

BOOK REVIEWS

Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary. Edited by Clinton E. Arnold. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002, vol. 1, xxii + 516, \$39.99; vol. 2, xxiv + 504, \$39.99; vol. 3, xxiv + 520, \$39.99; vol. 4, xxiii + 384, \$39.99; set price \$159.99.

This “Gold Medallion Book Award” (awarded by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association) four-volume set covers only the NT. The stated purpose of its evangelical authors (1.vii-viii) is to provide a view of the NT in its first-century context so that the average Christian can have ready access to the available background information on the text of the NT. To achieve this purpose, these volumes provide a narrative of the contents of the NT books in their canonical order, copiously illustrated with sidebars containing maps, pictures, and historical and cultural information from the world of the NT. The authors do provide scholarly level endnotes and bibliographies that the more motivated reader can pursue. Since the stated purpose is to write at the level of the church audience, I will honor that intention and evaluate these volumes from the perspective of a lay reader.

The strength of this set is in its illustrative agenda. Volume 1 on Matthew/Mark/Luke contains 79 sidebars, 4 charts, and 399 photos and maps (this organization reflects the indices at the beginning of each volume); volume 2 on John and Acts contains 96/20/436; volume 3 on Romans to Philemon contains 107/3/443; volume 4 on Hebrews to Revelation contains 95/5/273. The total illustrative material, therefore, is 377 sidebars, 32 charts and 1551 photos and maps. This is all provided with only occasional overlap (e.g. duplicated coins) and then for different illustrative purposes.

The sidebars/charts/photos and maps cover a wide range of material. They might contain backgrounds and comparisons of rival groups (e.g. Pharisees/Sadducees/Scribes; Stoics/Epicureans), or a detailed description of Herod’s Temple, or illustrative readings from extra-biblical Greek, Roman, and Jewish sources, or pictures of epigraphic and manuscript evidence. One drawback, however, is the difficulty of finding an item of interest. There is no comprehensive alphabetic subject index to all the items. The sidebars and charts are listed in the introductions to each volume, but these lists are like a table of contents rather than alphabetic indices. The lists for the photos and maps, however, are alphabetic.

The accuracy of artifact description is illustrated by the Ephesian Artemis statue. This well-known marble statue has three distinct rolls of “bulbous objects” that many have labeled “breasts.” The author of the Acts section (C. Arnold) rightly notes, however, that numerous other explanations of these attachments exist, including ostrich eggs and steer testicles. Since we do not know for sure, he rightly concludes, “whatever they are supposed to be, they probably represent in some way her role as a goddess of fertility” (2.414).

Each treatment of a NT book begins with a full color photo of the region of the audience for the book and a sidebar on “important facts,” usually containing statements about author, date, occasion, and key themes. A running narrative style is utilized to flow through each book. The authors do not provide typical “commentary” information but frame their narratives to address the historical and cultural nuances which occur

in the text (or are understood by experts on the text to be there). Since this work is not a typical commentary, anyone who expects to find help in interpreting problem passages will be disappointed. For example, lay persons who seek help on the matter of divorce and remarriage will need to look elsewhere. The comments on Matt 19:8–9 and 1 Cor 7:15 provide no overview of how interpreters in the history of the church have dealt with these two key texts and what that could mean for the current Christian community. Rather, the less-than-a-column comments on both these texts provide information about later rabbinic opinions and how dowries operated in marriage contracts. The treatment of women in 1 Tim 2:11–12 is interesting. The author (S. M. Baugh) of this section states that “Paul’s injunctions in 1 Timothy 2:11–12 require no special historical insights to understand.” He proceeds by giving a standard hierarchical-complementarian view of this passage with no reference to any opposing treatments in the text or in the endnotes. A sidebar is given to refute the view that any feminist cultural background for Ephesus existed. In this instance, the reader is left with a one-sided treatment of a highly contested passage. On the other hand, the treatment of 1 Cor 11:2–16 by David Gill avoids any posturing about the issue of “headship” and provides only general comments on the contested texts (e.g. 11:10) without implying any view in the current debate.

Another area of interest is how debated eschatological issues are handled (probably subconsciously). The contents of Matthew 24–25 are presented from a premillennial perspective. The “abomination that causes desolation” (24:15) and the flight to the mountains (24:16) are explained in reference to Daniel as ultimately “yet future” (1.149). The distress of 24:29 “must rest on the end of the age, when he will come as the Son of Man in great universal power” (1.151). The “generation” of 24:31 is the one “that sees the Lord appear” (1.153). On the other hand, the book of Revelation is imaged from a preterist perspective, being dated in the late 60s, probably AD 69, but pre-AD 70. The writer fairly but clearly states this dating assumption in the introduction and announces that the texts’ fulfillment will be explained within their first-century *Sitz im Leben* (4.246–48). The Olivet Discourse and Revelation 11:2 are best explained by the “Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70” (4.312), although “its prophetic fulfillment [also] lies in the time of the persecution of the spiritual temple—the church” (4.312). The author of the Revelation section does focus on how a first-century believer would have heard the words and images of the book and thereby usually avoids explaining how the various interpretive views deal with each of the sections.

Overall, the individual authors have maintained the purpose of this set. They have narrated the biblical text with a view to how it touched the world in which it was composed. This style of commenting on the text is well maintained throughout the four volumes. The general editor deserves recognition for herding his authors so well.

This set will certainly advance the lay reader’s perception of the Bible in its historical and cultural setting. Even those who do not like to read (which may apply to many in the target audience) will be led along by the copious sidebars, beautiful photos of geography and artifacts, and the numerous summaries and charts that provide snapshots of the contents of the text. More advanced readers, such as seminary students and even their teachers, will find useful material in the high level endnotes, including numerous connections to Greco-Roman literature, and in the bibliographies. The provision of a CD/DVD disk of the sidebar and photo material would make the set attractive to teachers in the church and introductory Bible courses in the academy.

The massive and unique nature of this set cannot adequately be evaluated in a brief review. Although, by its publishing purpose, it does not address the lay reader’s need for a presentation of interpretive views on problem texts and the resulting theological formulations, it certainly provides a fine overview of the world of the NT. A follow-up

set in the same style to address the theological challenges of the text and the church in an even-handed manner would be welcomed. This Bible backgrounds contribution will certainly be a fine addition to any library. It should be required background reading for pastors and Sunday School teachers. It will also provide teachers with ready references to primary sources for historical background consideration.

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A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Chiefly of the Pentateuch and the Twelve Prophets. By T. Muraoka. Louvain: Peeters, 2002, xxxi + 613 pp., € 75.00.

For over 100 years Septuagint scholars have realized the need for a modern, full-scale Septuagint lexicon. H. B. Swete (*Introduction to the OT in Greek* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900] 290, n. 1) noted that as early as 1895 a Cambridge committee had drawn up plans for a new LXX lexicon to replace the last lexicon expressly prepared for study of the Septuagint, J. F. Schleusner's five-volume work of 1820–1821. The unearthing of Greek papyri and inscriptions since Schleusner, the discovery of the biblical texts from the Judean desert, and the revived interest in the study of the LXX over the past decades have stressed further the importance of an up-to-date lexicon devoted to the study of the LXX. In response to this need various ventures in Septuagint lexicography have been planned or started over the past half century, and since 1992 two important lexicons of the Septuagint have been published: (1) the volume by Takamitsu Muraoka that is the subject of this review; and (2) *A Greek English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, compiled by J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie with the collaboration of G. Chamberlain (2 vols.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992, 1996).

In the mid-eighties Muraoka and J. A. L. Lee set out to compile a lexicon of the Septuagint, beginning with the Minor Prophets. They worked as full partners on the project until mid-1989, and Muraoka finished the Minor Prophets lexicon in 1993. It was intended to be a stepping-stone toward a complete lexicon of the Septuagint. The present work, a substantially expanded version of Muraoka's 1993 lexicon, is another giant step in the quest of such a full-scale Septuagint lexicon.

This lexicon is based on the Göttingen edition of the LXX, and in the handful of places where it was deemed necessary to depart from that text, it is clearly indicated in the lexicon. It covers all the Pentateuch and the Twelve Prophets, including full analysis of high-frequency lexemes like prepositions and conjunctions. When words in these two sections of the Septuagint occur outside of that corpus, but not too frequently, such occurrences are tracked down by the means of Hatch and Redpath and the entries for those lexemes are complete for the entire Septuagint. There are over 300 such entries, and on rare occasions these entries include data from books where no Göttingen edition is available yet. These 300 entries are among the some 1,500 lexemes that are complete for the whole Septuagint out of the total 4,478 headwords entered in this lexicon. Furthermore, for about 60% of the headwords, all the passages occurring in the corpus (the Pentateuch and Twelve Prophets) are either quoted or mentioned.

Muraoka's basic approach to Septuagint lexicography is to "read the Septuagint as a Greek document and [to] try to find out what sense a reader in the last few centuries before the turn of the era who was ignorant of Hebrew or Aramaic might have made of the translation" (pp. viii–ix), although he does compare the Septuagint and its *Vorlage* all along. However, an important distinctive of this lexicon is that his starting point

is to read the Septuagint as “a document of Hellenistic Judaism.” In this regard he considers “the language of the Septuagint to be a genuine representative of the contemporary Greek, . . . though necessarily influenced by the grammar and usage of Aramaic and Hebrew from which the bulk of the Septuagint was translated” (p. ix). This understanding of the Greek of the Septuagint distinguishes Muraoka’s work from Lust’s lexicon, which treats the Greek of the Septuagint (that is, the sections translated from a Semitic original) first of all as “translation Greek” (Lust, p. viii). Muraoka starts with consideration of the meaning that the text would have had for a reader in the last few centuries before the turn of the era, particularly one who was ignorant of Hebrew or Aramaic. Lust starts by seeking “the meaning intended by the translator” (Lust, p. xii) and puts more emphasis than Muraoka does on the importance of the Semitic original for the meaning of words in the Septuagint (Lust, pp. xii–xv).

Another important difference between the two recent lexicons is the manner in which they describe the meaning of words. While Lust gives “one or more translations” (Lust, p. ii) of the entries in his lexicon, Muraoka normally gives more than English translation equivalents; his work is a full-fledged lexicon that defines the senses of words, a helpful feature for non-native English speakers. However, where there is little likelihood of misunderstanding, Muraoka simply gives a translation equivalent, and where it is considered appropriate, his lexicon adds a translation equivalent or equivalents to the definition.

Muraoka attempted to start with the actual text, studying words in the actual sentences of which they are a part. The study of words in the various collocations they enter helped to define their senses and to determine their semantic contours as well as their syntactical patterns. He also attempted to study each lexeme in relation to other semantically related lexemes.

Entries in the lexicon typically consist of four main sections. In the first section the morphology of the word and symbols indicating the scope of the entry follow the bold-faced headword. An asterisk also signifies words not attested earlier than the Septuagint Pentateuch, i.e. the third century BCE. The second section is the main body of any entry, defining the senses of the headword and its usage. Syntactical relationships that words may enter are also given. The third section of the entries contains, where appropriate, a word or words semantically associated with the headword. Secondary literature dealing with individual lexemes is also given in this section. The fourth section addresses the relationship of the Septuagint and its Semitic original. This section represents a partial revision of Hatch and Redpath’s list of Hebrew/Aramaic words that the Greek headword is used to translate with brief arguments for Muraoka’s suggested revision and the added statistical information based on his revised list.

There are a few errors in the introduction (p. viii, n. 13 incorrectly refers to footnote 1, instead of 2; p. xi, n. 25 has *Silvas* for *Silva* [not corrected from the previous edition]; p. xiv, is it “head-word” or “headword”?). Also the guideline for the inclusion of names (geographical, personal, and national) is unclear. For example, the lexicon includes entries for the Greek terms for Egypt (p. 11), Egyptian (p. 10), Israelite (p. 271), Israelite woman (p. 271), Syria (p. 541), and many others. However, other terms like Israel, Jerusalem, Euphrates (Gen 15:18), Syrian (Amos 9:7), Abram (Gen 15:1), Masek (Gen 15:2), and Chaldean (Gen 15:7) are not included. One wonders what criteria were used to include some of these terms and not others. These are minor quibbles that could be addressed in the next edition, which will hopefully cover all the Septuagint.

Not all Septuagint scholars will agree with Muraoka’s approach to the Greek of the Septuagint, and the debate about the character of the Greek of the Septuagint will not be settled soon. Yet regardless whether one agrees with Muraoka’s approach or not, his lexicon is the most complete work available for the Septuagint, especially for the Pen-

tateuch and the Twelve. It is an essential tool for anyone who wants to do serious work in this body of literature. Biblical scholars, especially Septuagint scholars, are greatly indebted to Muraoka for his contribution to their discipline, and all, especially those who understand his philosophy and approach to the Greek of the Septuagint, will use his lexicon with great profit. May God give him grace in his effort to complete this study for all of the Septuagint.

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A History of New Testament Lexicography. By John A. L. Lee. Studies in Biblical Greek 8. New York: Peter Lang, 2003, xiv + 414 pp., \$39.95.

The present work is Volume 8 in the Studies in Biblical Greek series edited by D. A. Carson. The author, John A. L. Lee, recently retired from the University of Sydney, Australia, where he taught classical and *koine* Greek for thirty years in the classics department. He is currently working with G. H. R. Horsley on *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament with Documentary Parallels*, which is designed to update and replace Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*.

The present volume is laid out in two parts: (1) historical survey; and (2) case studies on individual Greek words. The first three chapters chronicle the three leading characteristics of the NT lexicographical tradition: reliance on predecessors, employment of the gloss method, and dependence on versions. Lee demonstrates how lexicographers in their choice of glosses frequently drew on the rendering of a given word in current translations and shows the chain of development from the KJV to Tyndale, from Tyndale to Luther, and from Luther *via* Erasmus to the Vulgate. He also points to the limitations of the gloss method and advocates a definition approach instead.

Chapter 4 traces the origins of NT lexicography back to Volume 5 of the Complutensian Polyglot published in 1522. Chapter 5 surveys the history of NT lexicography from the publication of Georg Pasor's dictionary in 1619 (which is largely dependent on Stephanus's concordance published in 1572) to that of Johann Friedrich Schleusner in 1792. Pasor essentially followed the gloss method and utilized an arrangement by roots rather than listing words in alphabetical order. Schleusner's work gathered up the efforts of his predecessors and synthesized their results. Chapter 6, "The Cheshire Cat," documents the lack of a "native" English tradition of Greek lexicography in Latin or English.

Chapter 7, "A New Century," discusses nineteenth-century efforts to replace Schleusner in Germany (Wahl, Bretschneider, Wilke) and England (Robinson, Bloomfield, Thayer). The following chapter surveys the works by Preuschen (1910) and Bauer (1928), all the way to BDAG (2000), and lays out some of the NT lexicographical challenges ahead. Chapter 9 documents that Bauer's 1928 revision of Preuschen in large part simply retained Preuschen's meanings, including subcategories, with minimal adjustments, and in addition provided other information from previous lexicons that Preuschen had stripped. Hence even BDAG (2000) is but the last in a series of works with a long, checkered pedigree that should now give way to new efforts.

Chapter 10, "The Breakthrough," lauds the Greek-English lexicon by Louw and Nida as an epochal event in the history of NT lexicography owing to its utilization, not so much of semantic domains, but of a definition method. Nevertheless, Lee points out that even Louw and Nida's work is not entirely original. Significant sources include

Newman (1971) and BAG (1957). Also, Louw and Nida by and large did not consider extrabiblical references. Chapter 11, finally, lays out the way ahead: a compilation of an electronic database (an ongoing task to be accomplished as a cooperative effort) and the employment of a definition rather than gloss method.

