

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Concept of Biblical Theology: An Old Testament Perspective.* By James Barr. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999, xvii + 715 pp., \$48.00.

Biblical theology is a flowering subject. The multiplicity of books and even scholarly journals devoted to (aspects of) biblical theology that recently have appeared in print testify to this fact. And yet, despite this outward sign of vibrant life, biblical theology is a discipline that is very much in search of its own identity and as such has a contested character. The massive and learned work of James Barr illustrates this quandary skillfully with special attention to the OT.

Barr's monumental publication, which was "written as a sort of textbook" (p. xiiv) is not intended to be a biblical theology. It is rather a discussion of the whole idea of biblical theology with its possibilities and prospects (p. xiiv). While its primary goal is neither to provide a survey nor a history of a discipline of biblical theology, Barr has nevertheless furnished the scholarly community with a *tour de force* of the discipline. The bibliography spans some 31 pages (pp. 610–40), covering most of the relevant literature up to the cutoff date for the book sometime in 1997. The bibliography is followed by 58 pages of small-print footnotes (pp. 641–98) in which Barr further interacts with other positions and scholars.

Barr begins his book with the question why it has been so difficult to define biblical theology and suggests that this is the case because "biblical theology" is an essentially *contested* notion and "does not have clear independent contours of its own" (p. 5). Its character, Barr submits, changes depending on to what it is contrasted. Barr suggests six different contrasts: (1) the contrast between biblical and doctrinal (systematic, dogmatic, or constructive) theology; (2) the difference between biblical theology and a non-theological study of the Bible; (3) the contrast between biblical theology and the history of religion and corresponding approaches; (4) the relations of biblical theology with philosophy and the question of natural theology; (5) the interpretation of *parts* of the Bible as distinct from the larger complexes taken as *wholes*; (6) The hotly debated conflict between biblical theology as an "objective" discipline or as a "faith-committed" discipline. These contrasts are discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

When the term "biblical theology" is used for the construction of one single theology of the entire Christian Bible, in contrast to individual theologies of the OT or NT, Barr has chosen to use the term "pan-biblical theology" (p. 1). Chapter 2 provides a concise overview of the origins of modern OT theology. Chapter 3 presents five main types of doing biblical theology: (1) collection of ideas and doctrines following the pattern of traditional systematic theology (Köhler); (2) a synthetic, comprehensive view of the OT world of faith (Eichrodt); (3) an explicit Christian approach with a Christian view of revelation (Vriezen); (4) the unfolding of the development of various traditions, with their own inner reinterpretations and actualizations (von Rad); and (5) a canonical approach (Childs). Other chapters deal with the relationship between the OT and the NT (chap. 11), the Christianization of the OT (chap. 16), the evaluation of postbiblical Judaism (chap. 17), the possible prospects for a Jewish biblical theology (chap. 18), and the question of apocryphal and other noncanonical books (chap. 32). Barr also takes up the old problem of the relationship between "committed" and "objective" approaches in

biblical theology (chap. 12) and suggests that “historical theology” offers helpful analogies to biblical theology (chap. 13). He also deals with objections to the very possibility of biblical theology (chaps. 14 and 15) and addresses the problem of a system and the question of a “center” (chap. 20).

In chap. 19 he looks at some newer-style theologies that spread in the 1970s (Zimmerli, Westermann, Fohrer, Terrier, Schmid). Barr also deals with recent approaches, especially the canonical approach (chap. 23). He is interacting especially with Brevard Childs, who has been the stimulus without whom Barr “would not have come to many of the perceptions . . . that are in this book” (p. 378), even though Barr admits that he has “come to disagree with almost everything in [Childs’s] proposal about the subject and in the values with which he has approached it” (p. 378). One has to thank Barr for introducing some important German proposals by Gese, Oeming, and Mildenberger, among others, who are perhaps less known in the English-speaking world.

In a significant way *The Concept of Biblical Theology* is the continuation of his earlier volume *Old and New in Interpretation* (1966) and is a descendant of his Cadbury Lectures, delivered at the University of Birmingham in 1968. Barr masterfully interacts with major recent proposals and positions. In doing so he seems to thrive in pointing out perceived deficiencies in other approaches. Barr is not shy in criticizing long-held and cherished positions and almost never seems to be satisfied with the way things have been done. All this makes interesting and profitable reading. Yet one misses his own constructive proposal that would significantly advance the discussion by providing better alternatives.

There is a certain apologetic fervor noticeable in his book. Barr is much less generous and gracious in his dealing with representatives who have attempted to do biblical theology other than with (historical-) critical presuppositions and with those who have dared to challenge his position (cf. pp. 235–36 and *passim*). Here Barr falls prey to similar deficiencies he bemoans in others, namely that “very strong opinions, often approaching personal insults, have been expressed” (p. 189; see e.g. his derogatory remarks on David Watson on pp. 201–2 and on Childs, *passim*).

Barr’s own disclaimer—that he does “not stand in the solid tradition of modern historical criticism,” that he was “never much of a historical-critical scholar,” and that he has not rejected “historical views of inspiration and biblical authority” (p. 666, n. 35)—is unconvincing. While it may be true that he has not detected a gloss, identified a source, proposed an emendation, assigned a date, nor done other things traditionally associated with the historical-critical method, as he maintains, and even though he criticizes historical criticism in the “usual sense” (p. 218 and *passim*), it appears that he never really approves doing biblical theology outside certain critical parameters that are simply accepted by him without question. His great sympathy for Rainer Albertz’s return to the history-of-religions approach in OT theology (pp. 118–29; cf. p. 605), his strong aversion against any canonical approach that rejects a “cool, descriptive, historical approach” (p. 192), and his repeated approval and defense of many aspects of historical criticism seem to contradict his own assessment. To claim that historical criticism is theological and emerges from theological perception (e.g. pp. 8, 9, 218) does not do justice to the clearly atheistic presuppositions of historical criticism (cf. Adolf Schlatter, *Atheistische Methoden in der Theologie* [1905, reprinted Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1985]).

There is much insightful reflection on crucial aspects to be found in *The Concept of Biblical Theology*. Barr is certainly right when he writes that “the skepticism of doctrinal theologians toward biblical theology is short-sighted, and that biblical theology will have to be recognized in the long run as an important and indeed essential component in the total structure of theology” (p. 242). We concur with Barr that there is a danger in approaching the Bible with preset dogmatic commitments that may lead

to a position where we see only that what we already consider to be right (p. 207). However, it is at least equally questionable to approach the Bible with naturalistic faith commitments that deny the very subject matter of Scripture: the supernatural God who reveals himself to human beings. While there is certainly more light to shine forth from the riches of God's word than perhaps has been recognized by many, Barr seems to overstate his point when he writes: "Biblical thought does not easily lead towards traditional orthodoxy" (p. 163). The problem is not with the biblical material, we submit. The decisive question is with what premises the Bible should be studied and what appropriate method should be chosen in approaching the task of doing biblical theology. Barr's conclusions "that there can be no such thing as the one appropriate method of biblical theology" (p. 61) and that "there is no such thing as a 'right' methodology for carrying out such a task" (p. 59) is not convincing and will produce even greater fragmentation. With such an approach, a unity of the content of the Bible, a unity of theology, and thus a united norm that distinguishes between right and wrong has vanished. Barr reaches this conclusion because he seems categorically to rule out "any claim to ultimate authority" (p. 60). This question of methodology is not "a relatively unimportant one" (p. 59), as Barr surmises. Why would he invest so much energy and some 700 pages to criticize deficiencies in other methods and why does he so strongly disagree with the appropriateness of some approaches if the question of method were unimportant? The great question is that of the correct and proper method. Everything else follows as a matter of course.

Interestingly, Barr fails to interact with significant conservative proposals. It is not a sign of scholarly fairness and rigor to mention the names of conservative scholars in the bibliography but virtually to ignore them in the main discussion of his book. To pronounce dogmatically that "no serious biblical theology has arisen where the truly conservative anti-critical principles have prevailed" (p. 83, cf. p. 82) betrays a prejudice on the part of Barr. What about George A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament* (1959); J. N. Schofield, *Introducing Old Testament Theology* (1964); Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (1978); Elmer A. Martens, *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* (1981); the contributions to Roy B. Zuck, ed., *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament* (1991); Ralph L. Smith, *Old Testament Theology: Its History, Method, and Message* (1993); and John H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (1995), to mention but a few significant evangelical contributions? Some of these are not even mentioned in his bibliography. This lack of interaction with conservative proposals is a serious deficiency of which one has to be aware.

Nevertheless, no serious student interested in biblical theology can afford to ignore *The Concept of Biblical Theology*. It provides a wealth of useful information and offers an insightful description as well as an astute analysis of different positions. As such it can be used as a ready reference work that provides a critical introduction to current issues and recent proposals.

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*History and Ideology in the Old Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium*. By James Barr. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, viii + 198 pp., \$39.95.

This little volume sprang from the Hensley Henson lectures, delivered at Oxford in 1997. The (intended) topic of the series was "The Appeal to History as an Integral part

of Christian Apologetics.” What in fact Barr produced was a series of lectures on the state of the art in Hebrew-Bible scholarship at the end of the millennium. As the title indicates, Barr identifies two focal points in the contemporary academic dialogue: “history” and “ideology.”

In the second chapter, Barr distinguishes six notable developments, each related in some way to history or ideology. (1) Historical criticism retired into the background, and subsequently reasserted itself with vigor. (2) Revisionist historians altered the debate with new perspectives on Israelite history. (3) Studies emphasizing ideological criticism proliferated. (4) Lines of conflict between history of religions and biblical theology hardened. (5) Philosophers asserted influence on biblical studies unparalleled since the early 1900s (e.g. Ricoeur, Gadamer). (6) All things “postmodern” became omnipresent. In the following chapters, Barr focuses his attention on changing fortunes of historical criticism, revisionist historiography, ideology, and postmodernity.

In chap. 3, Barr launches a counterattack on the postmodern assault against historical criticism. Singling out D. Gunn and D. N. Fewell’s influential *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* as an example, he points out numerous misconceptions and misrepresentations of historical criticism perpetuated by like-minded writers. Three falsehoods, in particular, goad Barr into his response: the erroneous assertion that historical criticism claims sole possession of objectivity; the misplaced belief that all historical criticism is obsessed with the “original” (meaning, author, text, etc.); and the false notion that historical criticism is a product of Rationalism and the Enlightenment (when, in fact, it is a continuation of Reformation principles).

Barr then itemizes several different operations (some more historical and some more critical) conducted by historical critics in an effort to show that it is not a monolithic “something” (method, movement, group) that can be subjected to universal criticism. He presents an account of certain recent developments in historical criticism that signal renewed ebullience from that quarter. He rightly observes that the current generation of historical critics has achieved a convergence between newer literary-critical impulses and older historical-critical ones (e.g. E. Blum, D. Carr), and he administers a necessary tonic for many venomous misrepresentations of the historical-critical tradition of scholarship at the hands of self-proclaimed postmoderns.

Chapter 4 boldly leads the reader into the morass of obfuscation and bad manners commonly referred to as the “minimalist-maximalist debate” on Israelite history. Barr cleverly sums up the principal point of tension as follows: “some theologians want to be sure that the Bible relates to history because they think it is important for theology, while some historians argue that because it is theology, it cannot be history” (p. 62).

Among the previous generation of historians, it was commonly accepted that, while the stories stretching from the patriarchs to the judges were nothing more than legendary traditions of the twelve tribes, narratives about the monarchy, exile, and restoration represented a genuine effort at history writing. Contemporary revisionist historians argue that the composition of the Deuteronomistic historian and the Chronicler are Persian-era or (more likely) Hellenistic-era propaganda with little or no correspondence to reality. As such, they are useless to historians. None of the narratives in the Hebrew Bible can be considered, by any standard, “historical.” Hence there is no David, no Solomon, no exile, no return. In other words, there is no ethnic group “Israel.” “Israel” is an ideological and elitist literary fabrication. There are only Canaanites or—as some minimalists prefer, betraying their contemporary political biases—Palestinians.

Barr sketches the principal tenets of the revisionist position and then turns to the near-legendary Provan-Davies-Thompson debate published in *JBL* 114 (1995). He describes the debate in detail, and charts subsequent movement in the positions of the combatants. Those who have followed the seesawing struggle between the minimalists and maximalists, even (like this reviewer) in a disinterested way, will find little new

information here. Nevertheless, Barr's detailed analysis of the so-called *JBL* debate is worth reading. In particular, though siding with Provan for the most part, Barr's critique of his position is a perceptive contribution to the discussion in its own right.

The fifth chapter turns to the subject of ideology. Barr catalogues and illustrates five primary meanings given to the word by biblical scholars. His point is simply that the term "ideology," though popular, has become so multivalent that it is almost meaningless.

In chap. 6, Barr examines the underpinnings of postmodernism. Postmodernism, in all its various forms, has two common values. First, it assumes the authority of the canons of contemporary literary criticism (which are never questioned). Second, it avoids and disparages any notion of "objective meanings." Rather than critiquing its values, Barr muses about its intellectual roots and its impact upon scholarship, Church, and the social mind.

Postmodernism, despite its self-proclamation, does not represent a break with the Enlightenment. Rather, it is a continuation of Enlightenment thought and its obsession with method. This is a fact that, though commonly recognized by philosophers (who refer not to "postmodernity" but "high modernity"), appears to be unknown to most literary scholars. Barr clarifies this point and characterizes postmodernism as a kind of "neofundamentalism." Although its roots lie in the Enlightenment quest for correct methodology, it is a permissive doctrine having only one law: no one is permitted to question its own value.

Barr then digresses into a long discourse explaining why certain groups, among both the liberal mainline denominations and evangelicalism, have turned to postmodernism with undue zeal. Commenting on *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern Age* by H. H. Knight II (Abingdon, 1996), Barr observes, that "the anti-Enlightenment sense of fundamentalists, focused mainly on biblical criticism, finds some support in the anti-Enlightenment hatred of postmodernists" (p. 150). He follows this observation with many specific and wise warnings for liberals and conservatives alike and prognosticates on the possible damage that may be done to religion by too close an association with postmodern values.

I have intentionally avoided commenting on chaps. 1 and 7. Chapter 1 is a fair but unnecessary argument for how the subject of contemporary biblical scholarship fits under the aegis of the lecture topic. Chapter 7, "Postmodernism and Theology," provides little more than a few thoughts on the merits (or demerits) of constructing a postmodern theology.

Overall, the book is not intended to bring the reader up to date on contributions to the body of scholarly work. It is more ephemeral. It describes new values and trends in biblical studies. Although Barr evaluates and criticizes each trend as the book advances, he makes no effort to resolve the issues at stake. His most decisive criticisms are reserved for the revisionist historians, and fuzzy-minded postmodern writers. As such, chaps. 3, 4, and 6 are the strongest and most informative. The book contains many profound observations, and as long as one recognizes the limits of the author's goals, it is both interesting and worth reading.

In sum, I believe Barr's final assessment of the contemporary situation is entirely correct: "The pursuit of rapidly changing fashions, the dominance of theory over serious knowledge, the absence of connection with religious traditions, and the readiness at any time to overturn that upon which one stood in one's own learning only a few years before—all these produce a fevered atmosphere which is likely to do considerable damage" (p. 156).

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*History as a Theological Issue.* By Nico T. Bakker. Translated by Martin Kessler. Leiden: Deo, 2000, xii + 301 pp., \$98.00.

The quest to discover the redemptive essence of history in contemporary theological discussion is undertaken in interesting fashion by Nico T. Bakker, emeritus professor of dogmatic theology at the University of Amsterdam. Bakker notes that the current postmodern mindset now dismisses the notion that there is any genuine (redemptive) meaning to past events as it relates the linear-historical progression of human development, particularly in light of events in the previous century that offer contrary evidence (e.g. two world wars, the Holocaust, the failure of communism). The author asserts that the absorption of the biblical-prophetic message into secularized historical-scientific methodologies has served to create the current crisis in theological studies. If a redemptive "essence" in history is to be found, it is in the Hebrew concept of *dabar*, meaning the "Word-that-happens" as an incident within history (p. 3). The genuine theological meaning of history can only be discovered when the "Word" (Jesus Christ) is separated from the profane and common view of history.

Bakker asserts that the methodology of critical historicism used by culture theologians such as Adolf von Harnack and Ernst Troeltsch has its initial roots in the thought of Augustine. Although these men had divergent views of history, each held in common the "belief" that history provided the proper foundation for the biblical proclamation (p. 6). The author devotes three chapters (1, 3, 5) of his nine-chapter work to evaluating the development of linear-historical philosophical systems of (human) progress found in the works of such diverse thinkers as Voltaire, Herder, Hegel, Marx, Comte, Burckhardt, Spengler, and Troeltsch. Although many of these scholars adopted a secularized approach to historical-critical studies, biblical studies also fell prey to the same methodology. Thus the foundations in this theological approach proved shaky.

Bakker appeals to Barth's view of the biblical narrative as "unhistorical history" in which God's word-acts (or act-words) are "unique" and incomparable in space and time and, therefore, inaccessible to historical investigation (p. 162). The "Word" which transcends and breaks into history is found in the event of the coming of Jesus Christ to earth. God's genuine revelation in history and in the biblical message is found in Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Christ's entry into the earthly realm gives eschatological significance to history. Apart from the "Word" that happens, there is no meaning in history. The Word's entry into history, however, is an event which transcends profane views of history (p. 214). It is for this reason that Bakker rejects Wolfhart Pannenberg's theological claim that history is the foundation of revelation.

This book helps reassert the claim that there is theological significance to history when it is understood to have its fullest meaning in the person of Christ who reigns as the Lord of history. Many evangelicals (and rightly so) will take issue with Bakker's (and Barth's) view of Scripture in which the biblical text is not revelation *per se* but revelation as the "Word itself happens" (p. 164). This work, nevertheless, is a first step in reclaiming meaning for history from the postmodern junk pile.

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*Biblical Hebrew: An Analytical Introduction*. By Winfred P. Lehmann, Esther Raizen, and Helen-Jo Jakusz Hewitt. San Antonio: Wings, 1999, xv + 387 pp., \$35.00 paper. *The First Hebrew Primer*. By Ethelyn Simon, Irene Resnikoff, and Linda Motzkin. 3rd edition. Albany, CA: EKS, 2000, x + 414 pp., \$34.95 paper. *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew*. By Andrew H. Bartelt. Saint Louis: Concordia Academic Press, 2000, xii + 276 pp., \$26.99.

