay or lecture that has appeared in print elsewhere, the book lacks a clear developmental progression. Some chapters have more to do with the guiding theme of the book than others. Some are only tangentially related. The author believes that there is a centrist movement struggling to be born in mainline churches and that a corresponding struggle is taking place in evangelical churches. Fackre himself and the United Church of Christ for which he is an important voice have been deeply enmeshed in ecumenical conversation for many years. His ecumenical agenda drives the various essays and lectures. He wants to encourage mainline and evangelical churches to listen to one another and, where possible, to find common cause in mission, theology, and practice. Fackre believes that the present moment offers exceptional opportunities for this to happen.

The author identifies three developments that have taken place in theology during the 1990s: (1) an increased tribalizing, i.e. doing theology within and for one's own camp (e.g. process, mystical, and evangelical theologies); (2) pluralistic theologies operating from a common core of piety, which tend to fade into a pragmatic it-works-for-me approach; and (3) a risk-taking approach based on a "Corinthian model." In the latter, the gifts of each approach to theology find appreciation and correction as needed. While the first two developments stand in considerable tension, Fackre believes that the third offers a great deal of promise. The alternative to a Corinthian catholicity is balkanization, armed camps that don't know how to talk to one another.

Decrying "tribal theology," some of the essays devote significant space to efforts in the United Church of Christ to embrace a theological center. The author insists that a centrist theology need not imply a lazy, noncommittal theology that stands for nothing. As needed, a centrist theology is ready to risk polemics as well as to venture irenics. Fackre wants to embrace evangelicals, catholics, and mainline denominations in the Corinthian model. He believes the model calls for mutual affirmation coupled with mutual admonition.

Fackre's essays merit a careful hearing. He may be correct that today's struggles in mainline churches together with the rethinking going on in evangelical circles present an unusually opportune time for believers to offer a reasonably united voice to the world. If it is to do that, the united voice must have a message of substance. Fackre wants the united voice to come from (1) a Christological center, (2) centrist doctrinal affirmations that have borne the test of time, and (3) a centrist stance that spans movements on the theological left and right.

Fackre's essays are well worth hearing, but they do raise questions. Among them: (1) Might one not argue that mutual affirmation and admonition are taking place within the current evangelical/catholic/mainline theological scene? Is the isolation—the "tribalization"—as pervasive as the author seems to intimate? Several of the recent works in systematic theology surveyed by the author enter into conversation across theological approaches. (2) What would the church/theological world he envisions look like? Would he like to see a merging of church governments, mutual recognition of clergy, and/or standardization of modes of worship? If these were to be realized, what is the source of the mutual affirmation and admonition? It is not clear where Fackre wants to move churches and individuals of different confessional traditions. It would be interesting to see the author flesh out the concepts of mutual affirmation and admonition.

Fackre is a seasoned theologian. He is always worth considering. These essays and lectures will contribute to efforts of believers to hear one another across centuries-old barriers as well as those of more recent vintage.

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*Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision.* By David F. Wells. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, 240 pp., \$20.00 paper.

Trying to capture the central themes of David Wells's *Losing Our Virtue* is not unlike attempting to summarize the book of Proverbs in a paragraph. The book is so rich, so layered, and so loaded with both probative sub-themes and mini-jeremiads that describing its central argument almost diminishes Wells's outsized contribution to our understanding of the needs of the Church and the world. The third of Wells's biting analyses of what ails modern man, Christian and secular (his earlier, and important, works are *No Place for Truth* and *God in the Wasteland*), *Losing Our Virtue* is an evaluation of how postmodernism and simple worldliness have infected the thinking and practice of the Church.

Some of Wells's concerns appear rooted in personal distaste as much as theological conviction. He intensely dislikes hand clapping during church services, sappy contemporary Christian music and modern dance as an expression of worship. Yet aside from his own preferences, it is hard to dismiss his main point: "Today's churchly trendiness is really yesterday's unbelief." Wells views the infusion of popular culture into the Church as evidence of a diminution of the Church's vision of God and suggests that in our eagerness to be relevant, we have become merely desperate. We have forsaken faith in the power of the gospel to transform and replaced it with marketing strategies and appeals to the very secularism against which the kingdom of God has set itself.