This history of the discipline is followed in part 2 by case studies of individual NT words: ἀγαπητός, ἀκροατήριον, ἀνατάσσω, γυναικάριον, δεχιολάβός, διανύω, εἰδέα, ἔχις, κράτος, οἰκονομία, πλῆν, and συνάγω. The volume concludes with a summary list of NT lexicons; a chronological list of NT lexicons; works not included as lexicons; a location list of older lexicons; a general bibliography; and several appendixes and indexes.

This is a book that had to be written. The author is highly competent and writes with both expertise and a passion for the subject. The overall “feel” of the work is not unlike Neill and Wright’s *Interpretation of the New Testament* or the two volumes on NT interpretation by Baird. Lee’s judgments are judicious throughout. His survey of the history of NT lexicography is a treasure trove replete with interesting material, and his vision for the future of the discipline ought to help set the agenda for future work on the subject. The lists at the end of the book are of considerable value for further research. The work is meticulously edited and exemplary in its attention to detail.

While Lee’s *History of New Testament Lexicography* is designed primarily for fellow specialists in the field, the volume is also suited as one of the texts for a course on the history of biblical interpretation. It comes highly recommended as a book that is both substantive and yet a joy to read. In case this has not yet become sufficiently clear during the course of this review, I love this book! It is hoped that Lee’s work succeeds in encouraging those working in the discipline to make a fresh start rather than building on old foundations. The new wine of NT lexicography, too, it appears, must be poured into new wineskins.

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Greek for the Rest of Us: Mastering Bible Study without Mastering Biblical Languages. By William D. Mounce. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, xx + 289 pp., \$34.99.

William D. Mounce, best known for the *Basics of Biblical Greek* curriculum from Zondervan, is now the preaching pastor at Shiloh Hills Fellowship in Spokane, Washington and was formerly Professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Azusa Pacific University. *Greek for the Rest of Us (GRU)* is intended for Bible students who have neither time nor money to master Greek in an academic setting but who still want to understand the Word of God better. Mounce’s main goals are to enable students to understand why translations differ, to discover the Greek and Hebrew word meanings lying beneath the English, to learn the basics of exegesis, and to read and digest good (exegetical) commentaries. Mindful of the adage “a little Greek can be dangerous,” Mounce warns students not to expect “to learn enough Greek to make complicated grammatical pronouncements that aren’t supported by the commentaries” (p. xix). He contends that, when Greek mastery is not feasible, learning a little Greek is good and that “a little bit of pride” is actually what proves dangerous.

GRU is designed to be a six-week study used in churches for lay teachers and Bible students eager to go the next level. *GRU* is divided into “weeks,” and each week is divided into chapters. The early chapters in each week typically discuss grammar while the final chapter shows students the application to their Bible study. *GRU* comes with

an interactive, multi-media CD-ROM containing nine hours of Mounce's non-technical lectures, texts, audio pronunciations of words and verses, memory songs, and overheads. *GRU* and its "talk-through-the-book" CD-ROM aim at minimizing the intimidation and fear in the minds of lay people or pastors whose Greek turned to rust years ago.

Week 1 focuses on the alphabet and pronunciation and also tackles translation theory, offering copious examples. Mounce demonstrates the good faith of the English translations and speaks sensibly about the values of both formal and dynamic equivalent versions. Week 2 does what most first-year grammars do not do and what most Greek instructors must do. It re-lays the foundation of English grammar since most students have a poor grasp of English, which makes grammatical comparisons difficult to impossible. Mounce also introduces "phrasing," a method of diagramming that indents subordinate clauses to the right and that also shows parallels and transitions. The English exercises in week 2 are followed by diagrammed Greek examples in later weeks. The approach is similar to William G. MacDonald's "textual transcription" in *Greek Enchiridion* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1986). In week 3 Mounce covers modifying phrases such as conjunctions, adjectives, and prepositional phrases and gives many English and NT examples of various constructions.

In week 4 Mounce surveys verbs—person and number, tense, voice, and mood. With this background students can for the first time make sense of a commentator's point about an imperfect passive indicative. He also shows how to use concordances and Bible software programs. Week 5 is about non-indicative verbals, such as participles and the subjunctive mood. It also provides an excellent overview of semantics, outlines steps for conducting word studies starting from interlinears, and discusses common word study fallacies. Week 6 ambitiously surveys the five-case system. Here Mounce also discusses how to read a commentary, provides a helpful description of top evangelical commentary series, and lists preferred commentaries for each NT book for both lay and advanced readers. Then Mounce briefly discusses the basics of textual criticism to make students aware of the development of text families, textual variants, and how to handle disputed passages like the long ending of Mark. Finally, Mounce adds an appendix entitled "Hebrew for the Rest of Us" and points students to standard Hebrew word study tools.

Mounce's writing style is appropriately down-to-earth, his examples are numerous, he cites all the major English versions, even recent ones such as NET, TNIV, NIRV and ESV (thus not singling out any one translation as particularly troubled), and his assignments seem attainable for each "week." Students are able to grow in their confidence that they can progress to the next level of Greek proficiency. Throughout the text Mounce notes how *GRU* can be complemented by other user-friendly tools (also published by Zondervan) like his own *NIV English—Greek New Testament* (a "reverse interlinear" keyed to concordances), his *Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*, and Verlyn D. Verbrugge's *NIV Dictionary of NT Words* (the recent abridgment of Colin Brown's *NIDNTT*).

GRU is "Baby Greek" at its best, especially since it so consistently cautions students of their exegetical limitations while at the same time raising and stretching their exegetical skills. Many "average" pastors would do well to work through *GRU* and rekindle the skills and passion for true exegetical preaching. *GRU* would not do for a first year grammar in a typical seminary M.Div. program, but could be ideal for Youth or Christian Education tracks, in lay-oriented certificate programs, or in courses tailored for Bible minors in Christian colleges. *GRU* ought to be applauded for its pedagogy (actually androgogy—teaching adults) and how it is intentionally and creatively designed to meet the practical discipleship needs of the church. Credentialed Greek instructors can easily take *GRU* to their own church settings. *GRU* would be ideal for night extension type ministries targeting pastors who have never had formal theological

education. *GRU*, with its CD-ROM, might even be a suitable tool for Christian classical schools and home schooling families eager to give advanced teens an exegetical and Greek foundation. Mounce should be seen as a model to the members of our Society in the way he has answered the call for the academy to equip and edify the church more directly.

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An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry. By David R. Bauer. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003, viii + 327 pp., \$16.95 paper.

David Bauer, Professor of Inductive Biblical Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, has provided a helpful list of 2200 biblical resources for seminary students and ministers. Nearly 600 of these resources are listed under the heading “highly recommended” and are fully annotated. The other 1600 works are simply listed (with not even a brief annotation given). This volume is an update of Bauer’s previous work, *Biblical Resources for Ministry: A Bibliography of Works in Biblical Studies* (Evangel, 1995). A complete index of authors is given in the back of the volume; an index of titles would have made the work even more useful.

The book provides bibliographic assistance in the following areas: 1) the whole Bible (41 pp.); 2) the OT (119 pp.); 3) early Judaism (16 pp.); and 4) the NT (131 pp.). There are no works on theology (other than small sections on biblical theology, theology of the OT, and theology of the NT), ethical issues (other than a three-page section on biblical ethics), church history, missions/evangelism, practical church ministry, or pastoral counseling.

Doubtless any bibliography is by its nature going to be selective. Bauer provides his three selection criteria: “1) usefulness for the theological interpretation of the Bible within the context of the faith of the church; 2) significance in the history of interpretation; and 3) representation of evangelical and especially evangelical Wesleyan scholarship” (p. 1). With these criteria in mind, I expected a significant number (perhaps even a predominance) of evangelical titles in the work. Sadly, such is not the case.

As long as the stance of the work is recognized as moderately critical/liberal (rather than conservative or evangelical), it can be used with great profit. But (especially given the third point in his selection criteria) Bauer seems to evidence a definite bias against conservative works in the selection and evaluation process. Conservative works are “flagged,” but not liberal works. For example, Bauer notes that John Walton’s *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context* is “written from a consciously conservative perspective, *but* [emphasis mine] fair, balanced, and judicious” (p. 52). A similar statement is made regarding Dillard and Longman’s *An Introduction to the Old Testament*: “written from a conservative perspective, *but* [emphasis mine] offering fair and open interaction with less conservative historical criticism” (p. 70). ISBE is flagged as “generally more conservative” than the Anchor Bible Dictionary (p. 27)—why isn’t Anchor tagged as “generally more liberal” than ISBE? Similarly, the International Theological Commentary is somehow dubbed as “responsible and reliable” (p. 42), despite its unevenness and (in many volumes) its lack of attention to the biblical text.

Many sections have few or no evangelical works given as “highly recommended.” Bauer lists a number of helpful periodicals, but fails to include *JETS* in his list (pp. 4–8). On canonicity (pp. 12–15), R. Laird Harris’s *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*

is not even mentioned. None of the highly recommended Bible atlases is conservative (and the atlases by Barry Beitzel and Carl Rasmussen are both more affordable and in general more useful for most seminary students and ministers than the ones listed); no conservative works on biblical theology (pp. 33–35) or ethics (pp. 36–37) are highly recommended, nor are any one-volume Bible commentaries (pp. 38–39). The same is true for the section on the history of Israel, with Eugene Merrill's *Kingdom of Priests* not even making the "also significant" list, while Wellhausen's work is praised as "the most influential work ever written on the history of Israel" (p. 50). Similarly, the section on OT Exegetical Method/Hermeneutics has Carl Armerding as its lone "conservative" voice, with works such as Kaiser's *Toward an Exegetical Theology* not even mentioned. And under OT Introductions, Archer, La Sor/Hubbard/Bush, and Hill/Walton are not included. None of the OT Theology highly recommended works is conservative.

OT commentaries fare better, but again with notable omissions: John Davis on Genesis and Exodus, Daniel Block on Judges and Ruth, E. J. Young on Isaiah, Leon Wood on Daniel, and Merrill, Finley, and Patterson's works on the Minor Prophets (published by Moody), to name but a few.

On Hebrew grammars and lexicons, at least five new Hebrew grammars have been published (by Ross—this reviewer's personal favorite, Rocine, Van Pelt/Practico, Garrett, and Futato), but the latest one Bauer mentions is Seow (1995); furthermore, Chisholm's fine work, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, is incorrectly classified as a Hebrew Grammar. Strangely, Davidson's *Analytical Lexicon* is "highly recommended" and "extremely helpful as a parsing guide" (p. 57), but the far superior *Old Testament Parsing Guide* by Beall/Banks/Smith and John Owens' *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* are not even mentioned. (I admit to a slight bias in my characterization of the former work!)

The section on Early Judaism (including apocrypha/pseudepigrapha and Dead Sea Scrolls), though small, seems adequate for the purposes of this work. Similarly, the section covering the NT appears to have fewer glaring omissions than its OT counterpart. Still, in the section on the use of the OT in the NT (pp. 218–20), there is no mention of Kaiser's *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* or *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, nor is Van Groningen's *Messianic Revelation in the Old Testament* included. In the NT commentaries, notable omissions include Darrell Bock's 2-volume work on Luke (mentioned but not "highly recommended") and Robert Thomas's two-volume work on Revelation (not mentioned at all).

Perhaps the most surprising omission for a recent work on biblical resources is the lack of any mention of biblical resources for the computer. Even a simple review of major Bible software (such as BibleWorks, Logos, Accordance, etc.) would be preferable to the largely-outdated sections on English Bible concordances (pp. 24–25) and many of the entries under Hebrew and Greek concordances (pp. 60–61 and 200–202). Further, an indication of which of the references listed are available on CD (and in what format) would enhance the usefulness of this work. Especially for Bible encyclopedias, lexicons, and other standard works, the electronic format may well be more advantageous (and often cheaper) than the print format.

While much of the material in Bauer's work is excellent, the overall bias significantly mars the value of the book for evangelical students and pastors. One is left wishing for a thorough review and updating of Cyril Barber's *The Minister's Library* (2 vols.), including some of the more recent titles as surveyed in the excellent IBR Bibliographies series. Until that happens, Bauer's work will be a helpful, but flawed, resource for the conservative biblical seminarian or pastor.

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Commentary & Reference Survey: A Comprehensive Guide to Biblical and Theological Resources. By John Glynn. 9th ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003, 311 pp., \$18.99 paper.

Those of us who are continually inundated by students with questions regarding which commentaries they should buy will be extremely interested in this guide to buying biblical/theological books. This helpful revision by John Glynn—the ninth edition of his book that first appeared in 1994—reflects a thorough and contemporary updating and it is thus exceptionally current, at least for the immediate future.

Glynn evaluates a wide range of theological resources. The book is organized logically into the following 21 chapters: Building a “Must-Have” Personal Reference Library; On Commentary Series; OT Introduction, Survey, and Theology; OT Commentaries; OT Background; ANE History; NT Introduction, Survey, and Theology; Jesus and the Gospels; NT Commentaries; NT Background; Jewish Background; Popular Dictionaries, One- and Two-Volume Commentaries; General References; Biblical Hebrew Resources; NT Greek Resources; Exegesis, Interpretation, and Hermeneutics; Systematic Theology; Church History; Computer Resources; Internet Web Sites; and The Ultimate Commentary Collection.

This book is a practical guide designed primarily for students. Commentaries are classified according to the extent that they require knowledge of the original languages (Technical, Semi-technical, Exposition). They are also classified according to general theological stance (Evangelical, Evangelical/Critical, Conservative/Moderate, Liberal/Critical). Also included in each section are Glynn’s recommendations.

Rating commentaries and other theological books can be a bit like rating NFL quarterbacks; obviously, there is always some subjectivity involved. It is unlikely everyone will agree with every choice Glynn makes. However, overall, I found this work solid and extremely helpful. Glynn’s recommendations are made from an evangelical viewpoint, but he is not narrow in his appreciation of serious biblical scholarship, and he recommends “Liberal/Critical” works when they are outstanding. Likewise, Glynn recommends theologies and commentaries across the theological spectrum.

One of the features of the book that I appreciated the most was Glynn’s discussion of commentaries that were in progress but not yet published. For instance, regarding commentaries on the Gospel of John, he notes that Craig Keener has a three volume work that is forthcoming (Hendrickson) and that Richard Bauckham is working on the NIGTC volume for Eerdmans. Glynn thus recommends buying the currently available works on John by Blomberg (IVP) and Carson (Eerdmans), but waiting for Keener and Bauckham to supplement these two.

My only criticism—and it is a mild one—is that there is no price data given with the commentaries. Cost is always a factor when building a library. For example, the three-volume commentary on Matthew in the ICC by Davies and Allison is great, but its retail cost is \$235! For that price one can purchase quite a few other commentaries that are also outstanding.

All in all, however, this is a well-balanced, helpful guide to buying commentaries and other theological resources. I heartily recommend it.

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Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old. By Robert L. Thomas. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2002, 524 pp., \$23.99 paper.

Robert L. Thomas describes his own work fairly: "The remarks in this present volume come from an exegetical practitioner, one who is not a hermeneutical theoretician and who has no aspirations of becoming one" (p. 19). Despite this confession, he sets out to critique what he takes to be modern and post-modern hermeneutical models, specifically the idea of preunderstanding, which he believes lies behind most of the problems in biblical interpretation and indeed in evangelicalism today.