*Biblical Hebrew: An Analytical Introduction* is written by three linguistics or language professors affiliated with the University of Texas at Austin (Lehmann, Raizen, and Jakusz Hewitt). Whenever possible, the authors make use of non-technical language that would be clearest for a lay audience.

This volume contains 20 chapters (and three appendixes, summarized below), each having three parts: reading, commentary, and grammar sections. The reading section provides a biblical passage (with Hebrew and transliterated text). Throughout the book the passages come from different genres and get longer in later chapters. These passages come primarily from Genesis, Exodus, 1 Samuel, Isaiah, Psalms, and Proverbs.

The commentary section serves as the backbone of the volume. It provides explanatory material (dealing with the passage in a word-for-word or phrase-by-phrase fashion) with extensive cross-referencing to other commentary and grammar sections in the volume. Earlier commentary sections give attention to basic constructions and word-by-word analysis while later chapters consider textual difficulties, special constructions, and give full-verse analyses.

The grammatical sections do not necessarily relate directly to the passage introduced in a given chapter, but function as reference material in support of all the commentary sections. Each chapter generally has five grammar subsections: syntax topic, morphology, and phonology.

In addition to introducing the reader to biblical Hebrew grammar, chaps. 18 and 20 introduce the reader to Mishnaic and Modern Hebrew. Chapter 19 ends with a transliteration and translation of the Siloam inscription. Chapter 20 also introduces the reader to other reference materials and teaching grammars. Interestingly, the volume makes no mention of Williams's syntax or the reference grammar by van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, nor does it cite Koehler and Baumgartner's lexicon (*HALOT*) or Cline's dictionary (*DCH*). The Glossary provides a listing and brief description of all Hebrew forms discussed in the volume. Appendix A contains numerous paradigms, which are all written with transliterated text. Appendix B serves as a glossary for key grammatical terms. Appendix C provides a smooth translation for all the readings found at the beginning of each chapter. A 13-page subject index concludes the volume with an abbreviation key on the inside front and back covers.

Time and space only allow for a handful of examples of grammatical comments. The authors call a *waw* consecutive a "waw conversive" and suggest that it signals the conversion of the verb's aspect to its opposite significance (p. 5). With regard to perfective and imperfective verbs, the authors posit that "the verb form indicates whether, at the time of reference and from the viewpoint of the speaker, the status of the action or condition is complete (perfective) or not complete (imperfective). Whether the situation referred to is in that past, present, or future is not, in itself, significant" (p. 9; emphasis original). The authors regard jussives and cohortatives as imperfective forms in jussive or cohortative use (p. 40).

On the one hand, this grammar provides a helpful combination of exposure to a number of biblical texts, an explanation of the primary details of each text, and a methodical presentation of grammar. However, the volume has several drawbacks. The transliteration system, though easily followed by any English speaker, does not prepare

the student of Hebrew to make effective use of most reference tools that use a more traditional transliteration system. Also, since the Hebrew consonants only appear at the beginning of each chapter, the student does not become at all familiar with reading the Hebrew consonants and vowels. The volume does offer a way for a person to learn biblical Hebrew in a somewhat user-friendly fashion, but it does not provide adequate preparation for those who want to use their biblical Hebrew in exegetical studies.

*The First Hebrew Primer* seeks to teach students to read and understand biblical Hebrew as quickly as possible, emphasizing recognition and translation rather than memorization (p. vii). In addition to adding some new terms and clarifying some key grammatical points, the key difference between this and earlier editions is the provision of new explanatory endnotes to enable interested readers to deepen their understanding of biblical Hebrew.

Throughout the book the use of an “outline” font directs attention to certain key features in a given Hebrew construction. Beginning with chap. 4, most chapters begin with an “oral review” to get the student reading Hebrew text. Chapter 8 introduces the first in a series of “tall tales,” familiar folk stories (e.g. “The Boy Who Cried Wolf”) translated into Hebrew (with minor adaptations). These stories reinforce the grammar and vocabulary taught in each lesson and give the student the chance to read large sections of Hebrew text. In chap. 10, the book introduces the student to “guided reading” of the book of Ruth. At first the volume presents a simplified/adapted version of Ruth, but eventually gives the student the actual text from Ruth. It is arranged in a two-column format so as to enable the student to check his progress. The last chapter (ch. 30) provides a helpful review of the entire book. That chapter concludes with an overview on how to make use of the BDB lexicon.

The present volume has some strengths. It gets the student involved in reading significant sections of biblical Hebrew texts as well as folk tales written in Hebrew for the purpose of grammar. It also provides fairly extensive exercises, a mixture of examples that focus on a particular grammatical point and others that provide a clause or structure to translate. Finally, it gives some attention to verb and preposition collocations, an issue too many grammars avoid.

Having said that, this text also has a number of weaknesses, especially when considered as a possible text in a Hebrew curriculum that finds fruition in exegesis and preaching or teaching. It uses esoteric terms that occur only in this volume. Explanations are absent or too simplistic at times. It presents paradigms to be learned through rote memorization rather than explaining key rules that explain the consonant and vowel patterns. This Hebrew grammar appears to be geared to prepare people for reading Hebrew in a synagogue setting and not for exegetes. Finally, it does not teach parsing—a problem or weakness with students I have taught who have used this text. Although I have found some of its companion works a great help for developing the ability to hear and speak Hebrew, this text does not provide the best introduction to biblical Hebrew, especially in a Bible college or seminary setting.

The objective of Bartelt’s *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew* is to provide a basic understanding of grammar, including vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. As the title of the volume suggests, many fine points are left for the additional refinement that comes with continued study of the language (p. vii). Bartelt focuses on the regular and normative features of Hebrew, recognizing that all languages have irregularities, some of which can be explained and predicted and some of which cannot. Unlike a number of recent grammars, this textbook “unashamedly” follows a more traditional and deductive presentation of Hebrew grammar, stressing the memorization of basic vocabulary, morphology, and paradigms.

Bartelt begins introducing the student to the biblical text in the first chapter. The examples and exercises move logically from the known to the unknown, from the regu-

lar to the irregular forms, from general rules to exceptions (p. vii). In addition to the customary components of a grammar chapter (grammatical information, vocabulary, exercises), each chapter includes helpful chapter summaries.

A selection of Bartelt's presentation of Hebrew is in order. Verbs are first introduced in chap. 4 (as compared with Lesson 12 in Kelley's grammar, for example), and weak verbs are introduced throughout the volume, in accordance with the verb stem. Bartelt introduces derived conjugations in order of frequency: qal, piel, hiphil, etc. He presents an aspectual understanding of the verbs. As it relates to the *waw* consecutive, Bartelt uses both descriptive terms, imperfect *waw* consecutive and preterite, to designate this form as a "third major verbal aspect" (p. 61). He calls jussives and cohortatives 3rd and 1st person imperatives, respectively (p. 125). In the final chapter he introduces the student to Masoretic accents, spelling, and basic sentence syntax.

Of the three grammars reviewed above, Bartelt's grammar is the most appealing. He presents the essential grammatical information with clarity, has exercises that encourage through repetitive/deductive work as well as sentences or clauses that give the student the chance to review other concepts and to maintain an exposure to the larger picture. He includes helpful charts at several junctures in the volume. At the very least, Bartelt's grammar will impact my presentation of a number of grammatical points in my own Hebrew grammar classes. On the other hand, the simplicity of this grammar will prove unsatisfactory to other professors. His intention to introduce his readers to the fundamental points of Hebrew grammar means that he does not give attention to various intricacies of the language.

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*The First Hebrew Reader*. By Jessica W. Goldstein. Albany, CA: EKS, 2000, xi + 195, \$24.95 paper. *Teach Yourself to Read Hebrew*. By Ethelyn Simon and Joseph Anderson. Albany, CA: EKS, 2000, x + 92 pp., \$9.95 paper.

Although the titles might suggest that these two books deal with the same issues, they deal with different aspects of the reading process. *Teach Yourself to Read Hebrew* focuses simply on the ability to pronounce the consonants and vowels of the Hebrew language. The first eight chapters introduce the student to these and provide pronunciation exercises. The final two chapters help the student correctly identify *shewas* and pronounce the syllables of a word properly. An answer key for the exercises concludes the volume. This book will have limited value for the average non-Jewish student of Hebrew, because it addresses only a preliminary part of learning Hebrew. Its primary function is to enable a Jewish worshipper to read aloud the various prayers as well as different parts of the Tanakh.

*The First Hebrew Reader*, however, is meant to serve as a transition tool to guide the student from the study of grammar to the art of translation. This volume provides 18 reading selections, seven from the Pentateuch, four from the Prophets, and seven from the Writings. Each selection divides the passage under consideration into sections of four to six lines of Hebrew text, and two facing pages are devoted to each section. The first page provides the passage in Hebrew (without any accent marks) at the top of a page and the same Hebrew text and an English translation in two columns at the bottom of the page. To help them stand out, the verbal forms are shaded in gray. The translation represents a compromise between an overly literal and a very idiomatic rendering. The second page provides any new vocabulary (compared with that presented

in a companion volume, *The First Hebrew Primer*), verb analysis or parsing, and key grammatical or explanatory notes. For those not familiar with some grammatical descriptive terms unique to products by this publisher, a guide to that terminology is located after the last reading selection. The volume concludes with a list of book suggestions for further reading, a Hebrew-English glossary, and an index of grammatical notes.

Any source that can help a student make the transition from understanding the basic elements of the Hebrew language to being able to accurately translate Hebrew sentences deserves consideration. *The First Hebrew Reader* nicely exposes its readers to 18 passages from various genres. Providing a sample translation and verbal analysis helps the student walk through a given section of an OT passage without having to look at a number of reference works. The pages are configured in a way that is conducive to use by an individual (outside of a classroom setting). However, the unique descriptive terms used by this volume (and others published by EKS) will cause some frustration for the student who has not been exposed to these terms. Very little is said in the grammatical note section that helps the reader on the clause level.

All in all, *The First Hebrew Reader* is a tool for students to consider if they are struggling with making that transition toward the skill of translating Hebrew sentences.

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*Translators As Storytellers: A Study In Septuagint Translation Technique.* By John A. Beck. New York: Peter Lang, 2000, 223 pp., \$59.50.

John A. Beck "Alters" the study of LXX translation technique. In his quest to "provide the clearest picture of the translator's literary sensitivity" (p. 10), Beck believes that "it is imperative that we measure translation technique not merely at the linguistic level but also at the literary level" (p. 197). Thus, while he proposes a helpful linguistic method, it is his narrative-critical method (inspired by such literary luminaries as Robert Alter) that he foregrounds. Here "characterization, the use of time, the patterning play of words and artful use of geography" find their rightful place of prominence in translation analysis (p. 2). By "comparing the literary dimension of parent and receptor text, we will survey the literary sensitivity to Hebrew narrative strategies within the translation technique of the Septuagint" (*ibid.*). Literalness represented the goal of the LXX translators, and Beck seeks to quantify the "percentage of literalness" (p. 22 and *passim*).

Chapter 1 offers a thorough history of LXX translation scholarship that continues into the next chapter. Beck critiques the main theories, introduces his method, and enumerates his "sampling of narrative texts from the three stages of the Septuagint's translation history." He chooses four texts from each division of the *Tanakh* on account of their "length, literary unity and the suggested diversity of translating style" (p. 8).

The first of chap. 2's three sections, "Introduction to Translation Technique Research," accomplishes its goal through clearly articulated presentations of the numerous lexical (seven features treated), grammatical (clause connection, verbs, and word order), and semantic aspects (especially quantitative representation of content) of translation. Next, "A Method of Linguistic Analysis" reveals Beck's passion for methodologies (here linguistic) that can measure the "percentage of literalness" (p. 22). "Measuring the Texts with Linguistics" then presents a sampling of the data collected from Beck's linguistic analysis. Table 25 summarizes data from the grammatical and lexical analy-

ses of the 12 texts, where, surprisingly, no clear distinction in the translating style between *Tanakh* divisions emerges. Ranking according to morpheme analysis, however, Torah rates the most literal; the Writings are most literal based on translation of *waw*-consecutive imperfections, and the Prophets rank first based upon renderings of clause coordination (pp. 51–52).

Chapter 3, “The Storyteller and Narrative Criticism,” seems unnecessarily long (72 pages). Shortening the methodological introduction (16 pages) would help, but the narrative-critical analyses of the 12 texts—while necessary for illustrating Beck’s pan-*Tanakh* method—may irritate readers attempting to keep the linguistic methodology in view. A few advance peeks at the conclusion may prove helpful: “it is clear that six of the texts experienced only slight literary adjustment. . . . Four texts experienced moderate adjustment. . . . And three texts experienced significant literary adjustment in translation” (p. 137).

Chapter 4’s brisk pace and stunning insights in some ways represent the highlight of the work. The storyteller and narrative geography reflects Beck’s expertise in *Eretz-Israel* geography (he regularly travels to Israel as a field-education instructor). Beck displays an impressive ability to conceptualize what he terms the biblical writers’s “artful use of geography” and then translate those intricate elements into his own engaging, illustrious account. Beck is, then, like his LXX translators, a good “storyteller.” It is here that Beck convinces me to merge the literary with the linguistic, and he defends the dictum that “the geography of a location can influence the writers in that region so powerfully that their literature will be shaped by it. Geography affects writers” (p. 167).

In the concluding chapter, the data from the combined analyses recorded in Table 27 reveal that “no consistent correlation exists between the narrative-critical and linguistic columns. . . . [Furthermore,] we conclude that the illumination of the translator as storyteller is best accomplished by employing narrative criticism as the lead method” (pp. 199–200).

This book unquestionably extends the discussion of translation technique, or better, the artful, literary translation of the Septuagint. Given the disparaging remarks leveled at methodologies overly dependent on linguistic dimensions, narrative-inclined scholars will likely warm up to Beck’s approach more readily than will language specialists, who will also be likely to object to aspects of Beck’s percentage-based analyses.

The introductions to translation technique offered in the first two chapters are excellent, though the endnote format proves aggravating and the lack of citation of major French Septuagint experts is regrettable. In sum, Beck is to be commended for attempting such an ambitious project, one that accomplishes many of its goals, and one that will likely be referenced by a broad range of biblical scholars for years to come.

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*The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.* By O. Palmer Robertson. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2000, 204 pp., \$12.99 paper.

“If you abandon Israel, God will never forgive you,” warned former President Clinton’s pastor (quoted by Clinton to the Israeli Knesset [p. 1]). According to Robertson, this asserts that abandoning the people of Israel is an unforgivable sin and implies that God willed that the nation of Israel should continue to possess the land of the Bible forever and the United States should support the nation of Israel without qualification (p. 1).

To critique such allegiance to the modern nation of Israel, Robertson addresses the land (chap. 1), the people (chap. 2), the worship (chap. 3), and the lifestyle (chap. 4) of the Israel of God. He considers its future by examining its relationship to the coming of the kingdom (chap. 5) and by an exposition of Romans 11 (chap. 6, a revision of his chapter in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology* [ed. K. S. Kantzer and S. N. Gundry; Baker, 1979] 209–27).

Twelve “concluding propositions” summarize the argument (chap. 7). The church is part of, but “does not exhaust” the messianic kingdom (p. 193). The modern nation of Israel is not part of the kingdom nor is its establishment a “prophetic precursor to the mass conversion of Jewish people” (p. 194). His thorough exposition of Hebrews 7 argues that, because no priesthood can be added to Christ’s, the Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system can never be reestablished (p. 194).

Less persuasive is his claim that the “land of the Bible” was a typological model of the consummation and thus has no continuing significance beyond a teaching function (p. 194). The land functions typologically, but this in itself need not exhaust its significance (which appears to be the force of his argument) and does not entail that it is now merely pedagogical. Likewise, he is correct that prophecies about a return to the land should be understood in the context of the restoration of all things (p. 194), but is incorrect that this cosmic recreation necessarily supplants the “land of promise.” Thus, though we can agree that the future kingdom will be universally displayed throughout the newly created cosmos, this does not imply that it “will not experience a special manifestation of any sort in the region of the ‘promised land’” (p. 195), particularly if we recognize an intermediate kingdom. The expanded place of blessing does not preclude centering the Messiah’s reign in the city of David, shepherding the entire earth with a rod of iron. Being based in Jerusalem does not limit it to that land.

His insistence that the Church should not countenance distinctive worship practices that demarcate Jewish believers “in a category different from Gentile believers,” who will be “citizens on an equal basis in the future messianic kingdom” (p. 194) may overlook the cultural diversity of the kingdom. Worship that segregates Jews from Gentiles is forbidden, but culturally distinctive worship will be preserved, not precluded. Likewise, it is ambiguous to say, “The future manifestation of the messianic kingdom of Christ cannot include a distinctively Jewish aspect that would distinguish the peoples and practices of Jewish believers from their Gentile counterparts” (pp. 194–95). Paul, after all, *was* able to distinguish himself and other Jews in a variety of ways, including taking vows himself and having Timothy circumcised, though he resolutely forbade making them requirements for belief in Christ.

All evangelicals should fervently echo Robertson’s concluding call for Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ to “diligently seek a unified ecclesiastical fellowship” with each other, rejoicing in each other’s role in the evangelization of all peoples (p. 195).

Robertson’s careful, detailed biblical expositions are the strength of the book. His reverent attention to God’s Word delights and refreshes. The absence of strident polemics is also welcome, though the paucity of references to opposing literature is puzzling. The book is a sustained biblical-theological argument regarding “the Israel of God” (and refutes Clinton’s pastor’s view), but without much consideration of even a limited range of plausible alternatives.

Robertson rightly insists that God has not replaced Israel, but continues to call Jews to faith in Messiah Jesus, incorporating them into the Church as fellow-members with Gentile believers. Less successful is his argument (from Eph 2:14, 19; Rom 2:28–29; 11:25–26a [at length]; and Gal 6:12–16) that “the Israel of God” now designates the international people of God who stand before God equal in Christ, both Jew and Gentile. As some recent commentators note, it remains puzzling (even if we granted a non-

ethnic use in 2:28–29) to suggest that Romans 9–11 concludes by a nonethnic use of “Israel,” after three chapters of ethnic use.

Nevertheless, the book’s numerous strengths repay a close reading. It corrects mistaken views of modern Israel and is rich with much sound exposition, even for those who will differ at places.

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*Leviticus*. By Mark F. Rooker. NAC 3A. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000. 352 pp., \$27.99.