But the book is much more than this. Wells engages in a careful dissection of the moral health of our culture and is disturbed by what he finds. As a result of jettisoning the concept of truth, our culture has lost its capacity to talk about good and evil. As a result, the Church is too ready to find alternative language to try to reach a generation that, in Wells's view, has difficulty distinguishing between the frivolous and the important. Even our ability to acknowledge a general sense of conscience—Wells borrows the term "obedience to the unenforceable"—has been grossly diminished. Consider this trenchant passage from a chapter entitled "The Bonfire of the Self:" "The inevitable outcome of treating the self as the locus of all meaning and of all moral values . . . is that both meaning and values become relativized to each self. If self-consciousness is private, unique and individualized, then moral values, if they arise in the self, are as private and individualized as the self in which they reside." This kind of insight is rare in Christian writing today—and no less urgent for its rareness.

Wells's basic conclusion is posed as a question: "Is it too much to hope that the evangelical Church can yet again recover its moral seriousness, that it can recover its vision of the holiness of God, its trust in the greatness of his power? This is the key, strange as it may seem, to Christian effectiveness in the postmodern world."

What many would challenge is Wells's exceptionally dire appraisal of the moral and spiritual health of the church. Clearly, there is much to raise the concern of mature believers: the theological ignorance of too many who sit in our church pews;

attempts to gain a hearing that produce an innocuous, and pathetic, preaching and teaching ministry; and a preoccupation with the self so pronounced that the salient purpose of the church—to know Christ and make him known, in all his love and holiness—are obscured by the “what God can do for me” mentality of the continuing “me” generation. But one must wonder if Wells does not overstate his case. The courageous, and publicly visible, orthodoxy of the Southern Baptist Convention is but one example of the way in which some evangelicals are seeking to adhere with greater fidelity to the teachings of Scripture. Many “mega-churches” with multiple thousands of members are growing not because of exotic programs but because they are composed of people who know how to love and are led by godly men who accurately handle the word of truth.

Wells is one of the most profound Christian thinkers of our time, and *Losing Our Virtue* is one of the most important books of recent years. His insight is keen, his burden righteous, his moral pain deeply felt. His resonant portrait of a culture that is self-destructing is in itself sufficient to justify purchasing and studying this book. Even if one disagrees with Wells’s assessment of the depth to which postmodern culture has penetrated the church, it is hard to dispute his take on the general spirit of the age. And that is sobering—and convicting—enough.

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*Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of the Scriptures.* By Jeffery L. Sheler. New York: Harper San Francisco/Zondervan, 1999, 288 pp., \$30.00 hardcover.

Does recent historical and archeological evidence support or discredit the Biblical narratives? This is the primary question that Jeffery Sheler, a religion writer for the *U.S. News and World Report*, seeks to answer in this volume designed for a popular audience.

Sheler divides the book topically into five main multiple chapter parts, to address (1) the relation of the Bible and history, including issues of authorship and canonicity of Biblical books; (2) the degree to which recent findings in archeology support the Biblical narratives; (3) the discovery and significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls; (4) the quest for the historical Jesus and the Jesus Seminar; and (5) the proposal and rebuttal of the purported Bible code. In a brief final section, Sheler writes a retrospective summary regarding the title question about the truth of the Bible.

On the whole, the first four parts offer a helpful summary of recent archeological findings and historical interpretations that reflect on the accuracy of the Biblical narratives. They provide the layperson who is not familiar with sources such as *Biblical Archeology Review* with a useful summary of recent extrabiblical evidence for and against the truthfulness of Scripture. Sheler crafts a carefully balanced presentation of the contrasting interpretations of archeological data offered by Biblical minimalists such as William Dever, on the one hand, and Biblical archeologists in the tradition of W. F. Albright on the other hand. Although the book unfortunately does not have a subject or Scriptural index for easy access, the archeological findings are discussed helpfully according to time periods in Biblical history—the patriarchal period, the exodus, the settlement of the promised land, the era of the united and divided kingdoms, and the NT era. Sheler also offers a balanced approach to the contribution of the Jesus Seminar. The inclusion of an extended discussion of the

purported Bible code in part five is curious and unfortunate, since this discussion does not approach the level of scholarly discussion in the other sections of the book. The Bible code section makes no clear contribution to the issues raised in the title of the book, and it is not directly related to any of the other material in the book.