The critique begins in chapter 2. Thomas argues that instead of accepting any concept of preunderstanding (which, he claims, confuses him), God communicates objectively in Scripture, and thus, "neutral objectivity" is possible because of the Holy Spirit. (This theme is also discussed by Brian A. Shealy in chapter 7 as the confusion of application with interpretation.) The contrast of objectivity with non-objectivity is shown in chapter 3 in an examination of eschatology, especially 2 Thess 2, where several reformed scholars, a number of translations, and many older mainline scholars are critiqued in favor of a dispensational approach. (Unfortunately, none of the scholars he cites is noted for his use of new hermeneutical insights.) This debate is a case of reformed/liberal verses dispensational, all cast as a discussion of exegesis rather than hermeneutics.

Chapter 4 claims dynamic equivalent translations are an example of the new hermeneutic; thus, only formal equivalent translations are appropriate. One reason for this is the uniqueness of biblical language, which is Thomas's point in chapter 8, where he definitively rejects "modern linguistics." The rejection of linguistics is related to chapter 5's rejection of general revelation in the sense of the integration of biblical insights with other truth and in particular with their integration with psychology.

For Thomas, all truth is *not* God's truth. If Scripture can be studied objectively and the integration of other disciplines is counterproductive, then one reaches the conclusions of chapter 6 that there is only one meaning in a text, and thus, most contemporary works on evangelical biblical interpretation or hermeneutics are mistaken. This is also the case when it comes to the use of the OT in the New (chapter 9). Walter Kaiser is wrong, for there is indeed a *sensus plenior*, but it is an "inspired *sensus plenior*" occasioned by Israel's rejection of their King. It is certainly not a method that is reproducible today. No mention is made of its similarity to contemporary Jewish exegetical methodologies.

Given Thomas's analysis of the special nature of biblical language, it is not surprising that chapters 10 and 11 reject genre analysis (a lot of issues in biblical criticism are gathered under that heading) in the interpretation of both the gospels and Revelation. This leads to part two of the book, where Thomas in successive chapters rejects progressive dispensationalism, evangelical feminism (a chapter actually written by Paul Felix), evangelical missiology, the dating of Revelation on the basis of the 7 kings, and open theism. All are equally the fruit of what he calls "the new hermeneutic."

Unfortunately, we gain only bits and pieces of the hermeneutic Thomas espouses. This is not a book that could be given to a student to assist him or her in learning traditional methodology. For that Thomas refers us to Milton S. Terry's *Biblical Hermeneutics* (1885) and Bernard Ramm's *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (1970). This present work would be more accurately entitled *What is Wrong with Evangelical Hermeneutics Today*.

One would wish that, having cleared away what he considers to be false, Thomas had then given a well-illustrated presentation of how to do biblical interpretation. While at times he seems to start in this direction, we never receive a systematic presentation. This is even more unfortunate because it is clear that for Thomas, biblical language is

special language unlike other human language. Thus, its words need diachronic study to get their “full meaning,” its Gospels are unlike other historical works of their period, and its verses have a single meaning, but may change meanings under divine inspiration. This means the principles I may use in understanding contemporary languages (and I do teach and preach in more than one language) do not apply. A systematic presentation of his theory of interpretation is indeed called for.

This book is not in essence about hermeneutics. Thomas is really attacking most contemporary evangelical scholarship under the guise of hermeneutics. Many of those he attacks (e.g. Leon Morris) wrote in a decidedly modern, historicist vein. They wrote before the discussions of linguistics and postmodernism that arose in the 1990s. In those cases, Thomas is attacking exegetical decisions by rather traditional (but reformed) interpreters. In doing this, he mixes people coming from various positions so that a significant amount of guilt by association results.

As I read this work I felt sad. Here is a man who has read a lot of literature and can accurately present parts of the positions of various authors. But he does not appear to have deeply grasped most of the positions of those he attacks. Instead, anything he is against, from reformed eschatology to open theology, from gospel criticism to the NIV, is all lumped into one great hermeneutical failure based on the false idea of preunderstanding, without any awareness of the preunderstanding he himself demonstrates (and which his reformed colleagues would quickly point out). Would that the world were so simple, but then from the perspective of Milton Terry, perhaps it looks that way.

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Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Prophets. By Gordon McConville. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002, 272 pp., \$25.00.

This book is written particularly for people who want to study the prophets independently. In view of the excellent presentation of the “Theological Themes” in each chapter, McConville has accomplished his purpose. However, in view of his heavy dependence on critical studies, the independent reader, without such knowledge, may find this book rather daunting. It nevertheless is an excellent choice for an undergraduate or a seminary introduction to the prophets.

The author treats the prophets in their canonical order, devoting a chapter to each of the sixteen prophets, plus a chapter on Lamentations. He consistently presents the material under the headings of “Date and Destination,” “Critical Interpretation,” “Structure and Outline,” “Theological Themes,” “Rhetorical Intention,” “Canonical Considerations,” and “Further Readings.”

Methodologically, he deals with the prophets canonically (p. xxvii), attempting to explain the prophetic message on the basis of the finished book rather than their developing versions as described by critical scholarship. He has a fine grasp, however, of that cadre of scholarship. His canonical critical method, quite obvious in his general approach, is unmistakable in his section on canon (e.g. “Hosea in the Canon”). Here he obviously is concerned with the meaning of the book in the OT canon, especially the prophetic canon, rather than how the book came to be considered as part of the canon. That is, “canon” is more a theological term than an historical one. For example, in his discussion of “Ezekiel in the Canon,” he includes no mention of the rabbinic controversy over the book’s inclusion in the prophetic writings. Rather, he discusses the theological contribution of the book to the canonical understanding of the prophets (p. 105).

McConville's scholarship is current, and he presents it in palatable language, although I think he assumes a lot of knowledge the independent student may not have. Yet, he keeps the purpose of the book in mind as he introduces questions in the side bars (e.g. "Think About" and "Digging Deeper") that are intended to stimulate the reader's further thought and study. Some of these encourage his readership to engage in further reflection about the interconnectedness of the prophetic books, which is a very fine feature of this book.

In his "Rhetorical Intention" section, McConville deals with the matter of how each prophetic book was read by various audiences in ancient times, as well as his modern readership (see e.g. pp. 68–69). This feature, of course, grows naturally out of his canonical approach, but it also taps into the method of interpretation that the church has used through the centuries. That is to say, any one prophetic book has spoken differently to the church in different contexts of history. Most non-critically trained readers are aware of this, but not so aware of the ways a single book has been interpreted at the various levels of its development, even though these stages are hypothetical. McConville addresses this matter in his quite helpful introduction (pp. xxv–xxvii), but it would have been helpful if he had drawn together the principles of rhetorical criticism and given some concrete examples there, as he does with the book of Jonah (p. 192).

The author's "Further Reading" suggestions are generally quite helpful, and he has gone to the trouble of placing an asterisk by those works that will be most helpful to the beginner, again keeping his audience in mind.

An editorial problem with the book is that major sections are titled in a smaller font than the subsections. This makes the flow of the text a bit more difficult to follow.

McConville's work is commendable and will serve students in the classroom very well, even though his target audience of independent student may have to do a lot of background reading to come up to the level he assumes in his discussion of the prophetic material.

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Biblical Ideas of Nationality: Ancient and Modern. By Steven Grosby. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002, 269 pp., \$29.50.

The title of this volume may be somewhat misleading to the uninformed reader in that the discussions of nationality, kinship, and borders include the Bible but extend from the eastern Mediterranean to the Far East. It is, in fact, a collection of 10 articles by Grosby that were previously published beginning in 1991 and ending in 2002. The author employed social science theory in articles intended for scholars who are presumably already well aware of the language and issues. The articles are as follows: "Religion and Nationality in Antiquity: The Worship of Yahweh and Ancient Israel" (1991); "Kinship, Territory and the Nation in the Historiography of Ancient Israel" (1993); "Sociological Implications of the Distinction between 'Locality' and 'Extended Territory'" (1993); "The Chosen People of Ancient Israel and the Occident: Why Does Nationality Exist and Survive?" (1999); "Borders, Territory, and Nationality in the Ancient Near East and Armenia" (1997); "Aram Kulloh and the Worship of Hadad: A Nation of Aram?" (1995); "The Category of the Primordial in the Study of Early Christianity and Second-Century Judaism" (1996); "Territoriality" (1995); "The Nation of the United States and the Vision of Ancient Israel" (1993); and "Nationality and Religion" (2001).

The author's thesis is explicitly stated: "This is because the primary motivation for these studies was the desire to take up what I perceive to be ongoing problems of the *Geisteswissenschaften*; the limits of historicism, or formulated positively, the merit of philosophical anthropology" (p. 2). He further explains, "The point of departure for these studies was that it was not *a priori* illegitimate to apply the category of *nationality and the bounded territory and extensive kinship structure* (my emphasis) that the category implies to various societies of antiquity" (p. 3). Thus, Grosby's efforts intended to specify as much as possible questions such as "What exactly is a nation?," "When exactly did Israel become a nation?," "Did Israel have precise borders as do modern nations?," and "What precisely comprised Israelite (and other cultures as well) social structure?" His answers to these questions diverge from conventional historiographical methodologies: "Of course, the historicists would and still do claim otherwise, insisting that nationality and relatively extensive, bounded territories are to be found only in the current historical period of what they call 'modernity'" (p. 3). Grosby is at his best in demonstrating that Israel possessed definable borders (although there is debate about historical preciseness of said borders) and a distinct sense of ethnicity (although there is some question about "when" true nationhood began). Some of what C. S. Lewis somewhere called "chronological snobbery" seems to have jaundiced contemporary evaluation of the witness of the Hebrew Bible.

Grosby's philosophical anthropological interests extend beyond the ancient world as he seeks to answer the question, "Is there any meaning to our existence?" (p. 4). How does a sociological study of the ancient world help answer that question for humankind *per se*? The nexus of the book's goals may be seen in the following quotation in which the key issues are italicized: "And if there is meaning to our existence, what is its relation to the *primordial beliefs* about the significance of the objects of that origin and transmission-*descendants and land-conveyed* unambiguously by the so-called *covenant* in Gen. 17:7, 28:15, and especially 2 Samuel 7; or are such beliefs and the existence of the collectivities that bear them-*the family and that bounded territorial collectivity of nativity, the nation*-subordinate to a meaning of *righteousness* [i.e. law] that transcends, hence conditions *vitality* and its transmission as stated in Deuteronomy 30?" (p. 5). His goal is to identify both continuities and discontinuities for ancient and modern humankind.

There is much to commend regarding these articles that are a veritable *tour de force* of Grosby's life's work. His conclusions, often brilliantly executed, must be understood against his methodological presuppositions and practices which are decidedly critical. "These introductory comments are not arguments against the achievements of the historical-critical analysis and higher biblical criticism in favor of a variant of biblical literalism. Indeed, far from it. To think that to read with care the Old Testament out of respect for the text as it is and in its entirety requires abjuring higher biblical criticism is to engage in hypocrisy; for to read the Old Testament with care is to recognize innumerable textual problems and inconsistencies" (p. 93). Thus, "Israel" existed no earlier than the Divided Monarchy (and the text's description of that period may or may not be historically reliable) and the historical reliability of any earlier events is "putative." These issues do not significantly impact the usefulness of Grosby's work which is a helpful contribution toward understanding human thought in OT times.

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Canaan and Israel in Antiquity: An Introduction. By K. L. Noll. London: Continuum, 2001, 331 pp., \$49.95.

K. L. Noll, Assistant Professor of Religion at Kentucky Wesleyan College, has written a distinctively readable and moderately revisionist history of ancient Canaan and Israel. Aimed at the introductory student who wants to examine the history of Syro-Palestine within its broader ancient Near Eastern context, it avoids two pitfalls of introductions: it is neither pedantic nor sententious. Instead, it attempts to balance moderate revisionism with a broad, albeit subtle, confession.

Canaan and Israel in Antiquity is different from most histories in three respects. First, it begins with a lengthy introduction on the nature of history, defined as a narrative that presents a past. History is what the teller reports vis-à-vis the events themselves. Second, it discusses the nature of truth and its relationship to history. Truth is a genuine experience. Third, it is distinctively Near Eastern in focus, often favoring Assyrian or Egyptian philology and epigraphy over biblical accounts.

Representative of moderate revisionism, its interpretations often follow those of Finkelstein. For example, it favors arguments against the united monarchy (pp. 182–195). Predictably, early Canaan and Israel were independent clans in one geographic region, who later shared stories and values because of organic development, where the exploitation of arable soil introduced urban centers, which stimulated communication and literacy, resulting in shared stories and values.

While many will disagree with Noll, revisionism's popularity has continued to grow since the publication of Davies' *In Search of "Ancient Israel"* (Sheffield: JSOT) and Lemche's SBL lectures. In an effort to balance revisionism and moderate criticism, Noll places himself somewhere in between, and since academic trends often follow Hegel's dialectic model, Noll's Promethean interpretations may soon prove to be the synthesis for historical-critical scholarship. Simply for that reason, serious students of the OT cannot ignore *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity*.

The greatest strength the book has to offer is readability. The writing is clear, the points are easy to follow, and the logic is simple. While demonstrating keen acumen of ancient Near Eastern history, its sanguine and provocative writing style keeps the reader interested and engaged. In summary, it does not leave the impression, as some histories do, that the author has a commentary in one hand and a history book in the other.

Although worth reading, many areas need improvement, not the least of which are the numerous grammatical errors. While struggling to balance accessibility with scholarship, some of his more vexing interpretations are triumphant and dismissive. Too often his speculation lacks argument and footnoting. For example, his strident proposal that the Hebrew Bible was an exclusive document only for the rich (the literate) neglects the value of oral transmission, widespread findings of epigraphy, and the prophets' castigations. Second, although many of his sources are up to date, one wonders why he included *The Origins of the Koran: Classic Essays on Islam's Holy Book*, edited by Ibn Warraq, as one of the four examples on epigraphy and philology, when the essays therein predate modern archaeology.

While I disagree with many of its conclusions, *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity* is thoroughly enjoyable and stimulating. It is successful as an introductory textbook, though not successful enough to replace Bright's *History of Israel*. Because of its provocative nature, it may actually prove to be more suitable for serious students, who want to understand the trends of OT scholarship.

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Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament. By Philip S. Johnston. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002, 288 pp., \$20.00.

Philip S. Johnston seeks to update his Belfast master's thesis and his Cambridge dissertation written over a decade ago for a wider audience: "all readers familiar with the issues of biblical scholarship" (p. 19). He neatly divides his study into four parts: Death, The Underworld, The Dead, and The Afterlife. Well-placed summaries seek to show the results of each part of the study.

Johnston refuses to accept simple, blanket answers. Rather he attempts to nuance each part of the study to show varieties of attitudes within Israel. Death is normally accepted as the natural end to life, but circumstances may lead to seeing death as a friend, a horrible threat, or even an enemy. It represents a separation from life, from the social community, and from God. Few rituals related to death find mention in the OT. Early fasting rituals may have given way to later funerary meals. This leads Johnston to conclude that "mourning and funerary customs were not apparently invested with religious significance" (p. 64). No evidence points to a veneration of the dead, reverence for the physical remains, or continuing feeding of the dead. Thus "Israelite life and faith were centred on the present life, not the start of the next" (p. 65).