Rooker’s “Introduction” (pp. 21–77) should be required reading in OT introduction courses. Adhering firmly to the Mosaic authorship of Leviticus (pp. 38–39), he demonstrates that liberal critics have not provided a viable alternative. A colorful citation from C. S. Lewis’s *Christian Reflections* summarizes Rooker’s view of critical scholarship: “These men ask me to believe they can read between the lines of the old texts; the evidence is their obvious inability to read (in any sense worth discussing) the lines themselves. They claim to see fernseed and can’t see an elephant ten yards away in broad daylight” (p. 32).

In addition to citing numerous books and periodical articles, Rooker refers the reader to a broad range of materials. At 5:14–6:7 he examines the varying viewpoints of Philo, Josephus, Origen, and Augustine regarding any distinction between sin offering and guilt offering (p. 122). Mishnaic descriptions of the Day of Atonement provide information regarding its observance in the Second-Temple period (p. 213, nn. 4 and 7). At 10:4–5 (an account of the removal of the bodies of Nadab and Abihu), he describes the special arrangement of doors in the modern-day mortuary at Jerusalem’s Hadasah hospital in the commentary regarding the prevention of priestly contamination by corpses (p. 159, n. 87). Mesopotamian laws regarding the removal of fungus from homes are mentioned as parallels to Leviticus 14 (p. 199, n. 129).

Rooker moves the reader step by step to an interpretive decision. Four different interpretations of the “strange fire” in 10:1–7 (pp. 157–58) and seven different explanations for the distinctions between clean and unclean animals in chapter 11 (pp. 170–75) are eliminated one by one until the strongest remains. However, a fuller discussion of the nature and operation of the Urim and Thummim would have been desirable (pp. 143–44).

Contrary to the author’s observation (p. 296, n. 291), Jewish avoidance of uttering God’s name is not based solely on 24:11; the third commandment (Exod 20:7) was involved very early in the practice’s history. Rooker fails to consider the essays of R. Laird Harris (“The Pronunciation of the Tetragram,” in *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis* [ed. J. H. Skilton; Presbyterian and Reformed, 1974] 215) and Louis F. Hartman (“God, Names of,” *EncJud* 7.680), who question the legitimacy of the practice.

There appear to be two different styles of commentary in the series. Rooker’s *Leviticus*, Kenneth Mathews’s *Genesis 1–11:26* (1996), Eugene Merrill’s *Deuteronomy* (1994), Robert Bergen’s *1, 2 Samuel* (1996), and Paul House’s *1, 2 Kings* (1995) tend to be more general and theological. Hebrew exegetical details are presented in footnotes, but not as extensively as in the more exegetical volumes like Daniel Block’s *Judges, Ruth* (1999), David Howard’s *Joshua* (1998), and Kenneth Barker and Waylon

Bailey's *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah* (1998). The latter, while more technical in style, do not neglect theology or exposition. The inclusion of both styles broadens the NAC, providing serious Bible students with valuable models of both kinds of commentary. Rooker's volume is a welcome addition to this stimulating series.

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*II Samuel 21–24. Context, Structure and Meaning in the Samuel Conclusion.* By Herbert H. Klement. New York: Peter Lang, 2000, 292 pp., \$45.95 paper.

Herbert H. Klement makes a significant contribution to the study of the structure and theology of 1–2 Samuel in this "slightly revised" version of his Ph.D. dissertation (University of Coventry/Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, 1995) done under the supervision of J. Gordon McConville. Klement's dissertation challenges the widely held view that 2 Samuel 21–24 is a collection of miscellaneous appendices loosely attached to the end of 2 Samuel, disrupting the flow of the so-called Succession Narrative (2 Samuel 9–20; 1 Kings 1–2). It has long been recognized that 2 Samuel 21–24 reflects a six part chiasmic structure (*a-b-c-c'-b'-a'*). In the first and last units (2 Sam 21:1–14; 24:1–25) God's judgment (famine and plague) falls on the people of Israel because of the sins of Saul (he put Gibeonites to death) and David (taking the census) respectively. The second and fifth units (2 Sam 21:15–22; 23:8–39) are two lists of David's warriors. At the center are two poetic units (2 Sam 22:1–51; 23:1–7), "David's Song of Praise" and "David's Last Words." What has not been previously recognized is how this structural arrangement may relate to those found in other parts of the book. Klement's thorough examination of this question has produced some significant insights, not only into the structure of Samuel, but also into how the author has used structure to call attention to important theological themes.

Klement's analysis of the literary structures embedded in 1–2 Samuel is far too complex to summarize in this brief review. Anyone interested in the literary structure of Samuel should carefully study Klement's suggestions. H. J. Koorevaar, who has also addressed the literary structure of 1–2 Samuel in a serious manner ("De macrostructuur van het boek Samuel en de theologische implicaties daarvan," *Acta Theologica* [1997/2] 56–86) properly refers to Klement's proposals as competent and impressive and as something that cannot be ignored in future studies of 1–2 Samuel (p. 58). He also suggests that it might be possible to find a synthesis between his own work and that of Klement (p. 57). Suffice it to say that Klement not only makes a good case for finding the six-part chiasmic structure of the "Appendix" in numerous other places in the book, but he also calls attention to a structural function for the placement of six poetic texts (1 Sam 2:1–10; 18:7; 2 Sam 1:19–27; 3:33–34; 22:1–51; 23:1–7), as well as the sixfold encounters between David and various prophets (two each with Samuel, Gad and Nathan). The structural pattern proposed by Klement reveals an alignment between the double chiasmic center of the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem (emphasizing the kingship of Yahweh, 2 Samuel 6) and the promise of an everlasting dynasty to David (emphasizing the kingship of David, 2 Samuel 7) with the double poetic center of the "Appendix" chiasm of David's Song of Praise (of the LORD's kingship, 2 Sam 22:1–51) and David's Last Words (concerning his own kingship, 2 Sam 23:1–10). All of this is coordinated with the function of three sets of double lists in 2 Samuel. The double list of David's warriors in the "Appendix" (21:15–22; 23:8–39) is mirrored by the double list of sons born to David in Hebron (2 Sam 3:1–5) and Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:13–16) as well

as the double list of David's officials (2 Sam 8:15–18; 20:23–26). The sons, officials, and warriors are the beneficiaries of the new order of society associated with David's royal court.

When all of this is put together (along with numerous other matters not mentioned in this review), it suggests that the so-called "Appendix" is not to be regarded as extraneous material inappropriately placed in its present position, as has often been suggested, nor is the structure of the "Appendix" to be viewed as merely a matter of aesthetics, but rather it provides the reader with a key for unlocking both the literary structure of the book and the theological concerns that the author intended to convey by the arrangement of the narratives of the book in the way that we find them. In Klement's concluding words (p. 253), "Recognition of Yahweh's covenant with David is what is promoted in Samuel. David's struggle with Saul, and his presumptuous behavior during his reign, do not finally call into question of the faithfulness of Yahweh. Yahweh has provided his people with a king who has defeated their enemies over a wide area. Yahweh's rule in Israel is exercised through David and his dynasty."

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*Psalms*. By James Limburg. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000, 509 pp., n.p. paper.

The commentary forms part of a series written to "help the laity of the church read the Bible more clearly and intelligently" (p. xi). Included are a six-page introduction, commentary on each psalm (Psalms 9–10 are considered one), and a short bibliography. There are no indexes or footnotes. Samples of titles given to individual psalms are "The Way to Go" (Psalm 1), "The Plotting Politicians" (Psalm 2), "A Mighty Fortress" (Psalm 46), "Rock Music" (Psalm 60), "From King David to Duke Ellington" (Psalm 150). Translations of each psalm, including the ancient superscriptions where they exist, precede introductory remarks, the latter consisting typically of personal incidents from the commentator's life, discussion of its role vis-à-vis previous psalms, suggestions regarding an ancient life-setting, and observations on the psalm's structure. General summaries follow according to paragraph divisions.

The approach is predominantly form-critical, although the canonical method is given due regard. Psalms is categorized as "The People's Book" because in it are songs, reflections, and advice for all of life's experiences, and so it is a "collection of 150 psalms" (p. xiii). Summarizing statements such as "lament and praise are the two fundamental themes running through the Psalms" and "a majority of the Psalms arose out of two fundamental situations in the lives of God's people" (p. xiv), confirm the governing approach. The basic theme is praise, since "the name of the book of Psalms in its original Hebrew form is one word: *tehillim*" (p. xiv). Such an asseveration overlooks the fact that the book lacks a title in *Codex Leningradensis*, and the traditional Hebrew title *tehillim* does not correspond to the Greek *Psalmoi*, the latter most probably derived from *miz-môr*. Gunkel himself is mentioned when describing the interpretation of psalms "with other psalms of the same type" (pp. xvi–xvii). As part of the introduction, the canonical approach is succinctly described, including the names of some of its better known practitioners, followed by observations in the commentary itself.

The author has attempted to combine the more recent canonical approach with traditional form criticism, two approaches that are fundamentally different. The canonical method assumes a unified text and message wrought from the hand of the final redactor,

while form critics attempt to reorder and reclassify the canonical Psalter. Mirroring the fact that at the present time the canonical approach is in its infancy, observations in the commentary from this perspective are of a scattered and mostly local nature, not accompanied by integration into the whole. To use Limburg's own words, the canonical method seeks to read each psalm in "the context of the entire book of Psalms, called the Psalter" (p. xvii), a task yet unfinished, as this commentary and the field at large demonstrate.

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*Proverbs 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary.* By Michael V. Fox. AB 18A, New York: Doubleday, 2000, xix + 474 pp., \$42.50.

Michael V. Fox has added another volume to the Anchor Bible. This publication is part of an update of R. B. Y. Scott's contribution to the Anchor Bible, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes*, which appeared in 1965. Scott's work was one of the earliest offerings in the Anchor Bible and fit closely with the original intention of the series (as I understand it), which was to provide basic introductory material, emphasize a new translation, and offer textual notes, along with a comparatively minimal amount of commentary. Subsequent authors added more weight to the commentary; thus Scott's work was much thinner than other volumes that followed in the series. As evidence of the larger space given in the more recent books in this series, Fox will cover the book of Proverbs in two volumes. The first volume covers chaps. 1–9 of Proverbs, while volume two will cover chaps. 10–31. Ecclesiastes will be treated in a separate volume. Thus what Scott did in one volume (257 pp.) in 1965 will be covered in three volumes in the updates.

The book consists of four main components: (1) commentary, which requires no knowledge of Hebrew; (2) excursuses on topics that arise from the exegesis; (3) philological and technical notes, which appear in small type; and (4) textual notes, which are found at the end of the book. There is also an extensive discussion of introductory matters and, as is true of all offerings in the Anchor Bible, the author provides an original translation of the text.

Fox divides Proverbs 1–9 into a prologue, ten lectures, and five interludes. The ten lectures are father-to-son discourses, each consisting of an exordium, a lesson, and a conclusion. The five interludes, regarded as later additions, are for the most part reflections on wisdom. There are also minor insertions, which are regarded as secondary.

One of Fox's most noticeable traits is that he is not hesitant to disagree with previous scholarship. The reader will soon discover that the claims of C. H. Toy (ICC), W. L. McKane (OTL), and others come under frequent and pointed criticism. However, Fox shows why he differs with these scholars and provides convincing arguments to support his beliefs. For example, there are detailed discussions regarding the identities of Lady Wisdom and the Strange Woman, in which Fox adequately cites the existing views, critiques them, and offers his own views, with reasonable arguments to back them up. It is disappointing that Richard J. Clifford's contribution to the Old Testament Library came out too late for Fox to interact with it in detail. The same can be said of the recent commentaries by Roland Murphy (WBC) and Raymond Van Leeuwen (NIB).

Fox provides a discussion of wisdom vocabulary (pp. 28–43) similar to the study found in Kidner's commentary in the Tyndale Old Testament Commentary series. While Kidner's study still has many valuable insights and deals with a broader range of

topics, Fox's treatment is more updated and scholarly. Another positive feature of this book is the discussion of ancient pedagogy (pp. 131–34, 309–17), which dispels some common misconceptions regarding teaching methodology in Israel. One of the most helpful qualities of the book is the frequent occurrence of informative comparisons, contrasts, and parallels with Egyptian literature, concepts, and beliefs. The author also does this with Mesopotamian materials, but to a much smaller degree.

One of the interesting characteristics of this book is Fox's attempt to take ancient Hebrew vocabulary and concepts and find modern Americanized English equivalents, such as "jerks" (p. 102), "blockheads" (p. 117), and "zombies" (p. 118). However, he may have gone too far with the blunt warning found on p. 237: "Keep away from another man's wife, or he'll beat the hell out of you, maybe kill you."

It was disappointing that Fox did not interact with Kitchen's discussions of the structure of the book of Proverbs in "The Basic Literary Forms and Formulations of Ancient Instructional Writings in Egypt and Western Asia" (in E. Hornung and O. Keel, eds., *Studien zu altägyptischen Lebenslehren* [Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979] 235–82) and "Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East: The Factual History of a Literary Form" (*TynBul* 28 [1977] 69–114). Kitchen made a case for the structure of Proverbs based on his comparison of Proverbs with contemporary literature outside of Israel. Kitchen's studies are listed in the bibliography but never made a part of the discussion.

Assessing this book's place in its field shows both positives and negatives. It is written from a different faith perspective than the one ETS members hold to and rarely includes evangelical scholarship in the discussion. Nevertheless, it is still a valuable resource because of the author's familiarity with ancient Near Eastern materials and his ability to show parallels, comparisons, and contrasts. Fox is also very well informed on the culture and language of ancient Israel. This kind of knowledge is crucial to the understanding of individual proverbs, since so many of them appear without context, as will probably be demonstrated in the second volume. It is also important to the understanding of the social setting and cultural background of wisdom materials.

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*Micah*. By Ehud Ben Zvi. FOTL 21B. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, 189 pp., n.p.

Ehud Ben Zvi's contribution to the FOTL series breaks new ground. The work reflects the growing number of studies of recent years that have focused on the literary issues of the book of Micah and attempts to bring these together with the results of the more traditional methodologies of historical-critical study, especially redaction criticism.

Rather than beginning with the putative words of the prophet, Ben Zvi defines the "canonical genre" of the book of Micah as it now stands as a "prophetic book," which consists of a series of prophetic readings. The choice of this designation reflects his interest in reconstructing the last stages of the process through which he believes the book was produced in its final form. In accord with most redaction-critical studies, Ben Zvi finds the setting of the production of the book in the Achaemenid postmonarchic community. This was a time when the post-exilic literati in urban centers enjoyed social and political circumstances that allowed for the production, reading, and rereading of their works. Such a temporal setting also would accord well with the emphasis on

explaining the destruction of Jerusalem and the offer of hope in words pointing to an ideal future.

The concept of “rereading” is crucial. The book of Micah was not merely read once on the surface, but was reread repeatedly. Subsequent “rereadings” are by nature quite different from a first reading of a text (or from the first time one would have heard the oral proclamation of a living prophet). Rereadings allow for “careful reading, studious and meditative” (p. 6). The “rereader” can be aware of the entire text of the book even while reading the first line.

Initially, the structure of the book is seen in simple terms: there is a title (1:1), the body (1:2–7:20), and a conclusion (7:18–20). The internal structure of the body is treated in terms of readings, “literary units with textually inscribed markers (such as openings, conclusions, inner-textual coherence, thematic focus) that were likely to signal to the intended rereaders of the book that they are supposed . . . to read and reread these units as such” (p. 7). There are four readings: 1:2–2:13; 3:1–12; 4:1–5:14; 6:1–7:17. The process of rereading was carried out sequentially as one read through the book, but awareness of the other readings created “a net of interwoven meanings” (p. 7). The book was thus produced by a generation of people who experienced the word of YHWH as a written text. The literate brokers of knowledge wrote for and read to their audience, the vast majority of the population, which was unable to read. The book describes a world in the period of the monarchy in which God’s word was proclaimed orally. But this was not the world of those who assembled the book’s oracles. It portrays the monarchy only as they imagined it, with few anchors tied to particular historical events or circumstances. Ben Zvi then proceeds to analyze each passage, or reading, in terms of how it would have been perceived by people in this post-exilic community.

The work is carefully done and has a well-thought-out, unusual methodology, which is applied consistently to the prophetic readings in the book. The methodology treats the canonical text as a unit and encourages the search for coherence in the text, a welcome and positive approach to the study of Scripture. Ben Zvi’s commentary is helpful for the reader concerned to understand the book’s meaning since he adopts the stance of the careful meditative rereaders of the biblical text. The book deemphasizes reliance on speculative redactional reconstructions of the development of the book.

The latter is also one of the book’s weaknesses: it relies on the final stage of the putative production process, which is itself a reconstruction. There is actually little textual evidence in the prophetic books concerning their production. The most extensive data on this is Jeremiah 36, which would indicate that the process was begun soon after the proclamation, and in this case, by the prophet himself. Based on the Jeremiah text, we should expect that Micah himself might have had a part in ensuring that the gathering and arranging of his oracles reflected the themes he preached in Jerusalem and Judah. In addition, the exclusive focus on the last stage of composition leads to a “historical agnosticism” about the possibility of actually knowing the prophet’s words, impact, and life circumstances in the eighth century BC. In studying the text with Ben Zvi in hand, the contemporary reader will notice as a result a certain repetitiveness: the setting for every unit is precisely identical, since each is linked to the final stage of production, occurring in the postmonarchic community. The text loses some of the richness that it would evince were we to read with an eye to the original prophet Micah of the eighth century and the varied settings in which his oracles were delivered.

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*The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament.* By John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000, 832 pp., \$29.99.

The *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* shares with its companion NT volume (*IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* by Craig S. Keener [IVP, 1993]) the quest of providing pastors, Sunday-School teachers, and everyday Bible readers with an effective and nontechnical resource on the socio-cultural, historical, and archaeological background of the text of the Bible. This OT edition is designed to serve “a nonprofessional market rather than the academic and scholarly communities” (p. 8). A broad and helpful bibliography on the cultural context of the OT is included (pp. 10–20), but one will look in vain for footnotes or endnotes. Bible college and seminary students and scholars will no doubt learn something new in the pages of this book, but they will not be able to locate the basic reference works from which any particular background information was taken. This book was not written with the scholarly community in mind, and it should not be criticized as if it were.