Sheler admits in the introduction that he writes as “neither a Bible scholar nor a theologian, but a journalist” (p. 2). He argues, however, that historical claims about the Bible are “fundamentally journalistic ones: What really happened and why? What was really said? How reliable are the sources?” (p. 2). Sheler’s claim that historical issues are essentially journalistic ones seems to recognize no essential difference between the search for “facts” in the scholarly investigation of centuries-old events and finding the score in yesterday’s baseball game. Curiously, Sheler appears to rebut his own claim just a few pages later when he states that “the Bible is not journalism, nor does it purport to be” (p. 23). Sheler cannot have it both ways. Either the events described in Scripture are factual or not. While it is appropriate to move from event to significance, it is difficult to understand how anything that did not happen could have much significance.

Sheler’s admission that this book is not a scholarly work is made painfully clear by his bibliography. While he certainly utilizes many excellent sources, Sheler rather indiscriminately sprinkles in a number of popular, unscholarly sources. For example, he has over fifty references to various basic dictionaries and encyclopedias, and he derives his definition of “history” from *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*. He refers over forty times to various magazines designed for a popular audience. He makes over thirty references to introductory texts, including basing an interpretation of Genesis 22 on *Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Sheler’s research relies heavily on a number of personal interviews, but since some of the interviews are nearly a decade old, their contribution is dubious in the fast-changing fields of archeology and historical interpretation.

Unfortunately, Sheler does not appear to realize how significant his naive historicism and lack of theological sophistication play in undermining his arguments. He parrots arguments that scholars make for and against the facticity of various events, but Sheler articulates no tenable historical method to weigh these claims against each other; thus, the lack of scholarly consensus results in a deadlock. Not surprisingly, then, Sheler finds the evidentiary value of the archeological findings to be somewhat minimal. The subtitle of the book suggests that the archeological data will resolve the issue of the truth of Scripture, but Sheler concludes instead with a rather Bultmannian appeal to faith: “More than the precision of its historiography, it is the power of its inspired testimony and the resonance of its timeless message that has earned the Bible the fidelity and trust of countless millions through the centuries who, having read and believed, have encountered in their own experience the self-revealing God of the universe” (p. 256).

Sheler’s theological naivete is even more disturbing. He states that “this is not a book about theology or the Bible’s theological claims” (p. 2). The apostle Paul would be shocked to hear that the historicity of the resurrection had nothing to say about theological claims (1 Cor 15:1–20). Furthermore, Sheler seems unaware that the doctrine of revelation is pivotal for Christian theology. Sheler simply assumes without evidence his view of inspiration as “a human witness to historical events” (p. 23), apparently without understanding how this doctrinal perspective colors his perspective. Throughout the book, Sheler discounts “Biblical literalism,” warning that someone looking to find “a ringing defense of Biblical literalism should look elsewhere” (p. 3). Attributing Biblical literalism to conservatives is a common malady endemic to secular journalists, despite the fact that it is impossible to find conservative theologians who describe their own hermeneutic in terms of such a wooden literalism.

The most raging fundamentalist does not believe that when he said, "I am the door," Jesus meant that he literally swung on hinges. While Sheler unfortunately does not define "literalism," he appears to use it in the sense of interpreting a text as referring to actual historical events. Such a negative attitude toward factual truth is incongruent in a volume whose title promises to affirm the essence and truth of Scripture through an examination of the archeological and historical evidence. Since Sheler purports to endorse a hermeneutic that texts should not be taken literally, perhaps we should take him at his word and interpret his book as an allegorical representation of the Detroit Yellow Pages, and thus have nothing to say about the truthfulness of Scripture. If, however, Sheler insists that his plain sense meaning should be taken more seriously, perhaps we could revisit how such a "literal" hermeneutic might also apply to interpreting Scripture.

In short, Sheler is readable and accessible, but does not afford the depth and perspective to offer a significant contribution to the field.