Johnston also says, "The underworld was not a particularly important concept for the Israelite writers" who had "no great concern with the ongoing fate of the dead" (p. 85). Occasionally, Sheol is seen as punishment for a righteous person or as a destiny one seeks to avoid, but generally "it is a destiny wished on the ungodly" (p. 85). Language indicating immediate experience of underworld existence "can hardly be taken literally, since they are still able to pray to Yahweh and to hope for his deliverance" (p. 97). Despite recent arguments to the contrary, earth (Heb *ha'areš*) and water are never names for the underworld. They are "associated with the underworld, but . . . not confused with it." (p. 124).

The Hebrew *repha'im* are different from the Ugaritic *rp'um* and reflect two distinct, unconfused meanings in Hebrew—an ancient people and the dead inhabitants of the underworld. Hebrew also used *'elohim* to refer to the spirits of the dead at least three times—Num 25:2 (Ps 106:28); 1 Sam 28:13; and Isa 8:19–22. This use "reflects not mainstream Yahwism but a Moabite cult, an outlawed spiritualist, and a practice condemned by Isaiah. Mainstream Yahwism apparently ignores the dead or reduces them to minimal importance" (p. 149).

Similarly, necromancy is of limited occurrence and meaning and remains separate from any reference to ancestor worship. Nonetheless, necromancy "was both highly illegal and highly effective" (p. 166). In the same vein, demonology is never highly developed and is not the cause of fear for Israelite writers.

Only two OT passages actually refer to veneration of the dead, one showing the apostasy of the wilderness generation (Num 25:2) and the other mentioning sacrifices eaten for the dead (Ps 106:28). Both times Yahweh punishes Israel. Johnston says, "There is insufficient evidence to link respect for parents, levirate marriage, annual sacrifice or other cultic practice with the cult of the dead" (p. 194). Lack of prophetic censure of grave offerings indicates that such offerings were "not inimical to Yahwism, and therefore that they did not involve veneration of or communion with the dead" (p. 194).

Similarly, the afterlife receives little OT treatment. Textual issues may indicate belief in resurrection was growing during the finalization and early transmission of the Hebrew text. The unusual cases of Enoch and Elijah never become a paradigm for Israelite belief or practice. Psalms 16, 49, and 73 affirm present injustice will be rectified in the afterlife, but give no theological reflection or description of how this may occur.

Belief in resurrection did rise in Israel, but apart from influence from outside sources. The OT reflects no judgment after death. "Yahweh's proclaimed power to renew

life, its occasional experience in life and in vision, his authority over the underworld, and the desire for unending communion with him all contributed to the development of Israelite belief in resurrection" (p. 238). Finally Daniel, points the way to individual resurrection (Dan 12:2).

Johnston reviews the OT evidence completely if not always clearly. He refuses to attribute all texts to a post-exilic period of theological utopia. He holds to most of the traditional beliefs of OT interpreters. But he has hardly proven a case for anything, coming down at most points on evidence from silence or on his own theological assumptions, especially assumptions that separate biblical affirmations from influence from Israel's neighbors. Much of the problem rises from what he repeatedly notes: the OT makes slight mention of most of the topics he covers.

Johnston fails to realize that OT silence does not mean such topics were unimportant for Israel and its religion. It simply means they did not become major topics for the OT authors. Anyone dealing with death and afterlife in the OT or with the topics related to these themes will want to consult this book for its wide range of sources and its pithy presentation of the evidence. Such students will need, however, to use their own imagination, exegetical skills, and theological methods to arrive at more complex solutions to the problems than those proposed by Johnston.

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Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide. By C. S. Cowles, Eugene Merrill, Daniel L. Gard, and Tremper Longman III. Counterpoints. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, 218 pp., \$16.99 paper.

Much of the "news" in American culture has for a long time been equivalent to "bad news," typically the reporting of violent crimes, including exceptional cases in which the violence was associated with some kind of religious motivation. But with the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 and subsequent military action in Afghanistan and Iraq, the subject of religion and violence has dominated not only the news media, but to a great extent, the American conscience.

Thus, appearance of the present title is quite timely. *Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide* is the thirteenth volume in the Counterpoints series. These volumes offer treatments of long-debated issues such as miracles, Law and Gospel, hell, women in ministry, and more. The distinctive approach of these works is that in each one, a number of scholars set forth their own perspective on a given subject, and then each of the other scholars writes a response to each position statement. So not only do readers get a number of well-reasoned views on a given subject, but they also get helpful critiques of each point of view from the other contributors.

This particular volume contains a brief editorial introduction, four chapters reflecting the four views and responses, a scripture index, and a subject index. The book contains no separate bibliography, but citations within the chapters constitute a rich store of both classical and recent resources related to the subject.

Chapter 1, "The Case for Radical Discontinuity," was written by C. S. Cowles, professor of Bible and theology at Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA. Cowles sets the tone for his perspective early on with the following statements: "To attribute such atrocities to the actual intention and will of God . . . poses insuperable difficulties for Christian theology, ethics, and praxis" (p. 15). Citing Sept. 11, 2001 as a shocking example of "the way distorted concepts of God are being acted out in the religiously

incited violence of our time," he then asserts that "evangelicals no longer have the luxury of defending genocidal 'texts of terror' as reflective of either God's 'moral being' or his 'will and activity.' Nor is there any need to do so" (p. 18). His approach is set forth in a more formal fashion in the following: The way to deal with "conflicting divine commands regarding the treatment of enemies . . . is to acknowledge what is everywhere assumed in the New Testament, namely, that while there are vast and vitally important areas of continuity between Israel's faith and that of the church, there are significant instances of radical discontinuity as well, none more so than in reference to divinely initiated and sanctioned violence" (p. 19). Thus, he sets forth a conviction he consistently emphasizes throughout the chapter—the idea that any positive acceptance or endorsement of the OT description of the destruction of the Canaanites as a true reflection of God's character or action is diametrically opposed to the real truth of God as revealed in Jesus. In fact, he eventually declares the idea of such action "can only be described as pre-Christ, sub-Christ, and anti-Christ" (p. 36).

Although Cowles's contribution is passionate and thought-provoking, it is a position few evangelicals will embrace, primarily because of its negative implications for the authority of Scripture, particularly the OT. In addition, his perspective seems to reject any kind of active judgment by God, whether past, present, or future.

Chapter 2, "The Case for Moderate Discontinuity," was written by Eugene H. Merrill, Distinguished Professor of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. Merrill sets forth his purpose clearly: "to identify Yahweh war as distinct from war in general, to determine its characteristic features, to attempt to justify it in light of the character of God as a whole, and to determine to what extent such a notion is continuous or discontinuous with the New Testament and applicable to modern life" (p. 65).

Merrill sees Yahweh war as part and parcel of the covenant relationship. God was acting through and with Israel, by means of Yahweh war, to establish and protect his unique people in the land of Canaan (p. 67). Components of that activity included defending the sovereignty of Yahweh against the "imaginary gods of the world" (p. 71), protecting the holiness of Yahweh (p. 81), punishing sinners because of "irremediable hardness" of their hearts, and educating Israel and the nations regarding "the character and intentions of the one true God" (p. 85).

Merrill's contribution is systematic and thorough, influenced by an expected dispensational point of view and producing assured conclusions. However it may seem somewhat sterile to those who believe the subject under consideration raises legitimate moral and ethical questions.

Chapter 3, "The Case for Eschatological Continuity," was written by Daniel Gard, dean of graduate studies and associate professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN. The thrust of Gard's view is that the questions raised by the texts under consideration can be answered by recognizing that a "trajectory can be developed that leads from the earliest narratives of the Old Testament, to the warfare narratives of Chronicles, to the intertestamental apocalypses, and to the images of the victorious Christ in John's Revelation" (p. 114). Gard asserts that this approach reveals "the images of Old Testament genocide can be seen as types of an eschatological event," so that the continuity that exists between Old and New Testaments is an eschatological continuity (p. 115). Gard's argument centers on the Chronicles and is strongly influenced by Rudolph Mosis's reading of Chronicles as eschatological in its essence (p. 130).

One of Gard's main points is to assert that if "holy war" will be a reality in the future, then to suggest that it really happened in the past does not set up a contradiction of the character or purposes of the God of the present.

In the end, Gard's presentation is challenging, but somewhat esoteric, with a major part of his argument being built on a vague association of historical eras with Saul, David, and Solomon.

Chapter 4, "The Case for Spiritual Continuity," was written by Tremper Longman III, professor of Old Testament at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA. Longman begins the essay proper with the observation that *herem* ("ban," "something devoted to destruction") suggests the idea of consecration, and thus worship (p. 163). He then adds that at the heart of *herem* warfare is the presence of God, and that the presence of God demands worship. Therefore, "it is not too strong to say that *herem* warfare is worship. The battlefield is sacred space. To be involved in warfare is a holy activity analogous to going to the temple" (p. 166). He then argues that all aspects of battle (before, during, and after), when properly understood, undergird this view (pp. 164–74).

In discussing the activities after the battle, Longman addresses *herem* again, asserting that in actuality, "it refers to the climactic aspect of divine warfare: the offering of the conquered people and their possessions to the Lord," meaning that, typically, the plunder was turned over to the priests and the prisoners were killed. "The principle behind the latter practice appears to be that because they were unclean, these ungodly people brought into the presence of God had to be destroyed" (p. 172).

Longman then deals with the question of how the God who ordered *herem* relates to the God of the NT by suggesting a five-phase development. In summary, that development is as follows: "The war against the Canaanites was simply an earlier phase of the battle that comes to its climax on the cross and its completion at the final judgment. The object of warfare moves from the Canaanites, who are the object of God's wrath for their sin, to the spiritual powers and principalities, and then finally to the utter destruction of all evil, human and spiritual" (p. 180).

Longman has written more extensively on this subject in other places, and his presentation here reflects continuing thorough analysis of the texts and subject. His focus on *herem* as worship is quite striking, but the whole, though helpful, seems vaguely troublesome, as if to suggest celebration of a severe aspect of the character and actions of God, when sober reflection would be a more appropriate response.

The volume provides quite a diverse set of treatments of the subject, which will be a valuable aid in wrestling with a difficult problem in biblical interpretation and application. However, the heart of the problem remains—the death of "innocents," a point Cowles hammered incessantly and the other contributors never really addressed adequately. Though the views differ significantly, all contributors agree on one point—that the texts studied offer no warrant whatsoever for modern Christians to use violence in promoting their faith.

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Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches*. London and New York: Continuum, 2001, xx + 821 pp., \$59.95.

Not since Albright's magisterial work on Israelite religion has anyone attempted to coalesce the archaeological and textual data. This recent work by Zevit has now become more accessible to students and scholars of ancient Israelite history. Zevit's tome brings the material and textual study of OT religious belief and praxis into a single work. Zevit speaks authoritatively and with a command of both the textual and archaeological data. He is a professor of biblical literature and languages at the University of Judaism, Los Angeles, has participated on archaeological excavations, and has spent years of research in Jerusalem.

The title is evidence of the paradigm shifts on the study of the history of the religion of Ancient Israel. While the previous Albrightian paradigm viewed Israelite religion as

an evolution from polytheism to monotheism, Zevit presents a more accurate view as the multi-faceted religious beliefs and practices that competed for Israelite minds and hearts. The paradigm shift is evident in the synthesis of data. While the previous generation focused on supplementing the textual data with the archaeological data, Zevit starts with the material culture record and then illustrates or interprets the data incorporating the textual evidence. This is due to the realization that cultic activity during the Iron Age was larger than the remnant found in the biblical text. The biblical writers (Zevit refers to the Deuteronomist) were not concerned with documenting the variations in religious praxis. In addition to a paradigm shift, Zevit provides a simple typological framework to incorporate all the data.

Chapter 1 sets out the paths and pitfalls of Israelite religion. The author presents the various approaches to the material data, biases, and working definitions. At the risk of oversimplifying the author's treatment of methodological and theoretical issues, chapter 1 defines what is Israelite religion while chapter 2 defines what is "Israelite." In chapters 2–4, the author examines the archaeological evidence for cult places and the material culture associated with cultic practice. Zevit proposes that the Israelites are a new social phenomenon in the Iron Age I and do not originate from Late Bronze Age Canaanite culture.

Chapter 5 summarizes the epigraphic evidence and chapter 6 discusses the biblical text. Zevit's epigraphic discussion is one of the strengths of this volume. He provides a thorough discussion of several inscriptions (e.g. Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet 'Ajrud) in their complete archaeological context. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the role of the prophet. Zevit discusses Israelite mantic practices. He concludes there is no distinction between the 'ecstatic' and the 'rhapsodic' prophets as religious types. Chapter 9 focuses on the names of Israelite gods in theophoric personal names and toponyms in the biblical text and the epigraphic and archeological data. Chapter 10 is the concluding chapter and the most extensive. In this chapter Zevit presents his paradigm and model of Israelite religion.

The value of this book is that it views Israelite religious practice as a system and any changes and variations as internal and not necessarily outside the system. Israelite religion was complex in the way it was produced. Most would disagree with some of Zevit's radical conclusions, but Zevit does a service by refining Israelite religion and viewing religious praxis and normalcy within its socially constructed form. Zevit's approach to Israelite religion is valuable particularly for those who study the religion of ancient Israel or biblical theology.

This book will be the standard for the next paradigm in the study of ancient Israelite religion. Zevit has a strong reliance on the Deuteronomist and current assumptions and conclusions are based on this interpretative paradigm. Zevit's conclusions are original and challenging, but he is self-critical and differentiates between the data and his interpretations. Although some of Zevit's conclusions are provocative, he is evenhanded with the data. While Zevit's conclusions will be debated and questioned, this is the most comprehensive synthesis to date of the archaeological and textual data.

Unlike other recent treatments on Israelite religion, the author does not place Israelite religion within the larger cultural context of the Ancient Near East. The volume is well illustrated, with extensive footnotes, references, and bibliography. He provides both the Hebrew and the English text, which is an excellent feature for students of the Hebrew Bible. *The Religions of Ancient Israel* will be the reference book for the next decade in biblical studies and will provide dialogue and theory building for the next generation. With the publication of the paperback edition, this volume now will make an excellent textbook for courses dealing with the religion of ancient Israel.

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1 Samuel. By Antony F. Campbell. FOTL 7. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, xviii + 350 pp., \$55.00.

Antony F. Campbell's *1 Samuel* is the fourteenth volume in the FOTL series to appear. Campbell will also be producing the commentary on 2 Samuel. The author has studied the books of Samuel for many years and has written extensively upon them. The present commentary is full of insights from his previous and continuing reflections on these books.

The form-critical approach discusses four topics for each text: structure, genre, setting, and intention. Each volume begins with an analysis of the entire book and then addresses the major units of the book. A bibliography appears for each textual unit, and a glossary includes descriptions of the genres and formulas found in each book.

Changes have taken place in this series over time. As editors Marvin Sweeney and Rolf Knierim note in their forward (p. xiii), increasing attention has been given to longer explanations of the structure of each text. Thus, in Campbell's commentary, the "structure" section is labeled "discussion" and is the largest part of the analysis of each text. Campbell also re-labels the "intention" section as "meaning" so it is clear it is the text's meaning and not the author's intention that is being discussed.

In Campbell's introduction, he explains his understanding of the form-critical method. The structure of a text shows how the details of a text fit together to comprise the whole. Identification of the genre of a text refers to the type of the text and how such a genre would be understood. The setting in life refers to the "institutional setting within the life of a community" (p. 6) that generated such a text. The intention of the text refers to the "meaning that we can make today of the text as we best understand it in its own time" (p. 6).