Essentially, the *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* is a revision and expansion of the shorter *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Genesis—Deuteronomy* by John H. Walton and Victor H. Matthews. IVP published the earlier work in 1997, and Keith N. Schoville offered an insightful review of it in this same *Journal* in 1999 (*JETS* 42: 489–90). The basic issues raised in Schoville’s review also apply to the new revision and need not be repeated here. A third author, Mark Chavalas, joined Walton and Matthews to produce the larger edition on the entire OT, and the fruits of their excellent and exhaustive research and collaboration can be seen in the quality of the comments in the work. All three authors are recognized experts in their field.

Relevant background information is listed by chapter and verse for selected passages in each book of the OT. The basic idea is to study the commentary alongside an open Bible. The entire work is divided into four sections, following the order of the Protestant canon, and each section begins with a brief general introduction.

In addition to the six already included in the shorter Genesis—Deuteronomy edition, the revised and expanded version contains an additional 23 sidebars on major historical and socio-cultural issues germane to the interpretation of the OT text (e.g. “The Political Climate in the Early Iron Age,” “Day of Yahweh,” “Apocalyptic Literature”). Unfortunately, the page numbers on which these sidebars are located are not listed in the Table of Contents, making it difficult for the reader to find the desired material quickly.

The glossary is expanded, more charts and maps are added, and a new topical index is attached to the book. A list of charts and maps (two maps are orphaned in the midst of the text and are left for the reader to discover alone) and a subject index (or at least an expansion of the topical index included in the book) would have been very helpful.

The goal of the *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* as expressed in the preface is a bit more subdued and demure (and less likely to be charged with parallelomania) than that of the more unbridled enthusiasm of its NT companion volume. Part of the purpose in providing such a vast amount of information on the cultural matrix in which Israel lived is to assuage the curiosity of the reader (p. 8). In addition, background information was not to be offered to help interpret a passage, but only to provide comparative data “that *may be* pertinent to interpreting the passage” (p. 8; emphasis added). The authors of the book deny following an apologetic agenda in the selection or presentation of data or in pressing any interpretation (pp. 7, 9). Actually, “by offering insight into the Israelite or ancient Near Eastern way of thinking,” the authors hope to help interpreters avoid erroneous conclusions (p. 7).

The authors are fully aware that the theological message of the Bible is not dependent on an exact knowledge of the archaeological or cultural background (p. 7). Obviously, not everyone will agree with them on the interpretive value or relevance of all of the extensive ancient Near Eastern parallels amassed in this text. Nevertheless, such phrases and concepts as “as far as the east is from the west” (Ps 103:12), “weighing the heart” (Prov 21:2), and reverential prostration (2 Sam 1:2) clearly become more understandable when compared with, and illustrated by, material from Egyptian literature and mythology. In addition, useful homiletical background information can be found on such diverse examples as the prohibition of images in the second commandment (Exod 20:4), the Nephilim (Gen 6:4), the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:4), Joshua’s long day (Josh 10:12–13), or Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image (Dan 3:1). For those who are careful to seek them out, many other exegetical insights abound.

There are, however, two important caveats that must be raised in any attempt to utilize ancient Near Eastern parallels to interpret the Bible. The first is the issue of propinquity, and the second, homogeneity. The authors of the *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* recognize that a “cultural element in the town of Ugarit in the mid-second millennium may not have any relationship to the way Israelites of the mid-first millennium thought” (p. 7). Despite this, the background information provided in the work is not delineated to precise time periods. In like manner, the authors recognize that some of the book’s material must be used with caution “because we cannot assume a flat homogeneity across the eras, regions or ethnic groups of the ancient Near East” (p. 8). But because the authors do not impose strict limitations on the way in which the information is offered, the reader could be confused into assuming that a monolithic culture existed among all groups of the ancient world, including the Israelites. The scholar and student might be able to perceive the difference, but it is unclear how well the everyday Bible reader may be able to do so.

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*Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000, xxxiv + 1328 pp., \$39.95.

Released in the fall of 2000, the *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (hereafter “the *Dictionary*”) is the fourth in the IVP dictionary series, preceded by the three dictionaries on *Jesus and the Gospels (DJG)*, *Paul and His Letters (DPL)*, and the *Later New Testament and its Developments (DLNTD)*. Although the other volumes give considerable attention to NT “backgrounds,” this volume is entirely devoted to background study. It is concerned with the background of the NT in the broadest sense, including the whole range of first-century Jewish and Greco-Roman literary, social, and political activity as well as the archaeological data.

According to the editors in their introduction, the volume contains approximately 300 articles, with around 200 contributors. The list of contributors is actually closer to 150. It represents a wide range of scholarship, mainly from North America and the British Commonwealth. Several Europeans also contributed articles. A number of entries are by female scholars, and Jewish and Roman Catholic scholars are represented as well. Many contributors are well known and widely published. A great number are less familiar, especially recent Ph.D.s who have established themselves by their published dissertations. A quick glance at the bibliography to a given article generally reveals a

work by the author, thus indicating expertise in that area. The editors have themselves published extensively in the area of backgrounds and have contributed a number of articles, comprising some of the very best work in the volume.

The dictionary follows the format of the previous three in the series. Each entry generally begins with a helpful outline and concludes with a list of related articles found elsewhere in the *Dictionary*. This is followed by an extensive and helpful bibliography. In the case of some short articles, they are nearly as long as the article itself. Some cross-referencing of articles to entries in the other three dictionaries is often provided within an article, but this is limited. It would be helpful in future editions if such cross-referencing were provided on a regular basis in the list of related articles that precedes the bibliography.

Articles vary considerably in length. In general, the more specific the topic the shorter the article. For example, the article on "Seneca" is one column long, whereas that on "Scholarship, Greek and Roman" is twenty-one pages in length. One of the strong points of the *Dictionary* is that it has a number of overview articles like the one above in addition to the usual more narrowly focused treatments.

The *Dictionary* contains three separate indexes (pp. 1304–28), for Scripture references, subjects, and a listing of the individual articles. The subject index is particularly useful, since many background topics do not have a separate article but are discussed within more general treatments. The *Dictionary* could be improved by the addition of more illustrations. I found only two, one of the Jerusalem temple and one of the monastery at Qumran. Articles such as "Art and Architecture" would be much easier to follow if a few drawings were provided.

The breadth of topics covered is considerable. Most writings of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha have separate articles. The major cities mentioned in the NT have entries, such as the two Antiochs, Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Rome. Major Greco-Roman writers are introduced, such as Cicero, Lucian, Suetonius, and the two Plinys. Articles are devoted to the Greco-Roman philosophers and philosophical movements as well as the major movements within Judaism. The different genres of Greco-Roman and Jewish literature are covered, as well as specific Jewish writings. In addition, there are a number of articles on the biblical languages, such as Aramaic and Hellenistic Greek, and related areas such as NT textual criticism.

A number of articles treat first-century social life, including family and household, characteristics of an honor and shame society, and the role and status of women. These are usually divided into two sections, one dealing with Greco-Roman, the other with Jewish society. Likewise, a number of entries deal with the various political structures in the Greek, Roman, and Jewish societies. One could quibble about some of the choices of topics. One gets the impression that a number of subjects were selected because a significant monograph had been recently produced on that particular topic, in which case the writer was invited to give a summary of his or her work.

Probably the most significant contribution of the *Dictionary* is its extensive treatment of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Many of the contributors have been active participants in Scrolls research. A large number of articles discuss the individual scrolls, many of which have only become available to general scholarship in the last decade. The *Dictionary* makes the wide range of these findings accessible.

One wonders why other recent archaeological discoveries are not covered more extensively. A good article is provided on the Zenon papyri, but none on other finds, such as those of Oxyrhynchus, which are important to NT studies for their linguistic evidence. No article appears on Nag Hammadi. In fact, Gnosticism as a whole receives little attention, mainly a single four-page entry. Perhaps this is to avoid overlap with the more extensive 12-page article on Gnosticism in *DLNTD*.

Looking at the four-volume series as a whole, its overall design is both its strength and its weakness. Its strength is in its dividing the four dictionaries into distinct subject areas: Jesus, Paul, the rest of the New Testament, backgrounds. This makes it quite handy for classroom use. I have thus found *DJG* to be an excellent choice for a text in a course on the Gospels and *DPL* to be useful as a text in a course on the epistles. The *DLNTD* is, of course, another matter altogether. It does not cohere as well, being the “hopper” volume, consisting of “all that is left.” The backgrounds volume is much better integrated and will prove to be a valuable reference tool for all areas of NT study.

A major weakness of the four-volume design is the great amount of overlap between the volumes. For one example among many that could be noted, both the *Dictionary* and *DPL* contain articles on major cities like Antioch, Ephesus, and Jerusalem. Likewise, both have entries on “Roman Emperors.” *DJG* discusses chronology in connection with Jesus, *DPL* in connection with Paul, and the *Dictionary* discusses the chronology of both Jesus and Paul. All three of these volumes contain articles on the Jerusalem temple. In all fairness, however, it should be noted that the overlapping articles in the various volumes usually look at the subject from different perspectives. In the temple articles, for example, *DJG* discusses Jesus’ relationship to the temple, *DPL* treats the temple as it appears in Paul’s epistles, and the *Dictionary* provides by far the most extensive treatment of the history and institutions of the temple.

As a whole, this volume is remarkably clean. There are the usual errata, but these are very few. An occasional more glaring error somehow missed the editor’s eye. For example, Palestine is not likely to have experienced an 800-meter rainfall (p. 303), at least not since the time of Noah!

I am personally delighted with this volume. It provides a wealth of information on a wide variety of subjects, bringing together in a single volume material that before was previously accessible only from many different sources. At \$40.00 it is an incredible bargain—around three cents per page. This is all the more significant when one bears in mind that many of the articles are a condensation of research that has been previously available only in monograph form, often at a cost of fifty cents to a dollar per page. All serious students of the NT will want this volume on their shelves.

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*Scripture as Story*. By Morris A. Inch. Lanham: University Press of America, 2000, 227 pp., \$29.50.

This book takes its place in the currently burgeoning field of narrative analysis of Scripture. Its chief virtues are twofold. One is the narrative theory that it lays out in the opening pages and then intermittently throughout. The second virtue is the way in which the book organizes the entire Bible into a continuous sequential story from creation through apocalypse. For Bible readers who have never been coached into viewing the Bible as telling a single overarching story, the framework provided by this book will be a valuable contribution to knowledge.

These commendable purposes are partly undermined by the strategies through which they are implemented. The narrative theory is excellent, but it is almost entirely derivative (quoted or cited from previously published sources). While this does not make the theory anything less than good, one expects a more original contribution to knowledge from a book published by a university press. Furthermore (although it is doubtless a minor stylistic point), the author drops his quotations from scholars into

his text without a lead-in, leaving the reader momentarily baffled regarding the quoted material and requiring the reader to turn to the endnotes to figure out what is happening. I myself disallow this in any form in my students' papers and would have expected the same from a scholarly press.

More debilitating is the proportion of the book that is devoted to plot summary, paraphrase, and quotation from the Bible, with only the barest of interpretive commentary interspersed. The proportion of such material is 90–95 percent, not counting the opening two chapters, which formulate a theoretical framework for viewing the Bible as story. A person unacquainted with the Bible would doubtless benefit from a plot summary of the overall shape of the Bible. Why a scholarly press would publish such a book is unclear.

To show the narrative unity of the Bible as this book does is a worthy venture. To fit non-narrative parts of the Bible into that narrative framework as though they told a story is something of a stretch. The real objection to the book is that such a rudimentary venture in plot summary (again excepting the first two chapters) would be offered as a scholarly work. The author should have applied an analytical grid to the material, thereby raising the plot summary of the Bible above the level of mere summary, paraphrase, and quotation.

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*Providence and Prayer: How Does God Work in the World?* By Terrance L. Tiessen. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000, 432 pp., \$18.99 paper.

Can divine sovereignty and human freedom coexist? Does God limit his control by allowing human freedom? If so, does God comprehensively guide history? If so, how? Is human freedom libertarian or compatibilistic? What is the range of God's knowledge? Can the future acts of free agents be foreknown? If so, does foreknowledge cause these events? If they are foreknown, are they certain? If so, in what sense can they be free? How does God relate to time and how does this shape one's view of foreknowledge? How does prayer fit into all of this? Does it really change things, only change us, or is it a means God uses to accomplish his purposes? With the title similar to Peter Baelz's *Prayer and Providence: A Background Study* (SCM, 1968), Terrance Tiessen's *Providence and Prayer* addresses these and other timeless theological questions.

Tiessen is author of *Irenaeus and the Salvation of the Unevangelized* (ATLA, 1993) and Professor of Theology and Ethics at Providence Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba. His desire to write *Providence and Prayer* emerged as he realized the practical and theological inconsistencies of many of his students. Their beliefs concerning prayer and salvation did not fit their confessed view of providence. In a manner reminiscent of J. I. Packer's *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, Tiessen asserts, "But when these students pray for the unsaved, they frequently assume that God can do things to bring about the salvation of people, which is not possible for God to do if those people have the sort of freedom that these intercessors believe to be the case" (p. 14). Thus, Tiessen wrote *Providence and Prayer* to examine some of the common models of divine providence, develop the views of each one's representative thinkers, and show how each would understand petitionary prayer.

After a valuable introduction that orients the general reader, Tiessen interacts with ten major models of providence. He organizes them as distinct chapters along a spectrum that correlates to divine and human agency (from the weakest view of God's

sovereignty to strongest): semi-Deist, process, openness, Church dominion, redemptive intervention, Molinist, Thomist Barthian, Calvinist, and fatalist. Tiessen then proposes his view: "a middle knowledge Calvinist model." Tiessen begins his discussion of each model by presenting a synopsis of it. This is extremely helpful, because each summary provides most of the central information about each model in less than a page. He then introduces a few leading proponents of each model. This is followed by his well-organized presentation and sound examination of the particular model's view of providence and related issues. Each chapter concludes with a splendid and practical case study concerning how a person adhering to that model of providence would likely pray (if consistent) in a certain situation. The book also contains an appendix that compares the models of providence as well as a small glossary.

Tiessen's own proposal, "a middle knowledge Calvinist model," comprises about one-sixth of the book. Like proponents of the Calvinist model, Tiessen affirms God's comprehensive control and a compatibilistic view of human freedom. He questions (but does not clearly reject) divine timelessness because it "may not do justice to God's highly relational personal being" (p. 289). He maintains that God not only determines human history but also responds to it. Tiessen suggests: "This divine responsiveness is facilitated by God's possessing knowledge of how creatures would act in particular circumstances (so called 'middle knowledge'). God not only knows the actual future, he has determined that future. But in order to do this, God needed to know how creatures would respond to situations, including their response to his own persuasions or actions. God *can* know this because creatures are not libertarianly free and he *must* know this in order to plan how he will act to bring about his purposes" (p. 289).

Tiessen provides nine theses to summarize his view of providence: (1) "God's providential care of his creation includes every detail" (p. 2); (2) "God has established a usual way of upholding his nonsentient creation" (p. 3); (3) "God's eternal purpose is the ground of his comprehensive knowledge of created reality" (p. 4); (4) "In establishing his eternal purpose God 'had' middle knowledge" (p. 5); (5) "God's comprehensive providential care is exercised in such a way that creatures act spontaneously, normally choosing what they do without external restraint" (p. 6); (6) "Were we to decide differently than we do, God's eternal knowledge of the future would be different than it is" (p. 7); (7) "God's relationship to time and, hence, the nature of eternity is mysterious" (p. 8); (8) "Given our creation as morally responsible creatures, God's direction of our lives is through commands and through persuasion" (p. 9); (9) "Although God is completely in control at all times so that the accomplishment of his purposes is never at risk, voluntarily free creatures often act contrary to God's moral precepts. This causes grief and pain for God" (pp. 330–32).

Tiessen's understanding of prayer flows from his view of providence. He suggests that (1) prayer is one of the means God has chosen to use in the accomplishment of his will (p. 337); (2) it is often legitimate to request God to work in nature (p. 350); (3) it is consistent to ask God to act even when other people are involved in the situation (p. 354); and (4) God has a special providential interest in the lives of his children (p. 356).

Important books related to God's providence abound: G. C. Berkhouwer's *The Providence of God* (1952); D. A. Carson's *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* (1981); William Lane Craig's *The Only Wise God* (1987); Benjamin Farley's *The Providence of God* (1988); Paul Helm's *The Providence of God* (1993); John Sanders's *The God Who Risks* (1998); and R. C. Sproul's *The Invisible Hand* (1996). Does Tiessen's *Providence and Prayer* make a contribution? Yes, for two reasons. First, Tiessen has provided a substantial summary of the major views of providence. His analysis of the ten major models of providence is fair, thorough, and nuanced (and better than *Predestination and Free Will: Four Views of Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom* [ed. David and Randall Basinger; IVP, 1986]). Second, Tiessen's own model demonstrates

his willingness to learn from some of the riskier contemporary views of providence while maintaining a strong view of God's sovereignty.

While *Providence and Prayer* deserves much praise, it still displays a few weaknesses. First, readers might have benefited from an earlier, clearer, and more thorough discussion of the nature of divine sovereignty and human freedom. Some readers, attracted by the title of the book, might feel overwhelmed and not finish it. Second, an earlier introduction to the Augustinian/Calvinist model of providence might have been useful, because most of the other models of providence seem to be reacting to it, misunderstanding it, misrepresenting it, critiquing it, or modifying it. If readers do not sufficiently understand the Calvinist view, then they will probably not adequately grasp the nuances of the other models of providence. Third, Tiessen often refers to the ideas of various representative figures without adequately introducing them. Fourth, only minimal exegesis is offered. Finally, Tiessen's third thesis seems difficult to harmonize with his fourth thesis (see above). Thus, a question keeps emerging, "What is the relationship of God's knowledge to his purpose and to his decrees?" In other words, does God purpose what he foreknows, does he foreknow what he purposes, or what? Overall, however, Tiessen provides a valuable service for professors and seminary students interested in learning about the various viewpoints concerning divine providence.

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*The Idea of Natural Rights: Studies on Natural Rights, Natural Law and Church Law, 1150–1625.* By Brian Tierney. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997, xi + 380 pp., \$24.95.

Brian Tierney of Cornell University presents a historical development of the subjective meaning of *dikaion* and *ius* relative to human rights, breaking with the common notion of when and how this development began.

Throughout classical philosophy, Roman law, medieval jurisprudence, and the writings of many later natural law philosophers, the word *ius* was first understood as an objective right relationship, then as a law or moral precept. Later, it took on a subjective meaning. Michel Villey held that the subjective meaning of *ius* originated in the fourteenth century with William of Ockham and his nominalistic view on universals. Tierney, however, cites Bonaventure and other thirteenth-century Franciscans as well as their adversaries—for example, Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaines—who all used the word *ius* in a subjective sense. "The doctrine of individual rights was not a late medieval aberration from an earlier tradition of objective right or of natural moral law. . . . It was a characteristic product of the great age of creative jurisprudence that, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, established the foundations of the Western legal tradition" (p. 42).