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*Our Father in Heaven: Christian Faith and Inclusive Language for God.* By John W. Cooper. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998, 301 pp., \$19.99 paper.

The gender-inclusive language debate has yet to reach its zenith in theological and pastoral circles. In theological circles the debate centers around the validity of gender-inclusive language as an adequate model for speaking about the Godhead, whereas in pastoral circles the discussion tends to focus more on the practicality of such a model. John Cooper's work masterfully reaches both circles. The purpose of the book is to make a contribution to the theological debate, yet it also raises the question of whether it is prudent to employ such a model in the Church.

Cooper argues for the necessity of using the revealed Biblical language when speaking of the Godhead. Foundational for his approach is a high regard and even reverence for God's self-revelation in Scripture, coupled with an insistence on the correct employment of Biblical language as it refers to God. Cooper is quick to acknowledge the adequate usage of feminine language in the Bible as it refers to God, but he rightly points to the restricted nature of such language. He argues that maternal references for God in the Bible only occur in the form of similes, analogies, metaphors, and personifications, never in the form of titles or names for God.

Cooper's work moves cogently from the identification of the debate through its various facets to a comprehensive and praxis-oriented solution for both circles. After beginning the work with a chapter defining the gender-inclusive language debate, he moves into an explanation of the elements that comprise the gender-inclusive language position. Cooper's argument against the usage of inclusive language focuses on the weaknesses of various theological and philosophical arguments for inclusive language. The more significant inclusive statements that he refutes include: (1) God accommodated a patriarchal society that authored the Biblical material; (2) revelation occurs in a woman's experience; (3) both men and women image God equally; (4) people name God; and (5) the words *father* and *mother* are equally metaphorical. Cooper is fair in representing the position of those who hold to an inclusivist position. However, he rightly points out that the inclusivist position inherits a number of theological and linguistic problems, namely, an inability to properly account for

the revelation of God as *Father* and *Son* in Scripture and an inappropriate use of feminine language for God.

Next, Cooper develops his argument against the inclusivist position by demonstrating that (1) Scripture contains both feminine and masculine language for God, but (2) there is a significant difference between how the Bible uses such language and how inclusivists use such language. He identifies numerous feminine references to God such as the simile of Isa 66:13, the analogy of Isa 49:15, and the personification of Proverbs 8. It is important to note Cooper lists numerous examples of birthing metaphors as maternal (i.e. Num 11:12; Deut 32:18), but he then questions whether these metaphors are referring to God as maternal or to the process of birthing as maternal. Nonetheless, he concludes that these feminine references provide a partial picture of the character of God; however, they do not identify God. God has revealed Himself as the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit*, and these identities for the persons of the Godhead are not mutually exchangeable for words such as *mother*, *parent*, *child* or the like. Cooper argues for an understanding of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit* as the revealed identities of God. Since these words are titles and names, they indicate aspects of the one being named. God names himself and in so doing he reveals his character and in some respects aspects of his essence.

Cooper concludes by providing the reader with a number of reasons why the inclusivist position fails to properly reflect Christian orthodoxy, piety, and practice. Chief among these is that employing feminine language for the Godhead violates how God reveals himself. The Trinity can never be adequately reflected by any linguistic construction other than *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit*. Also, Cooper correctly identifies the connection between inclusive language and pantheism: Full employment of inclusive language for God results in an ontological connection between the Creator and the creation. He argues that there is a real danger of slipping into idolatry when employing inclusive language that does not rightly reflect the Biblical model. Cooper also discounts all claims that the Bible is a sexist body of literature. Yet, having said this, he returns to the wellspring—the fact that Scripture itself provides the model for addressing the Godhead—and argues that this current attempt at linguistic accommodation does not rightly reflect the Biblical model.