In chapter 1, Campbell gives a structural outline of 1–2 Samuel since they make up one story. He understands the two books as "The Beginnings of Stable Monarchy in Ancient Israel" and sees the three major parts as "Preparations for David's emergence as king-to-be" (1 Sam 1:1–16:13), "Political moves to establish David as king" (1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 8:18), and "Stories of David's Middle Years: internal security threatened" (2 Samuel 11–20). Two appendices that focus on 2 Samuel 9–10 and 21–24 follow the last two sections.

This period of time was pivotal because it involved a transition from the tribal era to the centralized government of the monarchy. Campbell argues the books of Samuel contain several different interpretations of this period that come from various periods of history. Central to these interpretations is the religious understanding of these events, including the role of God. Campbell summarizes: "All in all, then, the books of Samuel can be unified around the interpretation of Israel's experience of monarchy: its preparation, its political realization, and inner aspects of its early functioning. Samuel is the figure used to put the religious stamp on the interpretation of this most significant change for Israel. David is the figure on whom the interpretation is focused" (p. 31).

Chapters 2–9 deal with consecutive structural units of 1 Samuel. The major units of these sections are analyzed with treatments of structure, textual issues, discussion, genre, setting, and meaning. Even though smaller text units are analyzed here the author reminds the reader how these units fit within the larger structure of 1–2 Samuel.

Campbell explains his understanding of these texts' historical development in his final chapter, "Diachronic Dimension: From Past Texts to Present Text." He admits we really do not know "with certainty who wrote, read, or kept the books of Samuel" (p. 296). We also do not know for certain about any earlier stages of the books. He provides a tentative exploration of six identifiable building blocks: Ark Narrative, Story of David's Rise, Stories of David's Middle Years, Prophetic Record, Josianic Deuteronomistic History, and Revised Deuteronomistic History.

Campbell rarely finds the genre of history accurate for describing 1–2 Samuel as a whole or the particular texts that make up the two books. He often identifies the texts as stories or narratives and not as history. He thinks the primary purpose of such texts is not to record details about past events but to interpret the meaning of these events. Because the texts show how God was working in these events, these texts are much more theological than historical. Campbell says, “The task of form-critical interpretation, in recognizing a story, is to focus on how the story is told so as to squeeze from the text its meaning—the light with which the story illuminates human experience” (p. 5).

The relationship of biblical texts to historical reality is complex and much scholarly disagreement exists about this. Some evangelicals are likely to be troubled by the identification of these materials as story and not history. Some might argue texts can be both historical and also teach lessons for later generations. Others might want to defend the historicity of these texts.

Campbell understands the form-critical method well and explains how each text has been constructed and how it communicates a message. The structural outlines show much care for the details of texts and how they fit together in a textual unit. The commentary focuses upon the meaning of whole texts and not isolated parts of texts. Although Campbell sees a complicated history leading to the present text, he usually shows how the pieces fit together. He takes the present form of the text seriously and wants to listen to each interpretation of experience found within the texts.

Campbell addresses some issues that do not seem to fit the purpose of a form-critical commentary and tend to add unnecessary complexities. Perhaps some of these detailed discussions could have been put into footnotes. While there is no question that the text critical history of the books of Samuel is complex, it is not so certain if Campbell’s brief notes are sufficient to address the issue or very helpful in this commentary. Text critical variations are really relevant only if they change a text’s overall structure, genre, setting, or intention.

A second matter relates to the history of the development of the text and how it affects the study of the present level of the text. While Campbell says that for those who use the form-critical method “the text is not fragmented into a hypothetical past,” at times these earlier stages seem to receive too much attention in his commentary. In the ten page analysis of 1 Samuel 12, half a page is devoted to text critical issues and three pages are devoted to a discussion of which details of the text are deuteronomistic. It is unclear how these pages contribute to the analysis of the present level of the text.

This commentary is not an easy one to read or use. Campbell’s vast knowledge is obvious, and he interacts with the work and ideas of many other scholars. While he tries not to get bogged down in the ocean of modern day interpreters, some readers may feel overwhelmed. This commentary is best suited for those who have read and studied 1 Samuel carefully and who are aware of the book’s many intriguing challenges. Campbell tells readers they should read this commentary only after reading the biblical text carefully, and suggests they should repeatedly return to the biblical text. His commentary can provide much guidance for the reader willing to analyze the biblical text in light of his reflections.

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Lamentations. By Dianne Bergant. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003, 144 pp., \$20.00 paper.

As a part of the Abingdon OT Commentary Series, Bergant's work on *Lamentations* is intended to be a compact, critical commentary "for the use of theological students and pastors" along with university level students (p. 9). It is against this goal that I attempt to assess the commentary.

Following a discussion of standard introductory matters, the commentary progresses through *Lamentations* chapter by chapter. The chapters are subdivided into literary units based on the author's outline. The commentary on each unit is presented in literary, exegetical, and theological analysis sections.

Throughout the commentary, Bergant's overwhelming strength is seen in the literary analysis sections. Taking the student focus of the series to heart, Bergant consistently explains and illustrates key poetic terms that are all too often assumed to be understood. This feature alone is worth the price of the book. Commonly used terms such as acrostic, inclusio, ellipsis, parallelism, merism, and more are noted in the introduction and then highlighted throughout the commentary.

Despite the wonderful poetic insights, the commentary as it stands has a shortcoming that will hinder its usefulness in educational contexts—the complete absence of notation. Although she frequently mentions alternative interpretative options, Bergant never cites sources of varying or supportive opinions. This fundamental weakness markedly decreases the educational value of the overall work as students will not be able to trace Bergant's research nor will they be guided to interact with opposing views.

Beyond the lack of notation, many will find the theological and ethical analysis sections lacking. Although Bergant does an admirable job of exploring the depth of feeling and emotion in the text, the ethical analysis sections seem disjointed from the theological discussions. As she approaches the material theologically, Bergant clearly demonstrates the covenant context for the city's suffering. Yet when considering ethical implications of the issues, Bergant slips into a humanistic framework. Issues of covenant and retribution are equated with modern evils such as Nazi persecution and ethnic cleansing (pp. 22, 66, 71). Although she freely admits *Lamentations* does not directly deal with the concept of theodicy, she leaves behind the retributive sense of *Lamentations* and looks for different understandings in our modern society. She deems Israel's "traditional society" to have viewed earthly chaos as representative of divine realities, whereas we moderns view them to be only ethical situations with human solutions (p. 34).

Bergant is to be commended for bringing together a valuable work on *Lamentations*. The poetic insights and teaching character contribute significantly to the field. Yet, the lack of notation and the humanistic approach to ethical issues will work against widespread adoption of this commentary.

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The Message of Jonah: Presence in the Storm. By Rosemary Nixon. *The Bible Speaks Today*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, 220 pp., \$14.00.

Rosemary Nixon is vicar of All Saints' Church in Cleadon, England. Previously, she served as principal of the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church in Edinburgh, as director of urban studies in Gatehead, and as tutor in OT studies at Cranmer Hall in Durham. Nixon provides a scholarly but practical exposition of the

book of Jonah, with unique consideration given to the experience of the prophet and the literary characteristics of the book of Jonah.

The author provides more than a commentary and exposition of the book of Jonah. After a brief survey of the various methods of interpreting the book, Nixon reviews key literary characteristics in a way that is engaging and valuable for preaching as well as scholarship. The author goes the extra mile to emphasize the possibility and acceptability of an allegorical interpretation, but at the same time seems to treat the biblical record as historical and reliable.

The book focuses on the prophet Jonah's experiences, struggles, and decisions, especially in regard to his relationship to the Lord. The author provides an in-depth analysis of the prophet's dialogue with God and the applications that flow from Jonah's experience. For example, in the introduction, Nixon wrote of Jonah: "His chief instincts were to run away, to sleep, to hide, to die, to be angry, to be comfortable, to inhabit a predictable and familiar world . . . On his door is a large notice which says 'Do Not Disturb.' And yet he is a prophet of Israel" (p. 33).

The exposition of the book contains an excellent review of Jonah's background and calling. More attention is given to the dynamics of the prophet's experience and background than to academic technicalities. Most impressive is the practical application found in this commentary. Pastors and teachers will find solid principles for Christian living, ministry, and missions.

The primary content of the commentary follows the book of Jonah, chapter by chapter and verse by verse. Sections of each chapter contain headings filled with sermonic themes, and paragraphs sprinkled with historical nuggets and commentary. Hebrew analysis of the book is not extensive, but more than sufficient concerning key words and concepts. The author provides extraordinary, yet concise, information about the literary structure of the book of Jonah. Special attention is given to parallels and patterns within the Hebrew text that are directly related to the message of the prophecy.

Evangelicals will find this book strong on biblical application, theological insight, and experiential analysis. However, those looking for a solid affirmation for the historicity of all of the book of Jonah will be disappointed. Nixon leaves the question of full historicity open for the reader. She emphasizes, "The language in the book is metaphorical. The writer is not simply writing a newspaper report of what happened to an Israelite prophet. He is grappling theologically with human experience" (p. 149). There are a few culturally correct undertones in the book that leave the reader with more questions than answers. Overall, this book provides adequate commentary and excellent application. The strengths far outweigh any weaknesses of Nixon's work.

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Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance. By David A. deSilva. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. 428 pp., \$29.99.

In keeping with the books of the apocrypha presented in *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: The New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV), deSilva discusses sixteen apocryphal works. Naturally, discussions involve the ten deuterocanonical books received by the Roman Catholic Church (with the Additions to Esther and the Additions to Daniel counted as one each). In addition to the deuterocanonical books, however, the Greek Orthodox Church also includes 1 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151, and 3 Maccabees with 4 Maccabees printed in an appendix, and the Slavonic Bibles approved by

the Russian church add one additional work, 2 Esdras. Thus deSilva directs attention to an expanded apocrypha, which like the NRSV is an inclusive representation of various groups of Christians. One of deSilva's stated goals is "to move readers beyond seeing the Apocrypha as one more thing that separates one group of Christians from another and toward seeing these books for what they are in and of themselves and to value them on that basis" (p. 15). Therefore his work, in a very positive sense, is in keeping with and thereby complements the ecumenical spirit of the NRSV committee. (See Bruce M. Metzger's discussion in *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001], 120–22).

Chapters 1 and 2 serve as introductory chapters for the book. On the one hand, chapter 1 introduces "The Value of the Apocrypha" (pp. 15–41). "Without the Apocrypha," deSilva rightly claims, "the modern student of Scripture has a skewed view of the Judaism into which Jesus was born and within which his followers moved" (p. 26). On the other hand, chapter 2, "The Yoke of the Gentiles" (pp. 42–62), sets the historical context. Although it too is introductory, it provides "the basic contours of the history and the challenges faced by Jews during the [Second Temple Period], so that he or she will be better able to place each individual book of the Apocrypha and the contribution it seeks to make to Jewish life within a meaningful framework" (p. 42).

The remaining chapters, 3 through 16, are dedicated to the books of the apocrypha. With the exception of chapters 14 (The Prayer of Manasseh: "The God of Those Who Repent") and 16 (Psalm 151: "He Made Me Shepherd of His Flock"), deSilva generally discusses (1) the structure and contents, (2) the textual transmission, (3) the author, date, and setting (except for 1 Esdras), (4) the genre and purpose (except for Wisdom and 1 Esdras), (5) the formative influences, and (6) the influences for each apocryphal book. At times, deSilva adds to his general discussion. Thus chapter 3 (Tobit: "Better Almsgiving with Justice"), chapter 5 (Additions to Esther: "The Aid of the All-Seeing God and Savior"), chapter 6 (Wisdom of Solomon: "The Righteous Live Forever"), chapter 8 (Baruch: "Return with Tenfold Zeal to Seek God"), and chapter 10 (The Additions to Daniel: "Let Them Know That You Alone Are God") include information about first-century theological issues. In chapter 3 (Tobit: "Better Almsgiving with Justice"), chapter 4 (Judith: "Hear Me Also, A Widow"), and chapter 7 (Wisdom of Ben Sira: "In All Wisdom There Is the Doing of Torah"), deSilva discusses the sociality issue of woman.

Throughout his book deSilva demonstrates how the apocrypha informs us of God, ethics, and challenges to faithful living, as well as reveals to us the significant developments in Jewish history, culture, and thought that provide the matrix for the early church. In fact, Christians who want to understand the world into which God sent his Son need to read the apocrypha. DeSilva's book helps provide additional insight into these extremely significant Second Temple works.

As with all books, however, there are some issues that could afford further discussion and thereby warrant comment in critical reviews such as this one. For instance, the connection made between Matthew 11:28–30 with the Wisdom of Ben Sira 6:24–28; 24:19 and 51:23–27 has been challenged by Jon Laansma (in *I Will Give You Rest: The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3–4* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997] 159–208). Nevertheless, deSilva evidences a wealth of awareness concerning the significance of the apocrypha for NT studies.

In addition, the title *Introducing the Apocrypha* strikes me as misleading. For whom was this "introduction" written? At times, deSilva writes as though his reader has no background in the biblical languages and then within the same paragraph assumes his reader can read Hebrew (p. 215). He also exhibits critical discussions beyond the comprehension of most lay people, college students, and many pastors. Daniel J. Harrington's *Invitation to the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) would better suit lay people and many college students. A more appropriate title might be *The Apocrypha:*

A Critical Analysis of its Message, Context, and Significance whereby the more suitable audience might be upper level college students and most certainly seminary and doctoral students as well as college or seminary professors. It is without hesitation that deSilva's book should be incorporated as a textbook to be read along with the reading of the OT apocrypha.

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The Lost Letters of Pergamum: A Story from the New Testament World. By Bruce W. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003, 192 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Sixteen years ago, the Heidelberg NT scholar Gerd Theissen penned a delightful historical novel that explored the social context of the historical Jesus. *In the Shadow of the Galilean* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) was eminently successful in exploiting a seldom used genre (at least by NT scholars) for reconstructing and presenting NT backgrounds. After Theissen, one could only wonder when he or some other knowledgeable and literary soul might attempt a sequel, such as *In the Shadow of the Tarsian*.

Bruce Longenecker is that person. He has skipped Paul of Tarsus altogether, however, in favor of a setting at the end of the first century AD on the west coast of the Roman province of Asia. He also avoided the creation of an historical novel in favor of writing a collection of fictional correspondences between a Roman nobleman in Pergamum and Luke, the author of the canonical Luke-Acts.

Fictional writing is notoriously difficult to do well, but Longenecker has proven himself quite capable. The end result is a highly informative volume that college and seminary students, as well as lay people, will find enjoyable to read. One of the virtues of this approach is that it will put solid NT background information into the hands of people who may not otherwise read the standard texts by E. F. Ferguson, P. Barnett, B. Witherington, or F. F. Bruce. *Lost Letters* will also make an excellent supplemental text for a course on NT Backgrounds.

As the starting point of his volume, Longenecker discusses the (fictional) archaeological discovery of a cache of papyrus letters tucked away in a private home under excavation in Pergamum. This would be a rather miraculous find since no papyri of any kind have been discovered in Turkey (simply because the climate is not conducive to the preservation of papyri). The letters represent a "dialogue" over time between Luke and a man named Antipas, whom Longenecker creates based on the reference in Revelation 2:13 to "Antipas, my faithful witness, . . . [who] was put to death in your city [Pergamum]—where Satan lives." In the correspondence, Luke proves to be a sensitive witness to Antipas who is very open to and interested in Christianity.