According to Tierney, many medievalists easily moved between the two meanings of *ius* as objective law and subjective right. Some of the twelfth-century canonists affirmed *ius naturale* as the right to reclaim or to relinquish that which is one's own. This was applied to Paul's statement, "All things are lawful for me." It was also used to explain Christian exemption from Jewish ceremonial precepts, as these were replaced by the concept of natural liberty.

It is popular fare today to deny the notion of an inalienable right to anyone living prior to the seventeenth century. As Tierney underscores, however, Henry of Ghent argued in his *Quaestio* for the right of self-preservation. Property was considered by the medievalists to be both private and common, depending on the need. While many have

shown that Thomas Aquinas did not state a theory of natural rights, Tierney notes "there was nothing in his work that necessarily excluded such a concept" (p. 108). Moreover, Hermanus Natalis, a Thomist who wrote ten years before Ockham, employed the language of natural rights, as did later many of the greatest thinkers of the Spanish second scholasticism.

According to Tierney, the first overt distinction between objective law and subjective right seems to have come from the pen of Marsilius of Padua (d. about 1342), who employed *ius* as individual right and *lex* as the law that defined it. This was a careful departure from the fourteenth-century jurists who took for granted the polysemous nature of *ius*. At this same time, William of Ockham disagreed with Pope John XXII concerning the notion of ownership, arguing for the Franciscan right to the vow of poverty. Ockham believed that dominion need not imply ownership. Christian law, according to the epistle of James, was a law of perfect liberty. In light of this, Ockham argued that the pope could not command anything contrary to divine and natural law; indeed, papal power had its proper limits in view of both temporal and spiritual rights. Vows of poverty, fasting, and renouncing property were not contrary to divine and natural law. The pope could not command them either, because to do so would contradict the liberty of the gospel. Scripture and right reason, argued Ockham, were the infallible rule in such matters, not one's naked will.

Tierney argues that Ockham's nominalism had no apparent connection with his view on natural rights. Both nominalists and realists, as well as rationalists and voluntarists, argued for natural rights; thus, rights theorists cannot be conveniently portrayed as either atheists following Hobbes or aberrant Christian thinkers dependent on Ockham. As Jacques Maritain has argued, individual rights were always implicit in the Christian concept of individual human dignity.

Tierney traces this development further. With the advent of the discovery and colonialization of America, questions began to surface relative to the domination of people groups. Did such people have rights? Francisco de Vitoria, a sixteenth-century Spanish Thomist, argued that all human beings, whether sinners, children or natural slaves, could possess natural rights. Bartolomé de Las Casas spent twenty years working among the American Indians, trying to convert them by peaceful persuasion. Writing in his *De thesauris* of the "dignities, good and other rights" that the infidels possessed by natural law, he argued that even barbarians should be treated with "brotherly kindness and Christian love" (pp. 275–78).

Continuing on, Tierney notes that Francisco de Vitoria derived his subjective notion of *ius* from Aquinas and Gerson. After this, definitions of *ius* as a faculty or power passed into the works of sixteenth-century theologians such as Suarez and Molina. Finally, in the seventeenth century, the Dutch Protestant humanist Grotius completed the bridge over which European culture passed from the medieval to the modern era. He cited not only the Spanish scholastics but also earlier medieval works relative to rights theories. Grotius had a dream of a reunited Christendom in which differences would be tolerated. Independent sovereign states would owe no allegiance to an outside power, except by a universally accepted international law. Grotius influenced all the major rights theorists of the next century.

Tierney has done us a great service in compiling a multitude of texts that bear on human rights. Among other things, his presentation will challenge modern pietists who hold that "believers have no rights." Also, he opens the way for us to see a continuum from the ancients to the present concerning the idea of natural rights.

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*Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero.* By Robert Kolb. Grand Rapids: Baker; Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 1999, 278 pp., \$21.99 paper.

One of the oddities of the Reformation period is the fact that it took the Lutherans longer than the Reformed to codify their doctrines. Although the Reformed were represented by several leaders in various countries, they had established their doctrinal positions in the 1550s, well before the leaders of the first generation had died. And though the Lutherans were led by a single man, they would not reach theological consensus until 1577 and the *Formula of Concord*. Unlike the seamless transition between the first- and second-generation Reformed theologians, the death of Luther unleashed a series of controversies, as his friends and followers argued about what their leader's paradoxical statements had meant. This book supplies an important and fresh angle into this period, for it explores how Luther's authority changed and waned among his sixteenth-century followers.

For the sake of analysis, Kolb helpfully divides Luther's authority into three components: prophet, teacher, and hero. As prophet, Luther represented, at least initially, the primary authority for understanding Scripture. In this capacity he replaced popes and councils as the adjudicating authority for Lutherans. As teacher, a role that somewhat overlaps his prophetic function, Luther supplied the model of biblical exposition that guided other Lutheran preachers and teachers. As hero, Luther became the rallying point for oppressed Christians and nationalistic Germans, both of which desired to throw off the tyranny of Rome. Throughout this book Kolb demonstrates that Luther has never lost his hero status, though already in the generation after his death his role as teacher was diminished and his function as prophet nearly disappeared.

Specifically, Kolb explains how Luther's prophetic authority, prolonged awhile after his death by the Gnesio-Lutherans, was eventually replaced by the *Book of Concord*. Kolb persuasively gives three reasons for Luther's displacement: his writings were too immense to be readily used to monitor preaching and settle disputes; his writings were too contradictory to be easily synthesized into a coherent position; and the political need in the 1570s to rehabilitate Melancthon inevitably led to a weakening of Luther's authority.

While this decline in Luther's authority is the heart of Kolb's work, he adds a second part that for Lutheran scholars is alone worth the price of the book. Here Kolb documents which of Luther's works were reprinted in the fifty years after his death. For instance, he describes the historical background and rationale behind the initial editions of Luther's works that were published at Wittenberg, Jena, and Eisleben (e.g. the Jena edition was published by Gnesio-Lutherans to offset the Wittenberg edition published by the Philippists). He also explains the motivation behind the collection and publication of Luther's *Table Talk*, sermons, hymns, prayers, prophecies, devotional thoughts, and various comments on Scripture and society. Finally, he reports how several contemporaries independently attempted to do the impossible and organize Luther's thoughts into coherent *loci communes*. In short, Kolb presents a detailed and interesting account of the earliest organization and publication of Luther's thought.

Like the other offerings in the Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought series by Paternoster and Baker, this book is written by a scholar for other scholars. While beginning students may find the content laborious and at times inscrutable, scholars working in the field of Lutheran studies will find here neatly organized material that supplies a foundation for further exploration. Furthermore, Kolb's extensive documentation and the content of his reflections indicate that he is drawing his material directly from the original sixteenth-century documents. Thus, he is able to make a genuine contribution to the question of how Luther's contemporaries

viewed him. While there are many fine biographies of Luther (e.g. Brecht, Obermann, and Bainton), none so thoroughly as Kolb recounts how the very first biographies, both by appreciative followers and less-than-impressed Roman Catholics, viewed Luther. This is interesting reading for the Lutheran scholar and non-specialist alike.

The book's lone significant weakness (and this may be unavoidable) is that its primary images of Luther as prophet and teacher seem to overlap. While there is enough difference between them to warrant individual categories, there is also enough in common that the distinction sometimes seems forced. It is not always clear where Luther the prophet stops and Luther the teacher begins. Kolb recognizes this ambiguity, even titling his chapter on Luther's teaching role as "The Teaching Prophet."

One other problem, which an attentive reader is able to work through, is the obscure outline for part one. There is a logic to the outline, but it is not readily visible to the reader who follows Kolb's description of it. The order in which he explains the book's contents differs significantly from the order of presentation itself. One wonders why he did not rearrange the chapters to cohere better with his understanding of their relation.

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*The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition.* By Richard A. Muller. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, xii + 308 pp., \$65.00. *What Pure Eyes Could See: Calvin's Doctrine of Faith in Its Exegetical Context.* By Barbara Pitkin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, ix + 260 pp., \$55.00.

Richard A. Muller and Barbara Pitkin are recent contributors to the Oxford Studies in Historical Theology, a series that has mainly addressed early modern Protestant thought for specialists in the field. In this pair of monographs Muller, a leader in the study of Protestant scholasticism, presents a thematic collection of essays; and Pitkin, an emerging scholar, offers her revised doctoral dissertation. Both authors affirm a common methodology: a more inductive rather than dogmatic reading of Calvin; a sensitivity to developments displayed in separate editions of the *Institutes*; agreement that Calvin intended the *Institutes* to be read in conjunction with his exegetical works; and a full recognition of Calvin's late medieval and Renaissance heritage. However, despite this shared methodology and an awareness of each other's work, Muller and Pitkin still differ over the importance of piety in Calvin's theology. Thus, that topic (more central to Pitkin than to Muller) serves as a useful touchstone in evaluating their respective efforts.

I consider Pitkin's work first. Her monograph continues the fruitful exploration of Calvin's twofold knowledge of God, a theme traced by Edward A. Dowey, Jr. in *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (1952; expanded, 1994). This *duplex cognitio Dei* refers to Calvin's distinction in the 1559 *Institutes* between the knowledge of God both as creator and as redeemer. The former knowledge is mediated through Scripture and, less directly, through the displays of providence found in nature and history. Saving faith, on the other hand, is gained only by the Spirit's illumination, a supernatural knowledge. The latter knowledge is always prior to the former, so that one must first be a believer to gain any benefit from the knowledge of God available through creation.

Pitkin's main concern is to broaden the scope of the *cognitio* in Calvin's definition of faith by tracing its affiliation not only with redemption as featured in the *Institutes*

but also with providence, something he displayed more clearly in his exegetical works. Thus, she argues that Calvin's definition of faith developed over time in a "twofold direction"—into both a redemptive knowledge and a more perceptual, providential knowledge—and that this duality is symmetrically aligned with the twofold self-disclosure of Christ as both divine and human.

To that end Pitkin traces an evolution in Calvin's understanding of providence in relation to faith. A key element in this is Calvin's shift from *fiducia* (trust or confidence) to *cognitio* (knowledge) between the 1536 and 1539 editions of the *Institutes*. It is this shift in trajectory that carries the weight of Pitkin's thesis, a shift she attributes to Calvin's continued exegetical work, mainly in the Psalms. There he noted the tangible manifestation of God's glory in creation and history, a glory visible and reassuring to the eyes of faith. Additionally, Calvin's regular use of visual and aural analogies (the eyes and ears of faith) suggests to her the critical place of creation and history in God's self-accommodation, which with the Spirit's work in the light of Scripture produces a faith that is essentially "noetic and perceptual."

Given this elevation of providence in defining faith, Pitkin then challenges an element of Dowe's thesis of the twofold knowledge. Rather than a dialectic that conjoins Scripture and faith in a state of tension, Pitkin argues instead that Calvin's idea of faith is best understood by tracing a relationship between faith and piety. That is, providential faith *together with* saving faith constitutes piety. Thus, she affirms a primacy for Calvin's notion of piety in defining faith. Faith, as it recognizes God's fatherhood and elicits a response of love for God, is the "functional equivalent of piety," so that piety "embraces the whole of the *duplex cognitio Domini*" (p. 148).

Pitkin's overall discussion, however, stumbles over the question of how Calvin perceived the problem of sin. She comments in the introduction: "In the postlapsarian world, the problem that faith corrects is not so much the ignorance of finite human nature but the blindness of *sinful* human nature" (p. 7). Later she attributes the problem to a "false knowledge of God and self," so that faith must be a "proper knowledge"—i.e. addressing sin by a noetic problem-and-solution symmetry (p. 31). Thus, the question of what *constitutes* the blindness of human nature is answered: a failure of cognition. In the balance of her survey, despite occasional caveats (e.g. "the category of knowledge does not push Calvin in the direction of an intellectualistic view of faith," p. 96), she elevates human reason as the primary problem of and cure for sin.

Does this, indeed, capture Calvin's doctrine of faith? It does so only if the function of human affections is ignored or understated as the cause and cure of sin in his theological anthropology. In probing the moral capacity of the human will, for instance, Calvin attributed the spiritual blindness of sin to lust (*cupiditas*), so that a person turns to God only by "laying aside the disease of self-love and ambition, by which he is blinded . . ." (*Institutes*, 2.2.10–11). For Calvin the Spirit's illuminating ministry is one of giving testimony to the heart that one is beloved by the Father and redeemed through union with the Son. Only this direct testimony to the heart can overcome an otherwise insurmountable skepticism about God's character and gifts. Calvin, for instance, before reaching the point in the *Institutes* where he offered his famous definition of faith as "the knowledge of God's benevolence toward us . . .," discriminated between a knowledge which can "coldly contemplate [Christ] as outside ourselves" versus the Spirit's work in which "he enflames our hearts with the love of God and with zealous devotion" (*Institutes*, 3.3.3). Pitkin's failure to engage this affective disease-and-cure symmetry leaves the door open to a much different reading of Calvin's doctrine of faith. Certainly, one may benefit from her work in tracing the growth of Calvin's appreciation for providence, God's extrinsic activity, but this is strictly a secondary feature of faith for

Calvin. That is, the inward *cognitio* of experiential love as disclosed to the elect by the Spirit is not to be confused with the extrinsic *cognitio* of providence but serves as its illuminating context.

I turn now to Muller's work. He offers a collection of his prior essays on Calvin, revised and bound together here (including a number of repetitive arguments) with some supplementary compositions. The essays are linked by their shared concern with aspects of Calvin's theological method. Together they represent Muller's ambition to offer Calvin's "unaccommodated" theology. That is, Muller's aim is to challenge twentieth-century historiography with its labyrinth of competing Calvin portrayals. Such portraits differ, Muller argues, to the degree that scholars seek to accommodate Calvin to their own dogmatic interests. Thus, Muller lists a set of abuses and abusers in chapter one; he also promotes those whose works are more reliable (as defined by careful historical methods). Abusers include Barthians, Schleiermachers, post-Kantians, and anti-scholastics (among others). Muller's rather sharp point is well taken—dogmatic biases are indeed more evident to those outside a given dogmatic tradition than they are to those who embrace the tradition.

Muller, then, sets out to achieve a more bias-free interpretation of Calvin: to understand Calvin "in all his sixteenth-century context, with attention to the continuities and discontinuities between his thought and that of predecessors, contemporaries, and successors" (p. 14). To do this Muller promotes a methodology more alert to the reformer's specific sixteenth-century social and theological contexts. Calvin, we are reminded, engaged in exegetical work as well as polemics. He engaged both humanistic and scholastic theological resources and worked positively with other theologians, including Bucer, Bullinger, Melancthon, Musculus, and Vermigli.

The book is divided into two sections. The first constitutes a prolegomenon to the balance of the work, examining Calvin's expressed theological intentions, his engagement with scholasticism, the interpretive framework offered by original editors, and the rationale behind the order of topics in the *Institutes*. The second section then focuses more on the *Institutes* in which, Muller argues, Calvin was maturing theologically as he produced its sequential editions. To that end he came to adopt, increasingly, the *loci* and *disputationes* formats being used already by Melancthon and others. This signaled Calvin's transition from a catechetical purpose (in the 1536 edition) meant to enhance piety to a theologically sophisticated educational resource meant to supplement his exegetical works.

What, then, of the place of piety for Calvin? Pitkin, despite sharing Muller's methodology, concludes that piety was increasingly central to the *Institutes*, while Muller—who traces *pietas* as one of his secondary themes rather than a major rubric—portrays Calvin as having reduced that emphasis over time. It seems to this reviewer that Pitkin is closer to Calvin's trajectory than Muller is, but neither work is satisfying, as we will note below.

How successful is Muller's overall thesis? It suffers the same fate as the works Muller seeks to dismiss. That is, if other scholars are biased by dogmatic commitments, Muller's work surely suffers the same fate. In his case the distortive dogmatic concern is Muller's career-long commitment to explore and rehabilitate post-Reformation scholasticism—the Thomistic merger of Aristotle and Christian doctrine. Given this ambition, the problem Muller knows he must address is the well-known hostility of Calvin toward scholasticism. To his credit Muller succeeds in identifying some complexities in Calvin's relation to late medieval scholastics as well as Calvin's positive engagement with proponents of Thomistic Protestantism. Muller even demonstrates many of his secondary points, but never to the degree that he is convincing when he aligns Calvin

with his scholastic successors. Why? Unfortunately his work is crippled by a selective use of historical resources in support of his own commitments. That is, despite his insistence that historians must engage *all* the major elements of late medieval theology, Muller's work is virtually silent about the spiritual tradition that Calvin clearly embraced: a distinct Augustinian tradition fundamentally opposed to scholasticism despite sharing many necessary elements of biblical and theological continuity with it.

One instance will illustrate the problem: our touchstone topic of piety. Muller promotes scholars who have engaged the continuity between late medieval and Reformation themes. One of these is the highly regarded Heiko Oberman. However, in a discussion that Muller overlooks, Oberman noted "some of the unique characteristics in Calvin's spirituality" in "Calvin's Critique of Calvinism" (*The Dawn of the Reformation*, p. 265). In particular, Oberman engaged Lucien Richard's *The Spirituality of John Calvin*, showing how Richard effectively traces the late medieval replacement of the term *devotio* by a new term, *pietas*. This shift reflected a rejection of the moralistic assumptions associated with *devotio*, especially an optimism about the spiritual viability of the human will and intellect. The Christian humanists turned instead to the affections—the dimension of the soul that experiences God's love—as the center of the Spirit's work. Thus, the "knowledge" of God is first of all experiential, a knowledge of the heart captured by the love of God. This, arguably, displays the critical context for understanding Calvin's use of *pietas* in the *Institutes*, one that requires careful attention by both Muller and Pitkin.

The breadth of this spiritual tradition may not be well known to some readers despite major contributions such as those emerging from Bernard McGinn. It was, for instance, the context for Jean Gerson's famous fifteenth-century attempt to reform the curriculum at the University of Paris (see Ozment's summary in *The Age of Reform*). Thus, a broader context of debate in examining Calvin's spiritual anthropology must include his concept of piety. Calvin drew deeply from Augustine for this, and he reinforced it by regularly citing the "spiritual" Bernard rather than Aquinas and the scholastic tradition. Certainly, among the traditions from which Calvin drew his theology, the way of the spiritual *viators*, featuring union with Christ and the Spirit's work in transforming hearts, was primary. This avenue, therefore, must be explored along with any others lest Calvin's theology be overly accommodated to the promotions of modern scholasticism.