The strength of this work lies in its comprehensive critique of the various planks in the inclusivist position, coupled with its insistence on the correct usage of Biblical language in reference to God. Another strength of the work is its comprehensive scope. Cooper (1) addresses the nature of the gender-inclusive language debate; (2) offers theological arguments for and against the gender-inclusive language position; (3) surveys the gendered language for God in Scripture; and (4) argues cogently against the inclusivist position. It is certain that further work remains to be done in a number of these areas; however, Cooper has presented the reader with an adequate discussion of the important issues. One issue not fully addressed but which deserves more attention is the question of why God has revealed himself as *Father* and *Son*. Cooper affirms that God has chosen to reveal himself using masculine language, and he demonstrates that this is the overwhelmingly predominant pattern of Scripture. But he never explains why God—beyond obvious divine favor—has chosen this pattern. Cooper provides a brief explanation of the theological significance of the messianic connection between *Father* and *Son* in terms of kinship titles, but he stops short of saying *Father* and *Son* are actually names. If *Father* and *Son* are names as well as kinship titles, then the theological significance must be explained. In my view, one answer is that God uses masculine language to convey his authority. This issue deserves further treatment.

Ultimately, John Cooper concludes that gender-inclusive language for God is untenable. He states, "We charge that inclusive language for God is guilty beyond reasonable doubt of deviating from the doctrine and piety of biblical Christianity" (p. 263).

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*The Cross and Salvation.* By Bruce Demarest. Wheaton: Crossway, 1997, 544 pp., \$25.00 paper.

This is a very good book about that most distinctive and vital Christian doctrine: salvation in Christ. It is the first volume in a new series *Foundations of Evangelical Theology*, edited by John S. Feinberg. After an introductory chapter Demarest launches into a thorough discussion of his topic with a further eleven chapters on the doctrines of grace, election, atonement, divine calling, conversion, regeneration, union with Christ, justification, sanctification, preservation and perseverance, and glorification. Within the middle ten of these chapters, a helpful fourfold pattern is followed: First, the issues ("Introductory Concerns") are defined. Second, a cross-section of opinion from the history of Christian thought is summarized. Third, the Biblical revelation is applied to the discussion in some detail. Finally, the implications for a Christian lifestyle are addressed.

No two theologians could be expected to undertake such a huge project or even to illustrate the issues in the same way, and Demarest's choices signal the expectation that he expects his readers will, like him, be conservative evangelicals. Nonetheless, the book is certainly not evangelical in a narrow sense. For example, although the author's Baptist sympathies are fairly clear (see the sizeable number of index entries under "Baptism, water" and "Baptist theology"), he does balance these with fair representations of other viewpoints. This balance is also seen in the fact that, apart from the Biblical writers, the twelve authors most frequently cited by Demarest are Augustine, Barth, F. F. Bruce, Calvin, Finney, Luther, John Murray, J. I. Packer, Spurgeon, A. H. Strong, and John Wesley. From this list it is clear that Roman Catholic opinion is much less extensively discussed, though it is not entirely absent.

From an international perspective the American context is a little intrusive at times. The opening paragraph, for example, is a discussion of America's waning Christian heritage, and some of the debates discussed have barely surfaced in other parts of the English-speaking world. Moreover, I was amazed to find no mention at all of John Stott's comprehensive *The Cross of Christ* (InterVarsity, 1986), and I cannot imagine that the Biblical discussions would not have been strengthened by a consideration of the writings of Leon Morris (e.g. his *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* and *The Cross of Jesus*) and Michael Green's fine discussion of the Biblical material in his *The Meaning of Salvation* (Hodder, 1965)—to mention but three non-American evangelical scholars. And is there nothing at all we evangelicals could learn from Moltmann's moving work *The Crucified God*, flawed though it obviously is? Moreover, two key Biblical words are virtually ignored. The first is (God's) *love*. The word is completely absent from the fairly comprehensive index, though there is a long entry for *law* and cognates. The very good chapter on *grace*—entirely relevant as it is—does not compensate for this omission. Is it not because God so *loved* the world that Christ was given? The other omission that surprised me is the concept of *covenant*. This reviewer cannot imagine discussing salvation (especially in a volume

of more than 500 pages) without linking it clearly with the notion of covenant—though perhaps that simply draws attention to my coming from a different stream of the evangelical tradition than Demarest.