This correspondence gives Longenecker the opportunity to discuss many topics of NT background that include but go far beyond the social and religious setting of Pergamum in the late first century. Readers will find this book rich with concise discussions of such Jewish-oriented topics as the various parties within Judaism (viz. the Pharisees, Essenes, Samaritans, Zealots, and the Sicarii), peasant life in Galilee, the historian Josephus, and the political figures of Pontius Pilate and Herod Antipas. This came as somewhat of a surprise to me since I assumed that the book would probably focus exclusively on the Asia Minor setting. The range of topics also makes the book more serviceable as a supplemental text.

The letters also give significant insight into the lifestyles of the urban elite in the Roman world. This includes such related topics as Greco-Roman religion (particularly

the worship of Asklepios), the honor-shame culture, benefaction and patronage, trade guilds, and the function of the ruler cult in the Roman empire. Longenecker also provides a fascinating reconstruction of two very different house churches. He portrays one of these house churches as highly syncretistic and making great compromises with the world.

I found most of the fictional reconstructions in the volume not only credible and plausible, but also as helpful in gaining a holistic picture of life at that time. This is an additional virtue of Longenecker's approach that will prove exceptionally valuable to students of the NT. I found Longenecker's portrayal of how a pagan would read and react to Luke's Gospel particularly fascinating. One could subtitle this section of the book "Reading Luke in First-Century Pergamum." I also found his depiction of the social difficulties newcomers would have when they attended the house churches quite intriguing. It should also be noted that Longenecker reaches much more conservative conclusions than does Theissen in his assumptions, conclusions, and reconstructions.

By the time I finished the volume, several questions came to mind. Perhaps the biggest question has to do with whether Longenecker has presented us with a Luke that is a bit too modern given his emphasis on "dialogue" with Antipas. Since Luke's hero in the book of Acts was passionately committed to bold proclamation that often got him into trouble, I was rather surprised that Luke was not more forthright and bold in his proclamation of the gospel to Antipas. In addition to this, I wondered why docetism never makes an appearance in the book. Also, would a conscientious believer such as Antonius have really gone to a gladiatorial contest? Were there no slaves in the house churches in Pergamum? Finally, I was somewhat surprised that the first explicit reference to "faith in Jesus" is mentioned with regard to Demetrius (p. 165) and not in connection with Antipas. It led me to wonder when Antipas exercised faith in Christ. These are all minor and should not detract from my overall high estimation of the book.

Although there is not a lot of high drama in *Lost Letters* as there is with some historical fiction, I suppose one should not expect this from a collection of letters. Longenecker has produced a very interesting and informative account. What a great way to learn NT backgrounds!

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The Quest for the Plausible Jesus: The Question of Criteria. By Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter. Translated by M. Eugene Boring. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002, xxiv + 344 pp., \$29.95 paper.

This is a fine translation of a significant work that first appeared in German in 1997 as *Die Kriterienfrage in der Jesusforschung: Vom Differenzkriterium zum Plausibilitätskriterium*. The original German title is a better approximation of the relative shape of this jointly authored volume, since the bulk of the book is concerned with the criterion of double dissimilarity, even though its positive contribution is in presenting the authors' new criterion of plausibility. Theissen is of course widely known in NT studies for important work in historical Jesus research, among other areas. Winter was his doctoral student at Heidelberg University (finishing in 1995). This volume is a joint product that develops work on the criteria for authenticity by Theissen, but incorporates major research that comes from Winter's doctoral dissertation on the criterion of double dissimilarity (part 2). The critique of double dissimilarity constitutes well over half of this volume. This is especially evident when one includes the lengthy and useful (though

somewhat limited) appendix that presents formulations and comments upon the criterion of dissimilarity (45 pp.). As a result, there is some imbalance both in the content and especially in the style of the work, between the doctoral portion and the other chapters. In a sense, this is really two books, a major one by Winter, and a much briefer but no less important one by Theissen and Winter. However, the research by Winter is necessary for establishing the foundation for the proposal regarding the criterion of plausibility.

The first part is concerned with the issue of the quest for criteria in historical Jesus research, emphasizing the development of the criterion of dissimilarity. One of the several important observations that it makes is that what the authors call the "crisis of historical interest in Jesus" (p. 2) that occurred alongside the development of form criticism and "kerygma theology" (p. 2) (sometimes called the "no quest" period of historical Jesus research) was really a German phenomenon: "While in English language scholarship—despite Schweitzer and Bultmann—a broad stream of interest in the historical Jesus continued without interruption . . ." (p. 2). They also note that the so-called Third Quest of historical Jesus research was "relatively unnoticed in Germany" (p. 4). In other words, Theissen and Winter provide useful evidence that the typical three- or four-stage conception of historical Jesus research is really only a characterization of a very narrow and often distinctly German type of historical Jesus research. This chapter also discusses the major issues that have arisen in defining the criteria and then focuses upon the criterion of dissimilarity in terms of defining it and its relation to other criteria, such as the criterion of coherence.

The second part offers a thorough and lengthy discussion of the criterion of dissimilarity. This survey, dependent upon Winter's research, reaches back to the Renaissance and traces its development through the Enlightenment to nineteenth-century notions of personality and heroism. After this broad sweep, the authors concentrate upon how the two prongs of the criterion, dissimilarity to early Christianity and dissimilarity to Judaism, were developed by the major figures in historical Jesus research, from Strauss to the present. Although the authors recognize that the quest continued unabated in the twentieth century (see above), they still utilize a form of the typical schema to depict historical Jesus research and still select one person's work as representative of the period. So, for the liberal and history-of-religions quest (what some would recognize as the original or first quest) they discuss Wilhelm Bousset; for the period of dialectical theology and skepticism fostered by form criticism (what some would recognize as the "no quest" period) they discuss the work of Rudolf Bultmann (a recognition that there was questing during this period); for the new quest the work of Günther Bornkamm; and for the third quest the work of James Charlesworth. The authors recognize that one could have selected other scholars (others no doubt would have!), but these suffice to make their point. The point is that the criterion is really two distinct criteria, with scholars emphasizing sometimes one and sometimes the other dimension, often to the neglect of the other. They find an ahistorical bias behind both, and conclude that the criterion fails to perform what it was designed to do and ends up with a Jesus who was "without historical antecedents" and had "no continuing effect on history" (p. 168).

In the light of this depressing (though no doubt accurate) conclusion, Theissen and Winter propose a new criterion of plausibility. This is in effect a four-fold criterion that sees a plausibility of relation between an event or person and its historical effects and a plausibility of relation between a historical context and what it produces. They also recognize that a figure such as Jesus would sometimes agree and sometimes disagree with these respective contexts. Surprisingly, the extended example that they use is the analogous one of sayings of Montanist prophets, rather than one from the NT. This chapter is usefully supplemented by what has been presented in Theissen and A. Mertz,

The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide (trans. J. Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1998) 116–18.

The final chapter is a revised version of Theissen's insightful article that first appeared in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* in 1996, and attempts to come to terms with Lessing's proverbial ditch. Theissen advocates that, rather than leaping across it, we plunge in and swim in it. This chapter, and hence the book, ends with a distinctly Germanic discussion of the philosophical, hermeneutical, and theological issues at stake.

There are several brief comments I wish to make before offering a critique of the plausibility criterion itself. The first is that there are some noteworthy gaps in the secondary literature, especially recent publications, several of which address the criteria (e.g. Downing, Walker, Polkow, Evans, Holmén, Wright, Porter, and even Dodd, to name but a few). A few of these were published after the original German edition and some even in response to it, but since this English version purports to be the "definitive edition" (p. xix), these perhaps merited acknowledgment if not thorough consideration. This publication does reveal that in some ways German scholarship has perhaps been slower and more hesitant to come to terms with the severe limitations of the criteria used to establish authenticity, especially the criterion of dissimilarity. A second brief comment is that there are a number of typographical errors and a few other inconsistencies of presentation. A third is that this work is woefully short on actual examples from the NT, showing how this new criterion of plausibility would actually work to push forward in positive ways NT research on the historical Jesus. It is perplexing that the longest example treated is concerned with the Montanist prophets. It may provide a useful analogy by which to refine the method, but in a book such as this one can rightly expect substantive, developed NT examples.

Recent work on the criteria has clearly made the case for, at the least, revisiting and revising them, if not abandoning many if not most of them altogether—especially the criterion of dissimilarity. From that standpoint, Theissen and Winter's critique of the criterion of double dissimilarity is part of a groundswell of opposition to a criterion that may (I use the word cautiously) provide a picture of the unique Jesus, that is, a Jesus who is dissimilar to his Jewish background and early Christianity, but almost assuredly does not provide a realistic or plausible picture of Jesus. That point is well taken. This book, however, wishes to go further and make the case for a new criterion of plausibility. I wish to offer a brief critique of this criterion (this is based directly upon my earlier response to Theissen's work in my *Criteria for Authenticity in Historical Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals* [JSNTSup 191; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000] 116–22). As noted above, the criterion of plausibility, like that of double dissimilarity, is two-sided—it considers Jesus in terms of his relations to Judaism ("contextual plausibility") and to early Christianity ("plausibility of effects"; p. 211). For Theissen and Winter, the question of authenticity is judged by means of probabilities. Rather than attempting to know history "how it really was" (Ranke—*wie es eigentlich gewesen*; p. 201), they work from a "comprehensive historical picture" (p. 199) of Jesus that creates a plausible scenario (their reference to the work of Imre Lakatos is to be noted; p. 203). The use of both contextual plausibility and plausibility of effects relies heavily upon the criterion of coherence of sources and recognition of a complex historical tradition that is sometimes resisted in the Gospels to create a comprehensive plausibility (p. 209). As a result, for both Judaism and early Christianity, there are places at which Jesus conforms to and at which he is distinct from them.

The foundational appeal to what amounts to the criteria of multiple attestation and resistance of the historical tradition (related to the criterion of coherence) reveals to me the major limitation of the program of Theissen and Winter as so far formulated. This

is a shift in emphasis away from the highly negative and reductionistic criterion of double dissimilarity to other already utilized criteria, rather than a genuine shift in method. Theissen and Winter's criterion of plausibility is still formulated around traditional criteria, such as multiple attestation, coherence, movement against the redactional tendency, and the like (there is some ambiguity regarding how these are related). The significant criticisms of these criteria—and there have been many—are partly responsible for the widespread reliance upon the criterion of double dissimilarity. In other words, Theissen and Winter must do more to establish the usefulness of these other criteria before they can utilize them to create a supposed new criterion. Furthermore, Theissen and Winter's discussion of how these various criteria relate to each other is so brief (pp. 201–12, with only pp. 210–12 given to formulating the new criterion) that they give little guidance and few examples regarding how one utilizes the criterion. In other words, they do not clearly explain when it is appropriate to see similarity and when to see dissimilarity, and how one evaluates them to create a plausible portrait of Jesus. It is, therefore, unclear what plausibility actually means, especially since one can imagine (the scholarly literature is full of examples) different scholars finding quite different scenarios regarding the actions of Jesus equally plausible. Lastly, the notion of a comprehensive picture of Jesus is no doubt correct, but one that must unfortunately remain beyond the scope of this new criterion of plausibility, despite its complexity, because of its reliance upon traditional criteria with all of their limitations. In fact, recognition of the coherence and distinctiveness of elements of the life of Jesus in relation to Judaism and early Christianity may well indicate that the criterion of double dissimilarity, even in the hands of Theissen and Winter, is still dictating the agenda for at least some historical Jesus research.

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Salvation for the Righteous Revealed: Jesus amid Covenantal and Messianic Expectations in Second Temple Judaism. By Ed Condra. AGJU 51. Leiden: Brill, 2002, xvii + 391 pp., \$120.00.

Since Baur and Wrede, major attempts have sought either to establish a seamless continuity between the Palestinian context of Jesus' teaching and the Gentile mission of Paul or show it cannot be done. Condra argues that to solve the dichotomy between Jesus, the teacher of Jewish ethics, and Paul, the apostle of a redemptive dying and rising Messiah, we must read Jesus and his milieu with a sensitivity to a diachronic progression of revelation. In other words, we should distinguish between Jesus' demands for a greater righteousness through a behavioral fulfilling of Torah, which he espoused under limited revelation, with Paul's emphasis on a forensic fulfillment of the Law through Jesus' death, which he understood in light of a post-cross revelation. An accurate description of Jesus' emphasis on righteousness and how it behaves within God's salvation of Israel can be made if we first recognize what expectations of salvation existed at the time. The book, a revised form of the author's dissertation submitted to Dallas Theological Seminary, is divided into six sections.

In the first chapter Condra lays down his reason, limitations, and presuppositions for his investigation. It is here, rather than in the title, that we are told that he will primarily compare Jesus' ethical teachings and soteriology to that of the Qumran community. Why? First, the Dead Sea Scrolls give an example of a belief system that clearly shows their views of grace and Torah obedience. If the tension between law observance

and salvation by grace can be maintained by the Qumranians, then why is it improbable for Paul to emphasize grace and be consistent with Jesus' emphasis on law observance? Second, the Scrolls show how the community could emphasize halakhah within a thoroughly apocalyptic worldview.

Condra anticipates critics who would argue that by comparing Jesus with the Scrolls he assumes that the ideas contained in the Scrolls were more prominent among the non-Qumranian Jewish audience of Jesus than seems historically probable. Thus, he limits those concepts in the Scrolls that are shared by other Jews (though with differing degrees of nuances) to three: belief in further revelation, apocalypticism, and halakhah. One weakness to Condra's method is that, while he is correct to argue that the Qumran ideologies were more widespread than earlier thought, he does not demonstrate how to determine the extent of their influence so it can be assumed that Jesus' audience had similar outlooks.

In chapter 2 Condra tackles the problem of finding a cohesive understanding of soteriology within a diverse first-century Judaism. While diversity cannot be denied, it must not be overemphasized. Sander's concept of "covenantal nomism" fails because it does not take the testimony of Paul seriously enough. Paul did oppose certain Jews who believed that salvation was maintained by law observance. Sanders missed seeing that Jews maintained a balance within the theological tension between divine grace and human responsibility. While Condra's critique of Sander's reading of Second Temple Judaism makes some excellent observations, his own concept of legalism (p. 54) seems anachronistically defined.

Condra then explores the concepts of apocalyptic and covenantal obedience held by the Dead Sea Scrolls community and its theology of salvation. Instead of quoting large portions of the Scrolls, he synthesizes them to reflect how the Qumranians read Torah so that it is interconnected with their revealed halakhah. Qumran halakhic rulings were Mosaic Law. "Righteousness" for the community is understood as perfect adherence to God's ordinances, and members who obey the new revealed covenant find atonement. The Qumran soteriology is best understood as a balanced tension between God's sovereign predestination of the "Sons of Light" and the responsibility of the "righteous," defined as those who keep what has been revealed. Condra contends that Jesus would not have seemed out of place to other Jews when he taught that obedience to the Law is determined by his new revelation.

Chapter 5 outlines messianic beliefs of the period based on explicit references to a Messiah as well as allusions to his primary functions. Condra questions the methodology that excludes passages as "non-messianic" when they clearly point to an eschatological deliverer. Building upon criteria from Horsley, he asserts that the diversity of the Messiah concept in uncontested messianic passages should lead us to include other passages (especially Ps 2:2; Dan 9:25-26) as messianic where eschatological salvation or a ruling agent of God is described. Once again, Condra gives most of his attention to the messianic beliefs attested at Qumran, where the "teacher Messiah" proclaims that future salvation is for the righteous who obey the Law. He claims that this expectation was so widely held that Jews were looking for a Davidic Messiah who also would reveal to them how to keep the Law and gain greater righteousness.