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*The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition.* By Richard A. Muller. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, xii + 308 pp., \$65.00.

*The Unaccommodated Calvin* is the latest of scholar Richard Muller's publications on the Reformer John Calvin. In the preface to this well-written, academically-oriented work, Muller clearly states his purpose in writing: "It is my hope in the present volume to underline the importance of an examination of Calvin's ideas in their sixteenth-century context and, as part of a movement away from various dogmatic readings of Calvin, to emphasize the importance of understanding Calvin's methods and procedures as a point of departure for understanding his thought" (p. viii). Muller's thesis, then, is that many theologians since the time of Calvin—especially in the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries—have misunderstood the Reformer's thought as a consequence of their misreading of his texts. This, in turn, has resulted in a number of widely accepted interpretations of Calvin's theology (i.e. of Barth, Schleiermacher, and deconstructionists) that need to be reevaluated on account of the fact that they may be "accommodated." Muller does not believe, however, that all modern studies of Calvin are corrupt. In fact, Muller makes a point to emphasize that he does not want "to claim an utterly new direction for Calvin studies but to acknowledge and then to follow useful precedents" (p. 12). Specific examples of such "useful precedents" that Muller mentions by name include the recent studies of Calvin by Steinmetz, Schreiner, and Thompson.

Structurally, *The Unaccommodated Calvin* consists of ten chapters that are grouped into two major sections. In the first of these sections, titled "Perspectives on Calvin's Text," Muller discusses topics such as the intention and method of Calvin's arguments, the influence of scholasticism on the Reformer, and the theological perspective of Calvin's late sixteenth-century editors. In the second part of this work, titled "Text, Context, and Conversation: The *Institutes* in Calvin's Theological Program," Muller examines several significant issues relating to Calvin's *magnum opus* including the context, method, and organization of the *Institutes*; the method and argument in Calvin's construction of *loci* and *disputationes*; and the problem of the intellect and will in the Reformer's theology. While all of the chapters in *The Unaccommodated Calvin* fit nicely into their respective sections, it is important to realize, as Muller himself points out, that "each chapter is intended to offer an argument that can stand on its own and that can be accessed independent of the other chapters" (p. 14). Therefore, the segments of this work ought not to be viewed as pieces of evidences that, when assembled, form an integrative argument in support of the author's thesis. Rather, each chapter in this volume presents an individual argument that stands or falls based upon its own merit. Of course, Muller no doubt intends that each of his chapters will independently testify to the validity of his major thesis.

Undoubtedly, the greatest strength of *The Unaccommodated Calvin* is the breadth and depth of research reflected in the text. Included within this volume are 77 pages of fine-print endnotes, a 34-page, 650-source bibliography (including 15 of Muller's own previous publications on Calvin), as well as an exhaustive index. In addition, Muller constantly interacts with many of the works that he cites in his bibliography—both ancient and modern—and his prose reveals a vast knowledge of his subject matter. A second favorable facet of this book is the section titled "Premises for the Examination of Calvin's Theology." The fourteen premises are well thought out and raise issues with which authors of future volumes on Calvin's theology will have to contend. In short, the extensive bibliography and fourteen premises that can be found in this book make *The Unaccommodated Calvin* indispensable for those who are interested in the study of the Genevan Reformer and his theology.

Despite these strengths, however, there are several shortcomings to this volume, the most prominent of which is that Muller does not clearly accomplish his purpose nor does he definitively prove his major thesis. In fact, apart from chapters one and ten, Muller scarcely even mentions or presents evidence that relates directly to the stated purpose and thesis of this book. Indeed, if it were not for the first and last chapters, this volume could easily pass for a collection of unrelated scholarly articles about John Calvin's theology and method. (In fact, Muller did publish several of the chapters in this text as separate articles.) It is interesting to note, however, that there is one reoccurring theme that could be used to unite this volume. This theme is Calvin's interaction with his contemporary and friend Philip Melancthon. In the first chapter

of this book, in passing, Muller makes the easily overlooked comment, "I hope to show, there is also a mass of evidence that Calvin engaged in an ongoing methodological dialogue with Melancthon's theology" (p. 14). This theme ought to have been incorporated into Muller's major purpose and thesis (and title?), for it seems to be the issue that is prevalent in his thought and that is the one common thread that runs throughout this entire text. A second deficiency of *The Unaccommodated Calvin* is the repetitive nature of this work. Due to the disconnectedness of the book's chapters, much of the material presented within the individual sections overlaps. While this reiteration does not take away from the author's arguments, it does make the text somewhat less appealing. It should be noted that Muller accepts this criticism and apologizes for it in advance (p. 14). One final aspect of this work of which the would-be reader ought to be aware is Muller's repeated use of words, phrases, and especially titles in Latin. While this use of Latin is to be expected in a work of this caliber, Muller could have put his book within the reach of many more readers if he had included parenthetical English translations (which he does occasionally provide, although without accompanying rationale or consistency).

These few criticisms notwithstanding, including Muller's misdirected thesis, *The Unaccommodated Calvin* is a fine academic production. This book contains accurate data, valid reasoning, and is certainly an important contribution to the field of Calvin studies.

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*Registers of the Consistory of Geneva in the Time of Calvin: Volume 1: 1542–1544.* Robert M. Kingdon, general editor. Thomas A. Lambert and Isabella M. Watt, editors. M. Wallace McDonald, translator. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, 470 pp., \$50.00.

The English translation of the first volume of the Genevan Consistory records during Calvin's tenure comes as a welcome addition to our understanding of sixteenth-century popular culture. I remember a conversation with Professor Kingdon in 1985 when he was encouraging Howard Rienstra, the director of the Meeter Center for Calvin Studies at Calvin College, to tackle this project. The Meeter Center has the microfilm of the registers, so the project could have been started in Grand Rapids. Reinstra's poor health and ultimately his death made it impossible for him to move forward, and Professor Kingdon decided to go ahead with the transcription. This process is still ongoing.

The Consistory records highlight the process of confessionalization of a populace reared under Roman Catholicism. The move to the Reformed faith was enacted by the Genevan city council. It was one thing to declare the Reformed faith the state church; it was quite another to change the personal religious practices of the populace. Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* underscored the role of the Consistory to enforce discipline upon the populace. Comprised of elders and pastors, this body summoned people weekly to answer various charges of misbehavior. The secretary of the Consistory recorded the minutes of these sessions, and these documents have been preserved in the Geneva State Archives. One of the major problems with these records is that the secretary wrote them in haste and, as a result, they are virtually illegible. Professor Kingdon has assembled and trained a team of scholars in the art of paleography to transcribe and

make sense out of these records. Their efforts have been painstaking and remarkable. The translation of these accounts makes this fascinating period of history accessible to the general public.

The minutes of the Consistory records are summaries of its proceedings. In the Consistory, the accused was brought in and the syndic (mayor) began the session by asking a series of questions followed by the defendant's responses. The syndic would then follow up with additional questions for clarification. The Consistory typically called witnesses to help them to come to a proper decision on the case, and then they would pronounce their judgment. They might, with Calvin's recommendation, admonish the accused to attend more sermons and stop their misbehavior. In severe cases, they might excommunicate the party from the church or prescribe some act of restitution. Finally, if there were criminal activities involved, they would remand the case to the city council for punishment. This might include incarceration, exile or execution.

Genevans from all walks of life came before the Consistory to defend themselves against a wide variety of charges of being "drunkards, blasphemers, usurers, wastrels, beggars, dancers, singers of 'improper songs,' healers, magicians, gamblers, and other 'evil livers'" (p. xix). The accused also came in large numbers. Between five and seven percent of the total population of about 13,000 was called in annually.

One of the primary purposes of the discipline of the Consistory was to help to educate the people in the Reformed faith and to purge them of vestiges of Roman Catholic practice. Many Genevans continued to pray to the Virgin Mary or to the saints. Others continued to use Roman Catholic prayer books or pray for the dead. There were several cases of parishioners keeping the feast days: fasting during Lent or venerating images in their homes. Other Genevans were accused of mumbling during the sermons, a practice that could be distracting to both the preacher and other parishioners. The "mumblers" were typically praying the rosary, a sure sign that they had not fully grasped the nature of Reformed teaching. They were generally admonished to attend more sermons, attend catechism on Sundays, and stop such Roman Catholic practices. It was typical that the individuals not be allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper until they demonstrated a better understanding of the basic teachings of the Reformed faith.

The Consistory minutes record multiple cases of people simply not attending the sermons, which were a primary vehicle for religious education. The accused typically made various excuses for lack of attendance, saying that their spouse made it difficult to attend or that they had a sick child or parent to whom they had to attend. Some people claimed that, when they did attend services, they had a difficult time understanding the French accent of the preachers such as Calvin who were not native Genevans. The Consistory's examination of such people reveals an appalling lack of understanding of the basic principles of the Reformation.

Family quarrels, adultery, and fornication were at or near the top of the list of offenses that the Consistory considered. They did allow for divorce in extreme circumstances and permitted for remarriage afterwards. The Consistory also handled cases of routine disagreements between people. It typically brought the aggrieved parties together to make peace with each other. They had to shake hands as a sign of friendship so that they could qualify to receive communion the next quarter.

When there was any question of possible criminal conduct, the case was remanded to the council. For example, one woman named Bernardaz, the wife of Anthoine Diard, the haberdasher, was suspected of smothering three of her children to death. The Consistory called her in for questioning, and she answered that she was not responsible for the deaths, but suspected a neighbor of the crime. The council imprisoned Bernardaz while they investigated the case. Ultimately, she was declared innocent of the charge of infanticide.

The editors have made the text quite user-friendly and have included brief biographies of the individuals brought before the Consistory. They have also identified the parties by profession, whenever possible, through a search of the Genevan archives and printed sources. This book includes a helpful index. My only criticism is that the translation is a bit wooden, but this does not seriously detract from such a significant addition to our understanding of popular culture during Calvin's tenure in Geneva.

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*Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England.* By Mark Dever. Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000, xiv + 270 pp., \$19.95, paper.

Richard Sibbes, minister at Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge, then Master of St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, and (concurrently) preacher at Gray's Inn, London, was a highly regarded Puritan preacher of the early Stuart period. His influence on John Cotton, Thomas Goodwin, and Richard Baxter, among many others, is well established in Puritan studies. However, despite Sibbes's stature among his peers, Mark Dever's study is the first published monograph devoted solely to him. It is a welcome effort.

The book, a revision of Dever's doctoral dissertation, is presented in two sections: a biography and a theological assessment. The biographical section of four chapters offers a thorough summary of Sibbes's life. Dever's notable contribution (and a fruit of his patient work in consolidating extant biographical data) is the correction of an enduring misperception that Sibbes was a radical—i.e. that he had been removed from his post at Holy Trinity because of ecclesiastical nonconformity. Dever shows that Sibbes did indeed conform. In the second section, chapters five through seven, Dever evaluates Sibbes's theology by engaging three overlapping concerns: where did he stand on predestination, what was his position on the role of the affections, and where is he to be located within the Reformed tradition?

In chapter five Dever asks specifically whether Sibbes emphasized sanctification rather than justification (as R. T. Kendall claims). If he did, Dever argues, Sibbes would be a moralist (elevating human moral initiative) rather than genuinely Reformed (elevating God's initiative). As a litmus test, Dever examines Sibbes's treatment of God's sovereignty. In particular Dever reviews Sibbes's views on predestination, election, covenant, conversion, and preparation. He concludes that Sibbes was fully Reformed at each point.

In chapter six Dever examines Sibbes's affective spirituality. Dever attributes this emphatic feature in Sibbes's preaching to the Puritan's personal preference for a more interiorized faith rather than to an alternative anthropology or a mystical spirituality. The point is deemed especially important by Eamon Duffy, who notes in his foreword that Dever's work rejects any notion that Sibbes's affective theology reflected "a disastrous theological rift" between the views of Calvin himself and the supposed moralism of later Calvinism (pp. vii–viii).

Duffy's affirmation, however, actually touches on a weakness in the work. At least two studies produced since Dever completed his doctoral dissertation have argued that there *was* a rift among the Puritans—a theological split, with Sibbes's affective theology opposed to the spirituality of William Perkins and William Ames. This is a critical

issue in that Dever uses the presumed continuity between the views of Sibbes and those two Puritans (among others) to build his case. The recent studies are J. Knight's *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts* (1994) and my dissertation *Richard Sibbes's Theology of Grace and the Division of English Reformed Theology* (University of London, 1996). Both agree that Sibbes displayed an irenic but insistent counterpoint to the emerging Reformed orthodoxy of his day. Dever, however, overlooks the latter work and briefly notices Knight's study but fails to engage it. Thus, Dever leaves unchallenged a very different picture of Sibbes, one in which Sibbes is shown to have turned his back on the emerging moralism in English Calvinism while quietly drawing others to an affective alternative. Knight's thesis must be noted briefly in order to develop this point.

Knight's study focuses on the Antinomian Controversy of New England (1636–38, soon after Sibbes's death in 1635). This debate over the nature of salvation and spirituality leads Knight to conclude that the Boston controversy revealed a "radical division" among Puritans which "had a prehistory in England" (p. 30). Knight traces this to a polarity between Perkins and Ames on the one hand, and Sibbes and John Preston on the other. The "Intellectual Fathers" of New England followed the former pair, while the "Spiritual Brethren" followed the latter. On the one hand, the followers of Perkins and Ames, Knight argues, elevated the rational and volitional aspects of faith and pressed for behavioral evidence to display one's election—a moralistic approach. The Spiritual Brethren, on the other hand, held that salvation and growth are grounded affectively in a transforming love for God engendered by the Spirit.

Differences between the Richard Sibbes portrayed by Dever and Knight can be partially unraveled by comparing their methodologies. Dever mainly seeks to evaluate Sibbes's alignment with selected Reformed doctrines. This use of a limited set of touchstone questions narrows Dever's analytical task to a manageable level but fails to ensure an exposure to Sibbes's own agenda. A second thorny issue is the problem of chronology: did any of Sibbes's views change over time? His sermon series (which comprise the full content of his seven-volume *Works*) were rarely dated. If, then, Sibbes shifted on a given position (and important differences are evident among separate sermon series), a scholar must choose which Sibbes to follow.

Knight, on the other hand, looks at Sibbes through the lens of the Antinomian Controversy. Here the context is an explosive theological debate that occurred within two years of Sibbes's death. It presents the opposing positions of the divided ministers, disclosing a battle in which both sides assumed they were indisputably orthodox. John Cotton, who had attributed his conversion to a sermon preached by Sibbes, was the leader of the Spiritual Brethren. In the debate he was explicit in citing support from the teachings of Calvin and Sibbes, among others. Thus, in order for Dever to make his case that Sibbes was completely aligned with the still-emerging Reformed orthodoxy, it is critical that he assesses the conflicting perceptions of such contemporary witnesses.

Dever's work, then, is an important addition to Puritan studies, especially for drawing overdue scholarly attention to Sibbes. The disappointment is that, despite its recent publication date, the underlying doctoral research was done too soon to engage the distinctly different portrayal of Sibbes offered by more recent studies. Thus, Dever's effort is certainly not the last word on Sibbes's place among English Puritans or his significance in the "Calvin versus the Calvinists" debate, but it does underscore Sibbes's status as a necessary reference point in that discussion.

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*Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought.* By Philip C. Almond. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 240 pp., \$54.95 hardcover.

Philip Almond's book examines the reception of the Genesis account in seventeenth-century thought. During this period the Scriptures provided the foundation of intellectual query. Apparent difficulties in the creation account furnished the impetus for biological, philological, and geological study. The book is unique in its spectrum of study, yet draws upon and develops Christopher Hill and Richard Popkin's explorations in seventeenth-century thought. It appears to be an outgrowth of Almond's lectures at the University of Queensland, Australia.

The work begins with an examination of Adam and Eve's created state. How precisely were they preeminent? Answers range from metaphysical conceptions of giantism to ultranatural speed, strength, and intelligence. The extended life spans of the antediluvians is considered. Diet, atmosphere, and supernatural preservation are all posed as possible explanations.

Almond then turns to Eden's location. Viewing allegorical interpretation as the normative understanding of the creation account in the Western tradition, Almond apparently indicts the translators of the King James version of the Bible for their literal rendering, a rendering that framed the seventeenth-century discussion. Given the literal parameters etched out by the King James translators, geographical speculation was common. While some felt that the flood's effects made the question mute, the majority offered various locations. Depending upon one's identification of the four rivers that flowed out of the garden, Eden was to be found in the tropics, China, Assyria, or Armenia. Nonterrestrial explanations were also offered; the lunar landscape was scrutinized with "Galileo's tube" in expectation.

Regardless of where Eden was located, all seventeenth-century *intelligentsia* were agreed that Adam performed special functions in the garden. He tended the land and ruled over the animals. Questions concerning vegetarianism were the rage of popular literature. Adam's encyclopedic knowledge of plants and animals had to be communicated, either through words or hieroglyphics. Yet Adam was not to perform his work alone; Eve was brought forth. The majority of seventeenth-century speculators were convinced that this proto-marriage was not consummated on Edenic soil.

As Almond draws the reader's attention to the fall, his affinity for allegory rises again. Barring such allegorical exegesis, the nature of the serpent was addressed. Many identified it with Satan, some opting for the medieval conception of a serpentine body with a woman's head. As the snake was cursed to eat of the dust, so too was the land cursed with thorns and thistles. While gardening manuals of the period reflected a decaying earth, ever technologically advancing biologists were becoming increasingly convinced of botanical progression.

The reader will find this book akin to a window viewing an alternate world. Here, theologians and poets alike address the question of the existence of extraterrestrials, arguing from the Biblical text. Here, a vegetarian Adam, thousands of feet tall, bounds across mountain ranges, writing in hieroglyphics to communicate with snakes with human faces. To Almond's credit, he has captured the seventeenth-century worldview, complete with a cosmology at odds with our own.

The book is not, however, without weaknesses. Almond is a student of the humanities; as a historian, his analysis is descriptive and not intended to be dogmatic in nature. Nevertheless, when describing the reception of the creation account, one must deal with the data of theology. Here, Almond is at his weakest. I cringed when, in passing, Almond describes Augustine, Luther, and Calvin as all uniformly asserting the

absolute destruction of the image of God after the fall. Such a reading of both Augustine and the Reformers is difficult to reconcile with their conceptions of the *imago Dei* and the *semen religionis* and should be carefully nuanced, lest the reader be misled.