Nonetheless, all of those faults would be easily ignored, or remedied, in the teaching context in which the volume will be widely welcomed and used. In fact, I can imagine more than one teacher (myself included) considering the construction of an entire course around this book—even if further reading is required. (To the supplementary volumes mentioned above I would also add the fine Mennonite study by John Driver: *Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church*.) Moreover, Demarest's competence in several disciplines means the work would stretch even advanced students into that integration of Biblical foundations, theology (including theology in its historical dimensions), and personal/ministry application for which we all surely long.

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*Agape, Eros, Gender: Towards a Pauline Sexual Ethic.* By Francis Watson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, x + 268 pp., \$59.95.

Francis Watson's previous efforts to discuss the integration of interpretation, Biblical studies, and theology (most recently, *Text, Church and World: Biblical Interpretation in Theological Perspective*, 1997) provide context for his latest contribution. In this intriguing work, Watson does not discuss Paul's teaching on gender and sexuality comprehensively; he mentions key passages like Gal 3:28, 1 Corinthians 7, and 1 Tim 2:11–15 only briefly. Instead, Watson focuses on three passages—1 Corinthians 11, Romans 7 and Ephesians 5—that for him point in the direction of a Pauline sexual ethic.

The unique contribution is Watson's approach to these texts. He begins each section of the book with a discussion of a modern text that he connects to a Biblical text. For 1 Corinthians 11, Watson selects Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas*; for Romans 7, it is selections from Freud; and for Ephesians 5, he begins with the introductory reflections from Luce Irigaray's *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*. Each text becomes a jumping off point against which a reading of the Biblical text is made. This attempt to bridge the ancient text to modern concerns is laudable, but it is not always clear that the reading brings us closer to Paul's meaning. Watson's examination of the Biblical texts is detailed and sensitive to exegetical and historical considerations, but this is not traditional commentary.

Any attempt to summarize Watson's argument would necessarily be inadequate. He makes subtle and complex points, weaving together his modern texts, Paul's texts, and historical interpretations ranging from Augustine to Barth. A few highlights of his interpretations of the key texts will help explain his basic approach.

Watson interprets *doxa* in 1 Cor 11:7 to be the object of joy and love rather than a reflection or that which brings honor. Women should be veiled because they are the object of erotic love and devotion; thus, the veil excludes eros from the community and insures that agape is its norm. This does not seem to be a persuasive reading of 1 Corinthians 11, but it provides the framework for much of his later discussion.

In Romans 7, sexual desire is paradigmatic of all wrong desires. As such, it has universal implications; it reveals fallen human nature. Watson reads the later Freud's balance between the superego and the id as analogous to the Augustinian

interpretation of the struggle of Romans 7. Against Irigaray's insistence that eros is the defining fact of human existence, Watson advocates a traditional Christian view of sexual morality. He points to the Jesus of the Gospel narratives, who demonstrates that one can be fully human without sex, that agape can exist apart from eros. At the same time, the agape of marriage is the proper space within which eros should function.

Watson's reading of Paul is egalitarian. 1 Corinthians 11 does not describe a hierarchy (or an egalitarian alternative) but contrasts a community grounded in agape with one grounded in eros. Paul's command to mutual submission in Ephesians 5 shows a "drift towards unilateral subjection" (p. 230), but Watson defines subjection as reciprocal love to resolve this self-contradiction.

Pauline scholars will certainly want to be aware of Watson's work, but this is more a theological analysis. Those looking for a comprehensive examination of Paul's teaching on gender and sexuality may be disappointed. Despite his general willingness to take Paul's teaching seriously, especially in his desire to identify Paul's theological concerns, Watson will not please most evangelicals because of his criticism of Paul. For example, he regards Paul's argument for the veil to be "questionable not only culturally and politically but also theologically" (p. 41). Watson's choice of parallel texts will also limit interest among evangelicals since a good portion of the work explains Woolf, Freud and Irigaray rather than the Biblical texts. There are also frank discussions and language that may be inappropriate for sensitive readers. Despite these shortcomings, Watson suggests interesting avenues for theological reflection and should be consulted by those desiring a fresh and theologically oriented look at issues of sexuality and gender.

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*The Last Things: Hope for This World and the Next.* By Herman Bavinck. Edited by John Bolt. Translated by John Vriend. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, 208 pp., \$19.99 paper.

Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) has contributed much to Dutch Reformed theology through his monumental four-volume *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek (Reformed Dogmatics)*. The Dutch Reformed Translation Society (DRTS) is to be commended for making it available in English. This volume on eschatology is its first release and most timely in light of recent debates on the existence of hell and the millennium.

The book contains seven chapters which are divided into three parts. Part one consists of three chapters on the intermediate state. The first chapter interacts with how classical philosophy dealt with the question of immortality and introduces what the OT and NT say about death, *sheol*, the afterlife, and God's kingdom. The second chapter, entitled "After Death, Then What?", answers questions on purgatory, soul sleep, intermediate corporeality, necromancy, and ancestral worship. The third chapter, "Between Death and Resurrection," continues to explore what the life hereafter entails, whether there is a second chance for salvation, whether the soul needs to be further purified, and whether the dead needs the intercessory prayers of the living. True to the Reformed faith, Bavinck categorically rejects the doctrine of annihilation, soul sleep, veneration of saints and angels, reincarnation, purgatory, and the two limbos.

Part two consists of two chapters on the return of Christ. The first (chap. 4) discusses how OT prophecies ought to be interpreted; Bavinck opposes a literal interpretation. According to him, a spiritual hermeneutic is required because of “the New Testament’s own spiritual application of Old Testament prophecy” (p. 79); “the earthly is an image of the heavenly” (p. 95). He dismisses Ezekiel’s future temple (Ezekiel 40–48) as a practical impossibility and so resists a “realistic interpretation” (pp. 86, 96). Bavinck views prophetic timetables not in “chronological sequence, but in a logical and spiritual sense” (p. 120). It is thus no surprise that he conveniently ignores Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks. As regards authorial intent, Bavinck appears to advocate the evolution of meaning in the history of Israel where the literal “gradually” gave place to the spiritual (pp. 94, 97). The NT is the OT spiritualized. Whereas dispensationalists consider the Church to be a “parenthesis,” Bavinck goes to the other extreme by viewing Israel as an “intermezzo” (p. 97). As such, prophetic and covenantal promises of peace, prosperity, and prominence that God made to the nation of Israel with regard to her people, land, and throne are to be stripped of their “external, national-Israelitish meanings” (p. 97). Such a hermeneutic seems to me quite unreformed, for it questions God’s covenantal faithfulness to Israel his chosen nation (contra Bolt, the editor; p. 15).

In chapter five, Bavinck argues vigorously that the “community of Christ-believers has in all respects replaced national Israel” (pp. 99, 102). He does not doubt that there exists an ethnic distinction between Jews and Gentiles in Paul’s analogy of the olive tree (Rom 11:11–32; pp. 104–106). Yet, taking the Church to be the New Israel, he cannot help but eisegetically conclude that “all Israel” is really “all Church”—the *pleroma* (pp. 106–107). His rejection of an end-time theocratic restoration of national Israel caused him to force the temporal conjunction *achri* to mean “in that way” instead of “until” (p. 107). Bavinck also argues that there will be no return of the Jews to Palestine, no rebuilding of Jerusalem and a temple, and no visible rule of Christ on earth, because Paul did “not say a word” about them (p. 107). One wonders why Paul needed to repeat those matters that are already taught (if a literal hermeneutic is applied) in the OT! If a doctrine is not Biblical just because the NT is silent about it, then on which testament primarily is the covenant doctrine of paedobaptism based? Here again Bavinck shows himself inconsistent in his Reformed thinking.

The third part—“Consummation”—consists of chaps. 6 and 7 on “The Day of the Lord” and “The Renewal of Creation” respectively. Particularly valuable is chap. 6, which argues for burial rather than cremation and rebuts the various alternatives to eternal punishment. Bavinck is convinced that all varieties of annihilationism have no ground in Scripture. He rightly warns that the “humanitarian viewpoint . . . brings its own imbalances and dangers. . . . Human feeling is no foundation for anything important, therefore, and neither may nor can it be decisive in the determination of law and justice. . . . Furthermore, for the person who disputes [the reality of] eternal punishment, there is enormous danger of playing the hypocrite before God. Such a person presents himself as extremely loving, one who in goodness and compassion far outstrips our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Critics of eternal punishment not only fail to do justice to the doom-worthiness of sin, the rigorousness of divine justice; they also infringe on the greatness of God’s love and salvation that is in Christ. If the object had not been salvation from eternal destruction, the price of the blood of God’s own Son would have been much too high” (pp. 147, 148, 152, 153).