The final chapter focuses on the Sermon on the Mount and other texts where Jesus demands an expanding covenantal righteousness. Condra asks, "Why do the Gospels show Jesus stressing obedience to Torah?" The answer is Jesus' audience would expect that "Correct Torah obedience through sectarian revelation was necessary for the eschatological salvation" (p. 276). The Gospels portray Jesus as meeting a common messianic expectation of the time. The Messiah would help God's people be faithful to the covenant so that they could experience deliverance. But Jesus also had a "filled out" meaning to his teaching on righteousness which anticipated the "progressive revelation"

which would have been received by Paul. Here, Condra acknowledges that his method presupposes Jesus being divine and having the foreknowledge of the results of his death and resurrection.

This diachronic and synthetic approach to Second Temple Jewish literature, especially the Qumran material, and the Gospels is clearly written and compelling, if one accepts some of Condra's presuppositions (e.g. Jesus' divine foreknowledge). Condra has well-formed insights into Qumran theology. He shows how one conservative approach can effectively argue how Jesus' demands to obey Torah in order to be saved is consistent with Paul's later revelation which taught that salvation was dependent upon God's grace and not on Torah observance.

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The Jewish Context of Jesus' Miracles. By Eric Eve. JSNTSup 231. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002, 420 pp., \$125.00.

This book reflects the ground swell of interest in miracles in antiquity—not least the miracles of Jesus. In a study that has grown out of his Oxford D.Phil. dissertation supervised by John Muddiman, Eve seeks to illuminate the miracles associated with and conducted by Jesus. In contrast to the usual approach of treating the Jewish context as background to studies of Jesus' miracles, Eve places the Jewish context squarely in the foreground as the main focus of investigation. "The purpose of this change of perspective is to enable Jesus' miracles to be seen in their Jewish context, rather than viewing the Jewish context through the lens of Jesus' miracles" (p. 18). This enables Eve to avoid the danger, which he sees particularly in the work of Vermes, of a distorted picture that arises from taking into account only those snippets of Jewish background that most closely resemble or contrast with Jesus' miracle working (pp. 18–19).

Recognizing the impossibility of examining every available text, Eve restricts his treatment to the main bodies of Second Temple Jewish literature: Josephus (chap. 2), Philo (chap. 3), the Wisdom of Solomon and Ben Sira (chap. 4), Pseudo-Philo (chap. 5), the Book of Watchers in *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees* (chap. 6), selected Qumran texts including the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen), the *Prayer of Nabonidus* (4QprNab) and the *Messianic Apocalypse* (4Q521; chap. 7), and Tobit and *Artapanus* (chap. 8). Even though the treatment is acknowledged to be selective, there remains an immense amount of detailed work for an argument that is cautious, balanced, and full to the point of being over cooked with many, often too many, examples given *in extenso*. Yet, there is generally too little interaction with secondary literature, which is needed for a book that intends to engage in scholarly debates.

In chapter 9, a critical central chapter, Eve draws together the threads of his discussion so far, beginning with four general observations: (1) that most of the Jews who produced Second Temple literature were little preoccupied with the miraculous; (2) that where there is an interest in miracles it is usually through an interest in biblical miracles, especially the miraculous events surrounding the exodus; (3) that, outside Josephus, stories of post-biblical miracles are rare; and (4) that the passages that come close to describing Jesus' career in miracles come to us in Christian recensions (cf. *Apoc. Elij.* 3:5–13; Matt 11:5) describing not a messiah but the coming of an anti-God figure. Eve notes the obvious irony that, if this is so, "the figure in the Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha that Jesus' miracle-working make him most resemble is that of Beliar" (p. 245).

In more detail, Eve notes that, in what he terms the Enochic-Qumran traditions, there seems to be slightly more interest in healing miracles and even more interest in exorcism. He reasonably suggests, therefore, that “perhaps the best way of understanding the context of Jesus’ healing and exorcism is at the creative confluence of three streams within Judaism: the widespread traditions about prophets like Elijah and Elisha, the Enochic-Qumran traditions concerned with the eschatological defeat of demonic powers, and popular folk-religion” (p. 259). In considering whether there are any parallels to the Gospel “nature miracles” in this literature Eve concludes that, with the exception of the miracles taken over from the OT, there are no stories that significantly resemble those attributed to Jesus. Also of significance is his corroboration of the conclusion of others that, although it would not be beyond the bounds of possibility to associate the two, “there was no *automatic* connexion between healing and eschatology in Jewish thought” (italics his). From this Eve goes on to suggest that this strengthens the idea that Jesus made creative use of individual healings as an acted metaphor (or parable) of the coming of the kingdom of God (p. 266). However, a careful examination of such sayings as Matthew 12:28/Luke 11:20 may show Jesus had a different view: that they embodied the kingdom of God.

The remaining four chapters look at evidence relating to Jesus’ miracle-working contemporaries. Over against Vermes, Eve concludes (chap. 10) that the traditions about Honi the Circle-Drawer and Hanina ben Dosa do not exemplify a class of charismatic holy men with which Jesus is connected. Nevertheless, Vermes’s point is allowed to stand that Judaism and the Gospel tradition associated miracle-working and prophets, not least Elijah and Elisha. The conclusion to chapter 11 on the sign prophets is similarly negative: whereas they were looking back to the exodus-conquest traditions as a type of imminent future salvation, Jesus was tapping into a different stream of expectation—that of the bountiful provision of God rather than the punishment and defeat of foes. Jesus was characterized by healings and exorcisms, miracles that seem to have formed no part of the program of the sign prophets. Chapter 12 deals with the evidence that other Jews around the time of Jesus practiced exorcism. Eve draws attention to the fact that, given the comparative wealth of material on angels and demons in general, it is significant that there is a comparative paucity of material on possession and exorcism so that, as others have shown, while not being unique, Jesus “may nevertheless have been remarkably unusual, not least in his claim to be doing so by the spirit of God” (p. 349). In the final main chapter, “Healers, Magicians and Spirits,” which explores some insights from medical and social-scientific anthropology, the author is the least sure-footed, and the results are thin and not as convincing. Notwithstanding, the discussion on the distinction made in a Jewish context between magic and miracle—whether the source of a feat was God or not—warrants attention.

In a subtle and thoughtful final chapter Eve is able to conclude that the healings of Jesus seem quite remote from the mainstream of Jewish interest in the great signs and wonders of the biblical past and expected future. Even though they are thoroughly Jewish, depend on the OT for their significance, and link Jesus to Moses, what nature miracles are found in the Jesus tradition appear almost tame in comparison. Instead, the miracles of Jesus resemble those of the great miracle-working prophets Elijah and Elisha. Eve echoes the conclusion of Theissen, among others, that the uniqueness of Jesus lay in his “seeing eschatological salvation realized in individual acts of healing and exorcism” (p. 380).

This study broadly achieves its aim to “clarify the role of miracle in Second Temple Judaism generally, and in such a way that the Jewish context of Jesus’ miracles comes into sharper focus” which, for Eve is that Jesus is a prophet, distinctive in being a bearer of numinous power and speaking in his own name (p. 386). In this Eve comes

to similar conclusions as Michael Becker, *Wunder und Wundertäter im frührabbinischen Judentum* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2002). Indeed, one is left wondering how Eve's results would be nuanced if the rabbinic material along with relevant PGM were fully taken into account. In any case, such studies are narrowing the options for credible portrayals of the historical Jesus.

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Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 3: The Resurrection of the Son of God.
By N. T. Wright. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003, xxi + 817 pp., \$39.00 paper.

It was my first sabbatical at Tyndale House in Cambridge in 1979–80, and I well remember the young Ph.D. student who sat a few study carrels away finishing his Oxford dissertation, Tom Wright. Since then I have followed his career with joy and a sense of awe. God has uniquely gifted and used him in the process of turning around the lengthy “exile” of conservative scholarship and placing it once again at the forefront of the academic world. In a sense, the Cambridge trio of the late nineteenth century has been replicated by the passing of the baton from F. F. Bruce to I. Howard Marshall and now to N. T. Wright over the last fifty years. This has especially been seen in Wright's magisterial “Christian Origins and the Question of God” series, the third volume of which is reviewed here.

In *Jesus and the Victory of God (JVG)* there were two major criticisms, the centrality of the “return from exile” theme (vastly overstated) and the absence of any presentation of Jesus' expectation of a second coming. In that work he interprets the apocalyptic passages as referring not to a literal second coming but to the return of Yahweh to Zion. The shaking of the heavens in Mark 13:24–25 is not concerned with any idea of an end to “the space-time universe” but is a poetic description of the destruction of Jerusalem, an occurrence that was part of the climactic events that would be the “close of the age,” namely the end of her “mourning and exile and the beginning of her freedom and vindication” (*JVG*, p. 346). The term “parousia” in Matt 24:3, 27, 37, 39 refers to Jesus' “coming” as the enthroned king. As a result many wondered if Wright believed in a second coming and a final resurrection. That question has now been decisively answered in *The Resurrection of the Son of God (RSG)*—he firmly believes in a second coming and the bodily resurrection of both Jesus and the saints.

Originally he did not intend to make this a whole volume but rather the final section in the second volume. However, *JVG* turned out too long, and the material quickly escalated from a section to a major work. We can be glad it did, for this has turned out to be the most comprehensive work on resurrection ever written, moving from pagan views to the OT and intertestamental developments and then (in order) to Paul, the Gospel traditions outside the Easter narratives, the rest of the NT, the early Church (Apostolic Fathers, Christian apocrypha, etc.), and the Easter narratives. Extensive interaction would take a major article, but introductory comments will help the reader understand the basic contours as well as some of the strengths and weaknesses (the former vastly outweigh the latter!) of the work. As to the after-life in pagan thought, two main conclusions can be made: (1) Almost universally it was agreed that the soul or shade lived on after the body died, but it was a one-way street (one did not return) and a time of grief for all concerned, entailing either a zombie-like existence (Homer) or a fairly normal life after death involving hunting, games, etc. (Egypt, Socrates);

(2) They did not believe in a resurrection to a higher life after death; in the pagan world this was impossible.

As for the OT he sees the idea of resurrection hope as a late teaching building on the hope of the nation for national restoration (the dry bones in Ezekiel 37) and the vindication of the martyrs, with precursors to the idea of resurrection in Isa 26:19 (in which the "dead shall live" with respect to the saints, though for pagans "the dead do not live" [26:14]) and Hos 6:1–2, 13:14 (third day theme). The primary passage on bodily resurrection is Dan 12:2–3 ("many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake"), but Wright accepts the critical consensus that Daniel was written during the Maccabean period (160 BC). For Wright the early belief was that death was "the land of no return" (Ps 39:4; Job 7:7–10, 14:7–14; Jer 51:39, 57—"sleep a perpetual sleep and never awake," *RSG*, pp. 96–97), and belief in resurrection appeared very late as a new doctrine.

Yet is this the best interpretation of the data? It is true that there is no developed reflection on life after death, but at the same time there is also no belief in annihilation at death and several indications of a nascent acceptance that existence continues after death. Two figures, Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs 2:9–11), were "taken up" to be with God and did not experience death, and in several passages the dead dwell in Sheol as *repha'im* or "shades" (Job 26:5; Ps 88:10; Prov 9:18; Isa 26:14). Job responds to Bildad in 19:25–27, "I know that . . . after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God." In other words, the OT centers on Israel's present experience of Yahweh, the covenant God, and does not develop a doctrine of after-life, but this does not mean they rejected any such concept. The nations surrounding them were virtually paranoid about an after-life (e.g. Egypt), and in reacting to these pagan religions the Jews would have talked about such beliefs if they rejected them. Rather, they centered on their true distinctive (a God who loved them and watched over them) from pagan peoples (whose gods were capricious and had to be mollified). So they developed their beliefs late, yet these were not *ex nihilo* but evolved naturally (see G. R. Osborne, "Resurrection," *DJG* 673–74).

Wright places his study of Paul before the Gospels because his epistles were written first and so represent an earlier witness to resurrection beliefs. I would have placed the Gospels first as representing Jesus' beliefs in the after-life, but either is viable. Reading Wright is like taking a breathtaking helicopter ride over the landscapes of the texts, and he does not disappoint. Every text is discussed, and we see how central the resurrection of Jesus and the believer is to Paul. This is not to agree with everything he says (e.g. authorship of the Pastorals), but the basic contours of Paul's thought are developed with depth and clarity. He concludes three things: (1) the centrality of Jesus' bodily resurrection for Christian belief; (2) the expectation that believers would rise in like manner; and (3) the use of the resurrection metaphor for Christian living, i.e. the "resurrection life." The only development in Paul's thinking was from the expectation that Christ would return before he died (1 Corinthians) to the realization that he would likely die first (2 Corinthians). His views built on Jewish expectations but went beyond them both in depth of insight and frequency of mention (*RSG*, pp. 271–76). He finds similar teaching in the Gospel tradition outside the Easter stories (*RSG*, pp. 448–49) as well as in the rest of the NT (*RSG*, pp. 476–79).

As for the Easter stories themselves, he notes how many critical scholars have assumed that a belief in Jesus' exaltation led to the creation of a group of "Easter legends" regarding an empty tomb and appearances that began with brief appearances and then evolved into bodily resurrection. Wright, however, argues for much of a historical core, arguing that if the early church had wanted to create allegorical lessons that fit their needs, they would have created very different stories than those found in the resurrection narratives. They have the feel of events that actually occurred rather

than fictional creations. The OT background, absence of hope, the portrait of Jesus, and the centrality of women as witnesses would have been very different in aetiological legends (*RSG*, pp. 599–608). He calls the different accounts: “the hurried, puzzled accounts of those who have seen with their own eyes something which took them horribly by surprise and with which they have not yet fully come to terms” (*RSG*, p. 612). He does not assume their historicity but does take them seriously as historical sources. Allowing the inconsistencies to stand, Wright argues that a historically plausible nucleus emerges—Jesus appeared to the women and to the disciples, and this involved a “transphysicality,” i.e. a transformed bodily existence (*RSG*, pp. 606–7, 612).

Let us see how he treats each Gospel narrative. Mark’s rendition centers on “fear and trembling,” but Wright argues strongly that there was an original ending in which the disciples are told to proceed to Galilee and the women’s fear and silence explains why Jerusalem did not immediately hear of the empty tomb. That is indeed possible, though I prefer to see in v. 8 a brilliant ending contrasting discipleship failure (v. 8, a major theme in Mark) with the promise of its solution in the presence of the Risen Lord (v. 7). Matthew centers on supernatural “angels and earthquakes,” and these stories are not likely to have been invented wholesale but were traditions Matthew narrated (even the remarkable raising of the OT saints in 27:51–53) to describe the dawn of a new age, even “the harrowing of hell” (*RSG*, p. 634). Wright argues that Matthew’s story is more likely than a critical reconstruction that would demand an original faith sans resurrection that led to resurrection language used to describe Jesus’ exaltation and then others to make up resurrection stories that themselves led the Jews to make up a story about the disciples stealing the body from the fictitious empty tomb (*RSG*, p. 639). Such is far less likely than Matthew’s story! Even the great commission (28:16–20) has earmarks of authenticity (e.g. the “some doubted” of v. 17), though Wright is unwilling to speculate about which details go back to early church tradition and which to the risen Lord himself.