Almond's methodology also deserves moderate criticism. First, the book is chiefly concerned with English thought and would be more suitably entitled *Adam and Eve in English Thought, 1600–1699*. Second, Almond never divulges the domain of his data nor his controlling principle. He frequently cites Luther and Melancthon, among other sixteenth-century thinkers, as sources, not merely as background. Within the space of a paragraph, William Perkins and John Milton are cited with equal authority. I was frustrated at being jostled from location to location with no map in hand.

These criticisms notwithstanding, the book is a worthy read. It is unique among monographs, as it describes multiple disciplines interacting with a revered Biblical text. The book also reflects a rising skepticism. The difficulties in the creation account, which served as impetus for seventeenth-century query, would soon become cannon fodder for eighteenth-century ridicule.

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*The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760–1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture.* By Dee E. Andrews. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, xv + 367 pp., \$59.50.

From Wesleyan exposition in England to circuit-riding itinerants on American colonial soil, the Methodist movement was shaped by encroaching democratic forces in eighteenth-century America. Dee E. Andrews's refreshing new study of Methodism in America might be considered a twenty-first century interpretation of an eighteenth-century religious phenomenon. The strengths of Andrews's narrative are her descriptions of Methodist spirituality, the story of how the African-American Methodists emerged, the penetrating analysis of Methodist women's spiritual narratives, and her explanation of how Methodism was politicized. Maintaining historical contextuality, Andrews opens up to view the contours of how a strikingly British movement was "Americanized." The evolution of Methodism in America came about because of changing notions of the relationship between church and state, zealous Methodist missionary preaching, insistence upon a salvific religious experience, and the emergence of congregative bodies known as "Methodist societies."

Andrews begins by examining Methodism's English genesis and how Wesleyan spirituality was experienced. The impetus for the Oxford-educated, missionary-minded John Wesley to advocate innovative spirituality, suggests Andrews, was provided by his mother Susanna. A rather bold and assertive woman with Puritan roots, she would often conduct prayer meetings and "preach" in the Wesley household. This fact, along with Moravian influences and Jonathan Edwards's defense of emotional Christianity, validated Wesley's changing conceptions of religious experience. Methodist conversion did not come about apart from the revival experience itself. Shaped by itinerant exhortation, hymn-singing, prayer, and sometimes even dreams, "all Methodists shared the language of the Wesleyan 'heart-work,' legitimating a historically feminine rhetoric of affection and surrender while arming themselves in the battle against sin in a historically masculine language of militancy" (p. 91).

This innovative and provocative description of Methodist conversion accented perhaps the most vital element of Methodist spiritual life, the Methodist society. While these societies served as the chief vehicle for Methodist "socialization," Andrews perceptively identifies a fascinating paradox: Methodists preached withdrawal from the world and in the same breath called for the conversion of it. Part and parcel of the social transformation within Methodism was its "missionizing."

Another strength of Andrews's narrative is her description of women's roles in Methodist societies. Relying on society records primarily from Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore (see the appendixes), Andrews concludes that "these local society registers reveal a church membership of remarkable variety and social mobility" (p. 112). She identifies five important trends with regard to Methodist societies: (1) women formed the majority of membership; (2) many women joined along with their sisters and mothers; (3) most new female members were "young and single"; (4) many married women sought membership as "single" women apart from their husbands; and (5) early Methodist societies evidenced "social and ethnic homogeneity." Overall, Andrews's analysis of the experiences of female Methodists provides a balanced and convincing account of this overlooked facet of American religious history.

Andrews's account of feminine Methodist spirituality is complimented by her vivid and detailed discussion of circuit riders. These migrating ministers were of a strikingly serious demeanor and easily identified by their saddlebags, which held journals, hymnals, Bibles, medicine, and numerous other trinkets. These itinerants were subject to the "paternal oversight" of Francis Asbury as he set their traveling plans. One constant concern for these preachers was the health of their horses, for without transportation the Bible would not be taught and the minister would not get paid. Tabs were regularly kept on the itinerant's preaching to monitor their effectiveness as ministers. Compensation came in small amounts and on an irregular basis. Andrews's attention to the non-spiritual details of Methodist itinerants' daily lives presents a clearer picture of this "Americanized" institution.

The seeds for the emergence of African-American Methodists were often planted by these itinerants. Andrews notes that the pioneer of African-American Methodist spirituality, Richard Allen, "was loyal to the faith that had freed him from slavery as well as from sin, (yet) he was simultaneously eager to escape the official dictates of the church that bound him to second-class citizenship" (p. 140). This was the dilemma of the African presence within Methodist circles. Although the Methodists in America were an inclusive group (for example, Francis Asbury granted Richard Allen itinerant "traveling privileges"), there emerged an increasing impulse within the African community to forge their own "Methodist existence." In part, a syncretist impulse sought to merge West African spirituality with Christianity and freemen actually attempted to establish a separate "black ministry." Here, Andrews brilliantly recognizes another paradox: "In shaping a racial identity, African Methodists drew upon Wesley's movement for organizational inspiration and, more intimately, the language—scriptural and Wesleyan—of heart-religion" (p. 153). Nevertheless, Andrews finds that this paradox "seized (African-Americans') religious confidence and racial boldness" (p. 154), which helped to shape African-American spirituality even into our own day.

These factors, among others, helped to "Americanize" Methodism. Andrews correctly identifies three "advantages" peculiar to Methodism that accounted for its success on American soil. Methodism offered salvation to all and was "not limited to sectarian commitment or ethnic or prior religious identity" (p. 283), it derived its energy from "action and innovation," and it was organized "not unlike the design of federal and state governments, though clearly unconnected to this" (p. 239). The "success" of Methodism

rests with its active and inclusive nature. Wesley's "heart religion" became, in America, "a plain gospel for a plain people" (p. 240). Andrews's narrative contributes to a broader understanding of the complex and often misunderstood panoply of American religious history.

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*Commending the Faith: The Preaching of D. L. Moody.* By Garth Rosell. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999, 263 pp., \$16.95 paper.

The opening paragraph in the introduction to *Commending the Faith: The Preaching of D. L. Moody* tells of a quote by the famous evangelist during one of his sermons. He said, "Some day you will read in the papers that D. L. Moody of East Northfield is dead. Don't you believe a word of it!" Moody went on to explain that at that moment he would be more alive than he ever had been: "That which is born of the flesh may die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever." On December 22, 1899, the newspapers proclaimed the death of Dwight L. Moody. One hundred years later, as his spirit ministers in heaven, his words continue to minister to those who remain.

The introduction continues with a brief but detailed biographical sketch of Moody. Author Garth Rosell provides an excellent background of the man whose sermons are contained in the following chapters. He also outlines the paradoxes that would later define Moody's preaching style and passion for the Word of God.

Following the introduction is a collection of sermons, prayers, and talks by Moody. Rather than spending time analyzing the style and preaching habits of the great evangelist, Rosell allows Moody's sermons to speak for themselves. Moody's expertise in exegesis and biblical hermeneutics becomes evident in the words of his sermons. His warmth and compassion for the people to whom he ministered is made apparent in his stories and illustrations. The honesty, sincerity, humility, and enthusiasm reflected in his sermons give reason enough for Moody's appeal to the masses.

The sermons are arranged into five categories of three sermons each, the order reflecting a person's need for Christ and subsequent walk with Christ. The reader first encounters three sermons on salvation. Having been adequately exposed to the conversion experience, the reader next has the opportunity to understand in more detail the person and work of Christ who saves. Rosell then includes three sermons on Christian service that provide direction for a new believer. The fourth section is comprised of talks that teach how to study the Bible and pray. It also includes some of Moody's prayers that can be used as models for both the new Christian and the experienced pastor. The last part of the book is devoted to sermons on the reward of Christianity, which is heaven. It is through these sermons that the reader is exposed to the hope, the characteristics, and the rewards of God's Kingdom.

This book belongs on the shelf of pastors wishing to relay classic sermons of the past to their congregation, seminary students studying to understand the concept of Spirit-led preaching, and lay people seeking the truth in God's Word. It is an excellent resource for study as well as a source of inspiration and encouragement. In Moody's sermons, the world can see what God can do with a fully consecrated man.

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*Bonhoeffer: A Theology of Sociality*. By Clifford J. Green. Revised edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, xviii + 392 pp., \$28.00 paper.

When this book was first published in 1972 under the title *The Sociality of Christ and Humanity: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Early Theology, 1927-1933*, it was very well received as an important contribution to Bonhoeffer studies. Clifford Green was praised for his insight into Bonhoeffer's theological development, and scholars welcomed this window into Bonhoeffer's earlier and much more complicated theological writings. In particular, Bonhoeffer's academic theses *Sanctorum Communio* and *Act and Being* were made accessible to a wider range of readers. For this reason alone it is a joy to find that this book has been published in a new edition.

However, there is a much broader reason to praise this new edition at this point in history. In the last thirty years, theologies of community have become increasingly important, as postmodern scholars have tried to address and challenge the modern emphasis on individuality. Although Bonhoeffer was developing his theology of sociality eighty years ago, and although Green was first writing about this development thirty years ago, Bonhoeffer's social theology speaks to the new generation in the twenty-first century.

Green argues that sociality is in many ways the key to understanding Bonhoeffer's theology and to tracing his theological development. What does Green mean by "sociality"? He gives an extensive and detailed explanation of sociality throughout the book, and it is well worth reading his descriptions. He provides his own summary of sociality through Bonhoeffer's perspective, noting that "Bonhoeffer sees all human life as essentially social, that he develops a theological phenomenology of the human person in relation to other persons and to various types of corporate communities and institutions, and that he interprets the Christian gospel within this matrix" (p. 21).

Many scholars ignore Bonhoeffer's early works, either because they are seen as too difficult and academic or because they are assumed to be radically different from his later theology in *The Cost of Discipleship*, *Ethics*, and *Letters and Papers from Prison*. Green, however, argues that these early works set the foundation for Bonhoeffer's later thought. In particular, he sees Bonhoeffer's idea that all theological concepts can only be understood in reference to sociality as a "programmatic statement" (p. 1). This is a lens by which we may understand how the early academic writings relate to his later, popular works, and we may see the continuity in his thought.

Green goes through *Sanctorum Communio* and *Act and Being* in detail, demonstrating Bonhoeffer's sociality throughout. He then goes on to explain how this theology of sociality exerted an impact on Bonhoeffer's soteriology and Christology. Green ends this study with an evaluation of sociality and ethics as they can be seen in *Letters and Papers from Prison* and *Ethics*. This final chapter is an addition to the revised edition at the request of Eberhard Bethge, who rightly noted that this was lacking in the first publication.

Green has included a new appendix that many Bonhoeffer scholars may find quite interesting. This includes some previously unpublished letters written from 1932 to 1949. The letters between Bonhoeffer and his American friend Paul Lehmann are particularly noteworthy.

My only critique of this book is one that I have of many Bonhoeffer scholars. In my research I have found that one of the people who was an important influence in Bonhoeffer's theological development was Adolf Schlatter. Green includes a list of people, including Barth, Hegel, and Luther, who influenced Bonhoeffer; he should have included Schlatter. Although he studied under Schlatter only briefly, Bonhoeffer had many of Schlatter's books and considered him to be extremely important. Schlatter's

ideas about sociality may have significantly influenced Bonhoeffer; certainly this could be an avenue for continued study.

Having mentioned Bonhoeffer's relevance for this new century, I would like to comment on two areas in which Bonhoeffer, as seen through Green's writing, can significantly contribute to the modern/postmodern discussion. First, Green points out that Bonhoeffer saw the issues of power and weakness in his Christology and yet did not come to a resolution. The intentional tension that Bonhoeffer noted between power and weakness may speak to the current postmodern scholars who often focus on power over weakness. Secondly, Bonhoeffer's theology concerning individuals and communities holds these two in balance. There is mutual reciprocity "so that both individualism and collectivism are ruled out" (p. 45). This balance of I and We presents a critique of both modern and postmodern formulations of identity. Green has clearly shown that Bonhoeffer is a theologian who, although long dead, can speak into the twenty-first century.

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*C. S. Lewis and the Bright Shadow of Holiness.* By Gerard Reed. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1999, 190 pp., \$14.99 paper. *The Latin Letters of C. S. Lewis.* Translated and edited by Martin Moynihan. South Bend: St. Augustine's, 1998, 126 pp., \$17.95.

One of the secrets to the ongoing influence of C. S. Lewis is his popularity among widely divergent Christian traditions. Writing from the vantage point of Wesleyanism, Gerard Reed (who is professor of philosophy and religion at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, CA) has produced a theological and practical overview of what Lewis termed "the bright shadow" of holiness.

The book takes its title from Lewis's account of his life-changing encounter with George MacDonald's *Phantastes*: "But now I saw the bright shadow coming out of the book into the real world and resting there, transforming all common things and yet itself unchanged. Or, more accurately, I saw the common things drawn into the bright shadow." Lewis later came to identify this bright shadow as "Holiness"—the holiness of the Holy One.

*C. S. Lewis and the Bright Shadow of Holiness* is a wide-ranging book covering not only the divine attribute of holiness, but also the doctrines of creation, sin, salvation, sanctification, and the Trinity. It is really three books in one. The first is a compendium of C. S. Lewis quotations, generally on the theme of holiness, taken from a broad selection of the author's essays, books, and stories. The second is the location and reorganization of these quotations into basic theological categories from depravity to eschatology. The third is an articulation of the Christian life, including not only Reed's own explanations of Lewis, but also trenchant observations from theologians throughout church history.

It is not easy to weave three strands into a single cord, but Reed has largely succeeded. He faces the additional difficulty in this case of trying to incorporate the eloquent words of C. S. Lewis into his own prose. One sometimes senses that Lewis's own thought has been diminished in the process, for even when his quotations are not taken out of context, they are still dislocated from the flow of his original argument.

Not surprisingly, *C. S. Lewis and the Bright Shadow of Holiness* is somewhat difficult to categorize. It is not exactly an interpretation of C. S. Lewis; still less it is a

theological critique, which in some ways would be more interesting. It is perhaps most usefully read as a survey of the Christian life. With his Wesleyan sensibilities, Reed often notices and emphasizes themes in Lewis that others might overlook or dismiss, such as his description of spiritual renewal as a “second conversion,” or simply his stress on holiness as the goal of the Christian life. It may be going too far to call C. S. Lewis a “holiness theologian,” as Reed does, but it is not surprising that his writings prove congenial to a Wesleyan reading. As the quintessential “mere Christian,” Lewis resonates with most theological traditions. Reed notes, for example, that “Lewis’s emphasis on ‘transformation,’ the divine working of the Holy Spirit, infusing grace and conforming believers to the image of Christ Jesus, squares with the call to holiness that is central to the Wesleyan tradition.” This is correct; however, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit can hardly be considered exclusively Wesleyan property. While some theologians might want to quibble over what is meant by “infusing grace,” all Christians everywhere recognize the call to be holy in Christ.

Reed is on less solid ground when he passes comment on Reformed theology, as for instance in his claim that Luther’s doctrine of *sola fide* “demands faith for salvation while rationalizing the lack of loving acts.” Then, there is the assertion that “the only righteousness available to us (in Reformed theology) is ‘the alien righteousness of Christ’ that is imputed to us,” as if somehow the Reformers lacked a robust doctrine of sanctification, including the impartation of righteousness to the believer in Christ. This points to a more serious weakness that perhaps is endemic to Wesleyan theology: a difficulty articulating the relationship between justification and sanctification in a way that preserves the graciousness of the former without minimizing the comprehensiveness of the latter. A more Biblical way to understand the relationship between justification and sanctification is in terms of the Reformation doctrine of union with Christ. At the risk of turning Lewis into a Reformed theologian (which he most emphatically is not), it could be noted that the theme of union with Christ recurs throughout his writings, which describe the Christian life as “sharing in the life of Christ.”

Reed himself is well aware of some of his book’s limitations, and cheerfully acknowledges that most readers will prefer to read Lewis himself. But *C. S. Lewis and the Bright Shadow of Holiness* should be received in the spirit it is offered: as a warm invitation to pursue holiness in Christ, with C. S. Lewis serving as an experienced guide.

Among the many people who turned to C. S. Lewis for spiritual guidance was Don Giovanni Calabria, a Roman Catholic priest from Verona. Lewis and Calabria exchanged letters for nearly seven years, intimately corresponding—in Latin—on such topics as sin, suffering, schism, prayer, and friendship. Upon Calabria’s death, the correspondence was resumed by Don Luigi Pedrollo, of the same congregation. Although most of these letters can be read at the Marion E. Wade Center in Wheaton, IL, Martin Moynihan’s translation of them has been out of print for more than a decade. St. Augustine’s sturdy edition of *The Latin Letters of C. S. Lewis* features both text and translation on facing pages, as well as Moynihan’s helpful introduction, which was first published in Volume 6 of *Seven: An Anglo-American Literary Journal*. (One minor but unnecessary annoyance: the Latin and English pagination does not always match.) This is a book many Lewis enthusiasts will want to own, whether they are Wesleyans, Roman Catholics, or mere Christians.

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*Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth.* By George Hunsinger. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, ix + 375 pp., \$39.00, \$29.00 paper.

Karl Barth, who sometimes lamented his inability to attract a school of followers, would no doubt be pleasantly surprised to learn that Princeton Seminary has recently established a Center for Barth Studies. Certainly he would be pleased with the quality of the latest offering from the director of that center, George Hunsinger. In *Disruptive Grace*, which is a compilation of fifteen essays written over the past twenty years (only three of which were not previously published), Hunsinger proves himself to be a leading champion of Barth's theology, sympathetic yet not uncritical. For instance, while defending Barth on many counts (e.g. he states that the common charge that Barth's doctrine of the Trinity suffers from modalism arises either from "ignorance, incompetence, or [willful] misunderstanding," p. 191), Hunsinger also chastises him for his "low-church" views on baptism and the Lord's Supper, views that hamper ecumenical dialogue ("Here Karl Barth would seem to be more a part of the problem than the solution," p. 275).