Chapter 7 discusses the nature of the new heaven and new earth, and the New Jerusalem. Bavinck rejects the idea of an *ex nihilo* “brand-new creation” of an entirely new world after the final judgment. He argues for a “renewal” or “transformation” of this present world when “God brings forth something new from the old” (p. 157).

Interestingly, Bavinck, though admitting that OT prophecy does describe *earthly* blessedness, nevertheless insists that certain OT prophecies must be spiritualized. Physical blessings promised in the OT will be fulfilled not in the millennium but when the present kingdom of God “is fully realized” in a worldwide visible kingdom (p. 158). He regards the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21–22 to be literal, but interprets John’s description of it in a figurative way, another instance of his hermeneutical dualism.

This volume, though written nearly a century ago, remains extremely relevant in light of the continuing debate between covenant and dispensational theologians on history and prophecy, Israel and the Church. Another vital contribution is its refreshingly polemical defense of the doctrine of hell and eternal punishment. Being the theological giant that he was and still is, Bavinck deserves the attention of all serious exegetes and theologians.

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*Jesus & Personality Theory: Exploring the Five Factor Model.* By James R. Beck. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999, 276 pp., \$15.99 paper.

Integrating modern-day psychology with Biblical principles has been a long and warmly debated issue among Christian professionals. James Beck has accomplished a worthy example of this, coming to the topic with a high view of Scriptural truth. Taking what he calls “the big five” factors that undergird our personalities (*openness to experience*, conscientiousness, *extraversion*, *agreeableness*, and *neuroticism*; note the acrostic *ocean*), he explains each one and compares them with Biblical principles as exemplified by both Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul.

The two major theses of the book are: (1) Jesus is a counseling model for Christian counselors in that his teachings speak directly to the five major structural components of human personality; and (2) these teachings (Jesus’ counseling) are indeed wonderful because they speak so perfectly to the composition of the human personality. To this reviewer’s thinking both as a theologian and a marriage and family therapist, Beck has admirably succeeded in defending his theses. He has articulated the meaning of his five-factor *ocean* model, factored it into the teaching of Christ and shown how the components of human personality fit Biblical teachings and principles.

His argument would have been strengthened had he utilized the nature of the humanity of Jesus’ personality as outlined in Luke 2:52: “Jesus increased in wisdom (i.e. mental maturity) and stature (physical maturity) and in favor with God (spiritual maturity) and man (social maturity).” Also, in Heb 2:9–18 there is a description of the experiential humanness of Jesus. These two passages of Scripture show the human side of his life, which further adds to the melding of both the human and divine nature of Christ; thus, the integration of the whole person is exemplified in him. This Biblical picture fits Beck’s model of the concept of personality theory.

In order to make an assessment of comparability between the teachings of Jesus Christ and his five factors of personality, Beck utilized the “Big Five Questionnaire” (BFQ) that explores the factors. Next, he used the *NEO Personality Inventory-Revised* (*NEO PI-R*) questionnaire (designed to assess the five factors). Two respected NT scholars were then asked to rate the personalities of both Jesus and the apostle Paul using the *NEO PI-R* test instrument. Finally, Beck evaluated their findings.

I found the comparison with the five factor model quite interesting but wondered how significant the comparison really is since Jesus was a perfect person, both in his

humanity and divinity, whereas Paul was imperfect in his personality and personhood. In some way we all would fit Paul's profile and, along with him, fall short of measuring up to Jesus Christ. None of us can compare to Jesus but, along with Paul, we all have a model of perfect personality in Jesus, who exemplified the five-factor model, and we can pattern our life toward wholeness after his life.

Beck's argument is compelling and provides a challenging and persuasive model of integration for Christian professionals searching for a depth and richness of God's grace in every human being. I would highly recommend this searching and provocative book.

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