Perhaps the greatest contribution of these essays is how they demonstrate the continuing relevance of Barth's thought to contemporary society and theological discussions. Regarding the former, Hunsinger does not merely discuss Barth; he judiciously applies Barth to contemporary issues such as the church's position on social justice, atomic weapons, and America's international relations. While readers will not always agree with Barth on these issues, they will recognize in him a necessary voice that may be argued against but never ignored. Concerning the latter, Hunsinger argues that Barth's foundational doctrine of *koinonia* ("In Barth's theology, I think it may fairly be said that *koinonia* is the ground of all being," p. 257) supplies the right material for constructing a relevant doctrine of the Trinity and divine eternity and for engaging other traditions in ecumenical dialogue. Thus, Hunsinger shows that Barth is not merely a twentieth-century artifact to be studied by historical theologians. In his capable hands, Barth continues to speak today.

Hunsinger further demonstrates Barth's relevance by frequently and fruitfully comparing him with a wide assortment of interlocutors. For example, these essays variously place Barth in dialogue with the pacifism of Martin Luther King, Jr. and René Girard, the liberation theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez and José Míguez Bonino, the sectarian views of John Howard Yoder, the postliberalism of George Lindbeck, the Roman Catholicism of von Balthasar, and the Reformation distinctives of Martin Luther. While Barth never actually interacted with many of these figures, Hunsinger's masterful knowledge of Barth enables him to creatively imagine how such dialogues might play out. The similarities and contrasts that arise from these comparisons clarify important and powerful themes in Barth's theology, such as his Christocentrism and views on the church's role in society.

Although there is a certain amount of randomness in any book that is a compilation of separate articles, Hunsinger bestows a measure of order by dividing his essays into three groups: political, doctrinal, and ecumenical theology. His stated goal for the political section is to explain how a traditional faith as espoused by Barth may be used to fuel a progressive stance on politics. Hunsinger resists the notion that conservative theology invariably must produce conservative political views. Instead he uses Barth's fairly conservative theology to support pacifism, civil disobedience, and immigration laws that welcome refugees, and to oppose the disparity of wealth produced by capitalism, supporting countries that violate human rights, and the use of weapons of mass destruction. While Hunsinger concedes that political activity was not a priority for Barth and that he too often allowed his political applications of the gospel to be "muf-

fled by the extraordinary expanse of other themes which he so prodigiously sets forth" (p. 55), yet all of the above themes are sounded somewhere in his theology.

The most controversial part of the entire book appears in this political section. In an essay that attempts to update Barth's *Barmen Declaration* for today, Hunsinger unfavorably compares the contemporary American church with the German church of the Second World War. He asserts that just as the silence of German Christians made them Hitler's willing accomplices in his destruction of Jews, so Americans are guilty for not speaking out against the use of napalm, cluster bombs, and the nuclear arms race. In short, ". . . today to be an American is to be an executioner or, what is much the same thing, an accomplice to the executioners" (p. 69). While Hunsinger appears to overreach, his stimulating rhetoric, much like Barth's, will awaken reflective readers from their easy acquiescence with the status quo.

I have one other quibble in this section. In an important essay that compares Barth's political views with those of John Howard Yoder, Hunsinger argues convincingly that Barth is not a sectarian like Yoder. However, Hunsinger is mistaken when he uses this fact to place Barth in H. Richard Niebuhr's "Christ the transformer of culture" type. Niebuhr states that the transformers of culture emphasize three beliefs: the independent importance of creation, a clear separation between creation and fall, and the present possibility of the redemption of culture (see *Christ and Culture*, pp. 191–96). None of these, with the possible exception of the third, was consistently held by Barth. While Barth may be closer to the conversionist than to Yoder's antitheist position, his heavy emphasis on the pervasiveness of human sin places him more precisely in Niebuhr's paradox camp.

Hunsinger's doctrinal section aims to defend Barth against various misrepresentations ("It will be a great day when Barth is at least rejected for positions that he actually held instead of for positions that he didn't take," p. 9) and to display his significant contributions to various doctrines. The five essays here explain Barth's "narrative Christology" that is content to merely describe Christ rather than flatten the mystery of his person, his understanding of the Holy Spirit from the perspective of his entire theology (a significant contribution to Barthian studies), his attempt to rescue the pagan notion of eternity by setting it within a Trinitarian context, his hermeneutical position by a creative revision of Lindbeck's categories (as a follower of Barth's "postliberalism," Lindbeck appears often in this book), and his near-universalism by contrasting it with three other views on the fate of unbelievers.

Concerning his last essay, I believe that Barth's implicit universalism is stronger than the "reverent agnosticism" that Hunsinger ascribes to him. Although Hunsinger explains that Barth leaned toward universalism, his term "reverent agnosticism" implies that Barth merely left the question open. However, far from being neutral on this subject, Barth came to the very brink of universalism. The only reason he did not commit to this position was his fear that doing so would be a form of natural theology. If he could say for certain what God was going to do, then he would no longer be at the mercy of God's sovereign revelation. Thus, while Hunsinger correctly explains Barth's position, the term he uses to describe that position can be misleading.

Hunsinger's section on ecumenical theology contains a helpful summary of Barth's correspondence with Harnack that demonstrates the sharp contrast between Barth's neo-orthodoxy and the prevailing liberalism of his day. In a provocative essay for evangelicals, Hunsinger reviews the dialogue between Carl Henry and Hans Frei, explaining how Henry and the evangelicals displayed orthodox content but Frei and the postliberals modeled a superior theological method. Finally, Hunsinger includes an essay that is one of the few to explore in detail what attentive readers have long suspected: Barth was heavily influenced by Luther. Here, Hunsinger documents how

Barth acquired his Christocentrism, theology of the cross, and primacy of the Word from reading Luther. I would add one more element that Hunsinger describes but never explicitly states: Barth also learned his opposition to natural theology from Luther. Indeed, the largest weakness of Hunsinger's writings is the infrequent appearance of Barth's opposition to natural theology. Given that this is the negative motivation for Barth's theology (the positive motivation being Christocentrism), I would have thought that Hunsinger would have made more of it.

In all, this is a stimulating and insightful book. There is much here to interest Barthian scholars, and yet it is written so well, without assuming prior knowledge in the area, that even upper-level college and seminary students may read with profit. Now that these essays are collected in one convenient place, I expect that they will be cited often by those studying the theology of Karl Barth.

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*Warranted Christian Belief.* By Alvin Plantinga. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. xx + 499 pages, \$24.95 paper.

A strong case can be made that no other Christian philosopher has done more to defend the rationality of Christianity in the twentieth century than Alvin Plantinga. For over thirty-five years, he has written voluminously in the areas of metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of religion. Plantinga was one of the first Christian philosophers to employ analytical philosophy instead of allowing it to be turned against Christian faith (as happened at the onset of the movement). Many Christian philosophers followed his wise lead. He has published in the most eminent academic journals, given the presidential address of the American Philosophical Association, and delivered the prestigious Gifford lecture in Scotland. He co-founded the Society of Christian Philosophers in the early 1980s, an organization contributing significantly to the resurgence of Christians in philosophy in the past two decades or so, and which publishes the respected journal *Faith and Philosophy*.

The book completes a trilogy of works on general and religious epistemology. The first two volumes, *Warrant: The Current Debate* and *Warrant and Proper Function*, were released in 1993 by Oxford University Press. The first assessed contemporary options in epistemology and developed the notion of "warranted belief" against alternative accounts of the positive epistemic status of belief. *Warrant and Proper Function* developed the idea that one's beliefs receive warrant on the basis of their functioning properly in an environment divinely designed to be conducive to cognitive success. This is a theistic version of externalist epistemology. Plantinga argued that the Christian worldview provides the metaphysic required for this epistemology. He then contrasted this theistic framework with that of naturalism (where nothing is intelligently designed) and found the latter philosophically defective when contrasted with the former. How can we have knowledge when all our cognitive equipment is the result of a mindless process of natural law and pure chance? Plantinga argued that the odds are very much against it, despite what the naturalistic, evolutionary establishment might say. (In this way, he has been a friend of the Intelligent Design movement.)

*Warranted Christian Belief* is the much-awaited defense of the possibility that specifically Christian belief satisfies the conditions necessary for warrant as Plantinga laid out in the first two volumes. *Warrant and Proper Function* defended a theistic episte-

mology but did not apply the account of warrant to specifically Christian belief. This long tome (longer than the first two volumes combined) is a formidable piece of philosophy, but Plantinga does not assume the reader has mastered the first two books. He summarizes positions argued at length in the previous works and refers to them in footnotes. A book of this size, scope, and depth cannot easily be summarized or critiqued, and I cannot begin to do it justice. Nevertheless, the basic themes can be set forth and a few questions raised. These should be of note to philosophers as well as theologians and biblical scholars who wish to fathom the implications of current epistemology for their disciplines.

Plantinga is the leading thinker in a movement known as Reformed epistemology, although not all Reformed philosophers or theologians endorse his views on religious knowledge. Plantinga, however, takes his cue from comments in Calvin and other Reformed thinkers to the effect that the knowledge of God does not require support from other beliefs that we hold because it is directly given by the Holy Spirit. Since his first book *God and Other Minds* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), Plantinga has argued, roughly put, that belief in God is epistemologically acceptable even apart from the success or failure of natural theology. One may legitimately believe in God apart from any specific positive arguments—whether inductive, deductive, or abductive—that establish the existence of God on the basis of certain features of the natural world. Theistic arguments may not be wrong in principle or entirely unsuccessful (as some, such as Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Barth have claimed), but they are not required for rational assent. A book he co-edited with Nicholas Wolterstorff (another formidable Reformed epistemologist) entitled *Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983) set out this perspective in great detail.

This volume continues Plantinga's philosophical project of articulating a Christian epistemology that lends warrant to Christian belief. Before explaining what Plantinga means by "warrant" (a technical term for him), several preliminary points need to be made.

First, one should understand that Plantinga is concerned with *de jure* objections to Christian belief. A *de jure* objection claims that Christian belief is somehow epistemically irrational or otherwise illegitimate, whether or not it is true. That is, someone violates some epistemic standard or fails to fulfill some epistemic duty or is not warranted in holding Christian belief. This is to be compared with *de facto* objections that argue that Christianity is false. If the *de jure* kind of objection succeeds, the truth or falsity of Christianity never comes to the table, because it is deemed epistemically improper at the outset. One of the burdens of this volume is to argue that all the *de jure* objections to Christian belief fail, for if Christian belief is true, it is very likely warranted. However, some may be disappointed that Plantinga never tries to make a compelling case that Christianity is true. He believes that it is true and that no *de jure* objection against it succeeds. Proving the latter is no small accomplishment philosophically. He also argues that he knows of no other way for Christian belief to be warranted than by something like the way described in his model (more on his model below). In the closing paragraph of the book he says: "But *is* it true? This is the really important question. And here we pass beyond the competence of philosophy, whose main competence, in the area, is to clear away certain objections, impedances, and obstacles to Christian belief. Speaking for myself, and of course not in the name of philosophy, I can say only that it does, indeed, seem to me to be true, and to be the maximally important truth" (p. 499).

In the first section "Is There a Question?" Plantinga assesses several objections to the very idea that Christian belief is possible. These criticisms come from (one reading

of) Kant, theologian Gordon Kaufman, and philosopher John Hick. In various ways these thinkers charge that Christian belief never lays hold of any intelligible object of theological particularity, because specific Christian doctrines are somehow beyond intellection, beyond concepts. The very idea of God is too remote from human understanding to be grasped conceptually. If so, this is a very strong *de jure* objection in that a Christian belief cannot be rational if it has no discernible object. Though Kant was a theist, he seemed to make knowledge of God problematic, if not impossible, given that the deity, as part of the “noumenal realm,” transcends the logical categories used to organize our experience of the natural world. Kaufman and Hick play on Kantian epistemic themes to undermine conceptual knowledge of God. Hick is well known for substituting the inclusive term “the Real” for “God” in order to make philosophical room for all the major religions—theistic and nontheistic. Plantinga patiently examines these sorts of perspectives, interprets them in the best possible light, and rightly finds them all horribly wanting. One cannot dismiss Christian faith on the basis that it rests on unintelligible or conceptually confused claims. Moreover, the alternatives offered by Kaufman and Hick are philosophically unsound.

The second part “What is the Question?” looks at how the question of Christian rationality has been framed in modern philosophy and focuses on John Locke as a leading exponent of “classical foundationalism,” the view that has set the terms of the epistemological debate until recently. Roughly put, classical foundationalism is an approach to knowledge that claims that a belief only becomes knowledge if (a) that belief is true and if either (b) the belief is self-evident or necessarily true or evident to the senses or (c) the belief can be supported in some way by what is self-evident, necessarily true or evident to the senses. Beliefs of type (b) serve as the foundation for all other beliefs of type (c) and not the converse.

Both Christians and critics of Christianity worked within this paradigmatic epistemology for centuries, but Plantinga rejects it for the following reasons. Many beliefs do not fit within the strictures of classical foundationalism; nevertheless, we take them to be true and reasonable. For instance, memory beliefs (such as what we had for breakfast) are not self-evidently true, necessary truths, or evident to the senses; neither are they based on beliefs outside of memory itself. Yet we take memory to be generally reliable. This category of beliefs is what Plantinga calls “properly basic beliefs” that are not held on the basis of other beliefs but that are not infallibly true (such as “All bachelors are unmarried men”). Further, classical foundationalism suffers from self-referential failure. It cannot fulfill its own requirements for knowledge. The tenets of this epistemology fail to fulfill the requirement that they themselves be self-evident, necessarily true, evident to the senses or based on such items of knowledge. Therefore, classical foundationalism is faulty and should not be employed for testing knowledge, including religious knowledge.

Plantinga’s key philosophical move in light of the failure of classical foundationalism is to argue that belief in God is one kind of belief that may be properly basic. If it is, we need not argue for God’s existence on the basis of things we already know through differing forms of arguments (reasoning from premise to conclusion). Rather, we come to believe in God “in the basic way.” This belief may be occasioned by looking at the beauty of nature or feeling divine displeasure over something we have done, but the belief in God is not evidentially based on these events. These are “nonpropositional” experiences that serve as episodes for coming to belief in God. The rest of *Warranted Christian Belief* is concerned to develop the notion of properly basic belief—not in relation to generic theism, but specifically Christian theism—and to defend this model of belief against various challenges.

In his third section “Warranted Christian Belief,” Plantinga adopts what he calls “the extended Aquinas/Calvin model” (A/C model) for how people may be warranted in holding Christian belief. Although Aquinas and Calvin differ at many points, Plantinga argues that they both believed in a natural knowledge of God apart from theistic arguments or Christian evidences. Earlier in the book Plantinga spends much time explaining the differences between the epistemological concepts of justification, internal rationality, and external rationality. Here he explicates his notion of warrant. Warrant is the strongest epistemological authorization for a particular belief. Plantinga writes: “In a nutshell, then, a belief has warrant for a person *S* only if that belief is produced in *S* by cognitive faculties functioning properly (subject to no disfunction) in a cognitive environment that is appropriate for *S*’s kind of cognitive faculties, according to a design plan that is successfully aimed at truth” (p. 156). He believes that Christian belief can have warrant when our faculty for sensing the divine—what Calvin called the *sensus divinitatis*—is functioning properly (through the “internal instigation of the Holy Spirit”) such that we believe in “the great things of the gospel” (Jonathan Edwards) and these truths are “sealed in our hearts” (Calvin) experientially.

Because it can be held as properly basic, “Christian belief can have warrant, and warrant sufficient for knowledge, even if I don’t know of and cannot make a good historical case for the reliability of the biblical writers or for what they teach. . . . On the model, the warrant for Christian belief doesn’t require that I or anyone else have this kind of historical information” (p. 259). When facing objections to Christian belief, Plantinga often invokes the special status of Christian belief as properly basic in order to deflect criticisms. If one does not have to play the evidence game, so to speak, one need not be threatened by some anti-Christian arguments. Plantinga goes further in claiming that if one’s Christian belief requires outside evidence for God’s evidence and the specifics of Christian orthodoxy, one is at an epistemological disadvantage. In one section—which should prove to be controversial—he argues that the classical method of arguing for theism and then giving Christian evidences (as exemplified by Richard Swinburne) fails to be sufficiently probable to be cogent; in other words, warrant cannot be established in this way. However, if one believes “in the basic way,” the warrant for Christian belief very likely obtains. Given Christian belief as properly basic, Plantinga also rejects the model that presents the Christian worldview as a hypothesis or theory to be verified or falsified by appeals to evidence and argument. Christian belief is more like memory beliefs: “Everyone . . . accepts memory beliefs. We all remember such things as what we had for breakfast, and we never or almost never propose such beliefs as good explanations of present experience and phenomena. And the same holds for theism and Christian belief in the suggested [A/C] model” (p. 330).

Taking Christian belief “in the basic way,” however, does not exempt one from having to address certain potential “defeaters”—claims or arguments that would render Christian belief unwarranted or worse. Neither does believing “in the basic way” necessarily make one a fideist, since Christian belief is taken to be rational (as a properly basic belief), not nonrational or irrational. In the fourth section, therefore, Plantinga considers “Defeaters” of five types: (1) the claims of Freud and Marx that religious belief is merely a projection; (2) the arguments of liberal Scriptural scholarship that deny biblical truth; (3) the challenge from postmodernism (mainly in the person of Richard Rorty) that the traditional correspondence view of truth itself (required for Christian truth claims) be rejected; (4) the accusation that religious pluralism undercuts the unique and final truth of Christianity; and (5) the objections of recent formulations of the problem of evil. Plantinga concludes that none of these arguments defeat warrant for Christian belief as he defines it in the extended A/C model.

This book is a huge, deep, erudite, and sophisticated treatment of religious epistemology. As such, it resists brief evaluation, but will no doubt generate scores of articles if not entire books assessing its many meticulously expressed positions. One of my main concerns is that the extended A/C model seems to deflate apologetic strategies that set out to establish the existence of God and the historical reliability of Scripture on the basis of arguments and evidence. Even if one may hold Christian belief in a basic way such that this belief is warranted, this does little if anything to help convince unbelievers—who do not believe in the basic way—who desire reasons of their own to believe in the gospel. In that event, presenting the Christian worldview as a comprehensive hypothesis that better accounts for history, nature, and human experience than rival world views (the cumulative case method) seems the best and most needful strategy.

Plantinga's apologetic defends the right of Christians to believe in the basic way and shows the weaknesses of some of the attempts to defeat Christian belief. In the end, however, he claims that philosophy cannot cogently support Christian *truth*. For all our indebtedness to Professor Plantinga, some of us will demur at this point and seek out more positive resources *within philosophy* to argue that Christianity is not merely warranted, but true.

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