Luke has two narratives (Luke 24 and Acts 1), and unlike in his Gospel as a whole he departs freely from the Markan portrait (with its command to go to Galilee) to center on the Jerusalem scene. Luke has designed his narrative to parallel themes found in the birth narratives of chapters 1–2, and every element shows a Lukan rewriting of the basic story to fit his themes and purposes. In short, for Wright Luke’s narrative (like the others) is based on authentic tradition that has been reshaped by the author. John’s portrayal (Wright refuses to take a stand on the authorship question) is similar. Chapter 20 finalizes the message of the prologue (1:1–18) that in Jesus the living God has assumed human flesh, and it also sums up the Johannine themes of faith, the Spirit, the restored Temple, and Jesus as Messiah. However, John presents them not as fictional themes but as themes that arise from events that he believes actually happened. The same is true of chapter 21, portraying the fishing scene and reinstatement of Peter as events that truly happened. In short, all the Gospel writers rewrote the stories to fit the theological themes of their respective Gospels but also described events they thought truly occurred (*RSG*, pp. 679–82).

In his final chapters, Wright discusses “Easter and History” and its implications for Jesus as “Son of God.” In terms of historical event, he argues that only the combination of an empty tomb and literal appearances of the risen Lord constitute a sufficient and necessary basis for the universal belief in the early church that Jesus indeed arose from the dead bodily. Each by itself would not constitute evidence, but together they explain what really happened (*RSG*, pp. 686–88). His arguments are quite compelling, but within this he is willing to allow contradictions to stand and rejects any attempt at harmonizing the reports in the various Gospels (*RSG*, p. 614). Yet this is unnecessary, and the events can validly be harmonized (cf. John William Wenham, *Easter Enigma* [2d

ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992]; Murray J. Harris, *From Grave to Glory: Resurrection in the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990] 157–63; Grant R. Osborne, 3 *Crucial Questions about the Bible* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995] 39–41). In short, Wright has done a remarkable job in showing the basic historicity of the resurrection events, but he could have gone one step further, showing that they do not contradict one another but are historically trustworthy in the details as well as the broad sweep. Still, this is a work that will stand for years to come as the deepest study yet of the meaning and history of the resurrection of Jesus.

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Poetics for the Gospels? Rethinking Narrative Criticism. By Petri Merenlahti. *Studies of the New Testament and Its World.* London: T. & T. Clark, 2002, xi + 174 pp., \$49.95.

Poetics for the Gospels? Rethinking Narrative Criticism is part of the fruit from a six-year research project, “The Gospels as Stories” (1994–1999), by the Department of Biblical Studies at the University of Helsinki. In the series of critical essays within this book, Petri Merenlahti surveys and evaluates the history and practice of narrative criticism, and he proposes a more critical and comprehensive program of historical poetics.

The essays are grouped into three sections. Part 1 consists of three chapters that trace the origins and nature of narrative criticism, demonstrate the historical contingency of the conceptions of literary meaning and value, examine the consequences of historical contingency for practical analysis, and show the inescapable ideological nature of the biblical text and how narrative-critical readings of the Gospels have necessarily interpreted and evaluated the narratives’ values and beliefs and responded to them with action in the present. Having established the indissoluble relationship between textual features and ideology in the Gospel texts, part 2 examines the nature of this relationship. The three chapters in this section explicate the complex relationship among text, history, and ideology by means of practical analysis under the three classical loci of narrative theory, namely narrative rhetoric, characterization, and plot. In light of the demonstration in the first two parts of the book that the formal features of the Gospels texts are not to be dissociated from their ideological and historically particular cultural aspects, part 3 relocates poetics as part of a broader interpretive framework.

The chapter on the history and origins of narrative criticism yields not only an informative history lesson, but also several significant insights. On the one hand, Merenlahti argues that literary interpretation of the Gospels may as easily yield unity as diversity and fragmentariness. Moreover, both unity and fragmentariness as literary values are particular and historical, not universal and timeless. On the other hand, he shows that both the historical standard of the evangelists’ time and the evangelists’ own aims required a degree of unity. Furthermore, the evangelists were not primarily engaging in an aesthetic enterprise but were promoting “an ideologically viable interpretation of an essentially historical message that was to be preserved in an authentic form” (p. 31). One consequence for practical analysis is that interpretation must take into account the historical particularity of the text and the reader. Chapter 3 “Why do Modern Readers value Mark?” is a particularly powerful example of the historically conditioned nature of the reception and (re)evaluation of a text. In addition, chapter 4 helpfully illustrates that the implied readers of the Gospels are thoroughly ideological

beings, and thus narrative criticism's desire to assume the implied reader's position and point of view leads it back to ideology. Another noteworthy conclusion from its analysis of the implied reader of the Gospels and Acts is that "Christian social experience and identity become necessary preconditions for understanding the narrative" (p. 54). I find the above points persuasive and helpful, though to differing degrees.

The practical analysis of the relationship between textual features and ideology in the Gospels in Part 2 is also enlightening. Chapter 5 provides helpful categories for understanding and interpreting "gaps" (omissions of relevant information), "blanks" (omissions of irrelevant information), intentional and unintentional ambiguities, and the limits on ambiguity imposed by the ideological aims of the Gospel. Just as significant is the insight that the marriage of poetics and ideology is the source of both unity and diversity in the Gospel narrative. Ideology, since it holds diverse elements and patterns together and turns narrative into a commentary, simultaneously provides unity and coherence as well as fragmentation and dissonance to the narrative. The analysis of characterization in chapter 6 is also useful. The degree to which characters stand out as individual personalities or mere functional agents depends on how "each character relates to the ideology of each gospel and to the ideology of its readers" (p. 97). Chapter 7 likewise sheds some light on the plot of the Gospels. All follow a pattern of concealment and disclosure, moving towards the final recognition of the initially incomprehensible identity of Jesus, with differing emphasis on concealment or disclosure in each individual Gospel narrative (p. 109).

Part 3, while providing an insightful evaluation of current interest in integrated approaches (in particular D. Rhoads's "Narrative Criticism: Practices and Prospects"; K. Syreeni's model of three worlds; and V. Robbins's socio-rhetorical approach), advances some proposals that are more debatable in my opinion. As Merenlahti argues, Syreeni's and Robbins's models do imply a paradigm shift towards a broader integration of text, history, and ideology—whether or not they are judged successful as formulations of a new paradigm. While I agree that the text itself is rooted in a particular space and time with its material, social, and cultural conditions and that interpretation is a secondary description and assessment that is itself historically conditioned, it does not seem to follow that "[a]t some fundamental level, descriptive models are not so much descriptive as they are metaphoric" (p. 130). While Merenlahti explicitly rejects radical skepticism, I fail to see the basis upon which he is able to affirm that interpretive models are not empty of all descriptive power. Moreover, it seems dubious to apply psychoanalytic criticism as instrumental metaphors when they are considered deliberate interpretive fictions that are nothing else but metaphoric.

In final analysis, *Poetics for the Gospels? Rethinking Narrative Criticism* is an informative and thought-provoking volume that will repay careful study and reflection. Models of textual interpretation that are more comprehensive and better-informed hermeneutically (including better awareness of the extent to which the interpreter's response to the text is historically conditioned) are needed to explicate better the intricate tapestries of text, history, and ideology/theology that are the Gospel narratives. Whether or not one agrees with his proposals, Merenlahti is a worthy dialogue partner, not only for those interested in the future and prospects of narrative criticism but also for anyone broadly concerned about the theory and method of interpretation.

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Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel. By Richard Beaton. SNTSMS 123. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, xv + 242 pp., \$60.00.

This recent study, a revision of the author's doctoral dissertation (supervised by Ivor H. Jones and submitted to the University of Cambridge in 2002) is an in-depth investigation of Matthew's use of Isa 42:1–4 in Matt 12:18–21. In his introduction (chap. 1), Beaton presents his thesis: "the image of the servant presented through Matthew's anomalous text-form is central to his overall portrayal of Jesus and, ultimately, to his profound christology" (p. 4). He also discusses six problems with the quotation (the unusual text form; the relation between the adjusted text form and its context in Matthew; the superfluous material in the quotation; the thematic diversity of the Matthean context [Matthew 11–13]; the pre-Christian messianic interpretation of the Isaiah passage; and the rhetorical function of the quotation). He offers several guiding presuppositions and assumptions of his study (Matthew was Jewish and wrote for a Jewish audience; knew some Hebrew; wrote his Gospel between AD 70 and 85; and had access to Mark's Gospel, M, and Q), a limitation for his study (he does not interact with OT scholarship on the "servant songs" of Isaiah), his method (he will attempt to establish Matthew's OT textual source; investigate the relation between quotation and Matthean context; survey uses of the Isaiah passage in traditions contemporaneous with Matthew; and study the rhetorical impact of the quotation), and his procedure (he discusses the purpose of each of his subsequent chapters).

In chapter 2, Beaton surveys the state of the question concerning Matthew's use of the OT, formula quotations, and "servant of the Lord" terminology. In chapter 3, Beaton "seeks to examine the transmission, translation and usage of Jewish sacred texts in general and, more specifically, Isa 42.1–4, in the hope of placing Matthew's usage of Isaiah within a historical context" (p. 45). With regard to Jewish exegesis, he notes the difficulty with this Matthean quotation from Isaiah, namely "that commentary concerning the citation never occurs, denying identification of authorial intent and understood meaning" (p. 48). He also says, "Whether he [Matthew] has been faithful to the prior context and employed the text in a manner congruent with its historical usage is debatable" (p. 48). However, this is a debate into which Beaton unfortunately does not wish to venture. In discussing "Exegesis and the Biblical Text in Second Temple Judaism," Beaton surveys the current state of OT textual criticism and notes that "biblical texts in early Judaism were characterized by greater fluidity and variety than previously thought" (p. 52). Turning specifically to the textual state of the book of Isaiah, Beaton surveys LXX Isaiah and the Qumran texts of Isaiah and concludes, "the number of Isaiah traditions in existence in Palestine prior to the period of the penning of the New Testament is augmented, rendering Matthew's unique text of Isaiah less conspicuous than is often otherwise understood" (p. 57). Halfway through his chapter, he draws two larger conclusions: "First, the overview of text-forms securely places the penning of Matthew during a period of textual fluidity and variety. Second, the contention that exegetical decisions were incorporated into texts, even into those that were considered sacred, seems well founded" (pp. 60–61). Beaton then turns to an examination of early Jewish usage of Isa 42:1–4 (pp. 64–84). He discusses LXX ("To summarize, the LXX's adjustments to the MT present the reader with a heightened particularism that extols YHWH's support for Israel and its mission to the nations" [p. 68]) and non-messianic but individualistic readings, primarily in the Qumran *Hodayot* and other early Jewish texts. After looking at *1 Enoch* and its use of the title "Elect One," Beaton concludes, "one may consider the text messianic in pre-Christian times" (p. 78). After an examination of the Targums, he concludes, "Thus, the Targum on Isa. 42.1–4 presents an individual, probably a messianic figure, who proclaims the word of God to the peoples . . ."

(p. 82) and “the conclusion that the Targums appear to express a messianic understanding of the text that is pre-Christian appears to be sustainable” (p. 83).

In chapter 4, Beaton examines the text form of three other formula quotations from Isaiah in Matthew’s Gospel (Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:23; Isa 8:23b-9:1 in Matt 4:15–16; and Isa 53:4a in Matt 8:17) and studies “the relationship of the citation to context and meaning.” He concludes that Matthew’s text form “reflects the fluidity and variety that characterized this era” (p. 119). Concerning context and meaning, Beaton suggests that these other quotations demonstrate that a formula quotation can function at two levels: the narrative level and a higher theological level that moves the reader to view “Jesus’ person and ministry within the broader message of the Gospel” (p. 120).

Also in chapter 4, Beaton studies the text form of the Isa 42:1–4 quotation and its role in the context of Matthew 11–13. He concludes that “Matthew’s unique text-form, it seems, demonstrates his use of either the Hebrew, or more likely a Greek (or Aramaic) text conformed to the Hebrew, which he then altered in the light of his own concerns” (p. 141). Beaton analyzes these “alterations” to find other aspects of Matthew’s theological emphases, which include the servant’s mission of proclamation, the role of justice in his ministry, and the universal appeal to the “nations.” These themes reverberate throughout the context of chapters 11–13, says Beaton, in terms of Jesus’ messianic secrecy (proclamation), his controversy with the legalistic Pharisees (justice), and Matthew’s emphasis on healing (nations). In chapter 5, Beaton explores the often contradictory portrayal of Jesus as, on the one hand, a humble, low profile servant, and, on the other, a powerful, public, regal figure. He attempts to show how both conceptions are present in Matthew’s Christology without contradiction. In his conclusion, Beaton summarizes his main conclusions and suggests further areas of research on the rhetorical function of OT quotations in NT narratives.

Beaton’s work demonstrates how important a proper understanding of OT quotations can be to NT interpretation. I was disappointed, however, that Beaton spent little time on the OT context and theological message of the passage quoted by Matthew.

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The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples. By Jeannine K. Brown. Academia Biblica 9. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002, xii + 171 pp., \$29.95 paper.

This is a slightly revised version of a doctoral dissertation completed in 2001 under the supervision of Professor Arland Hultgren at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. It is a careful and helpful study of the Matthean disciples using, as the title indicates, a narrative-literary analysis of the portrayal and function of the disciples in Matthew’s Gospel.

The primary thesis of the study is that, although the disciples confess Jesus as Messiah and understand some aspects of his teaching, they are not characterized as exemplary of discipleship. Rather, since they consistently misunderstand Jesus’ mission and message of the kingdom (especially in 16:21–20:28) on account of their inappropriate preoccupation with their own status within the coming kingdom, they cannot fully understand Jesus’ teaching on the nature of true discipleship and are characterized by “little faith” in regard to Jesus’ ability to act in concert with his true identity. Therefore, since the Matthean disciples misunderstand and have “little faith,” they function at times to illuminate not only a positive example of discipleship but also at times a nega-

tive example of (“a foil to”) discipleship to the reader. Additionally, the portrayal of the disciples (both positively and negatively) must be seen within the light cast by Matthew’s use of other characters as examples of discipleship and of Jesus himself as a model of it (pp. 36–37).

The impetus for the study came from a comparison (chap. 1) of earlier redaction-critical (Gerhard Barth, Ulrich Luz, Mark Sheridan, Robert Gundry, Andries van Aarde, and Andrew Trotter) and comparative-critical (Michael Wilkins; Brown does not highlight the stated distinction) analyses of the disciples in Matthew with more recent literary-critical analyses of the disciples. The former tend to maintain that Matthew portrays the disciples as people of “little faith” (in contrast to “no faith”; cf. 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20), who at the same time come to understand Jesus’ identity and mission (e.g. 13:36; 15:15). Further, these earlier analyses tend to identify the purpose for Matthew’s portrayal of the disciples within his Gospel in similar ways. Brown explains this purpose in terms of “function” and utilizes a three-tiered model drawn from Kari Syreeni’s schematic (“Separation and Identity: Aspects of the Symbolic World of Matt 6:1–18,” *NTS* 40 [1994] 523): the textual world of Matthew’s story, the concrete world of Matthew’s community, and the symbolic world of Matthew’s concept of discipleship. Brown observes that redaction/comparative-critical analyses generally claim that the disciples’ understanding functions in the textual world Christologically to highlight Jesus’ status as an effective teacher, that the disciples themselves function in the story as a bridge to the concrete world of Matthew’s community, which can identify with the disciples, and that the disciples also function on several levels as discipleship examples in the symbolic world.

Brown’s evaluation of literary-critical analyses (Jack Kingsbury, Richard Edwards, Warren Carter, David Howell, Donald Verseput) of the Matthean disciples finds that they mostly agree that the disciples are characterized by “little faith.” Yet conversely, they depart from the earlier studies by generally agreeing that Matthew characterizes the disciples as misunderstanding Jesus’ identity and mission, although they disagree as to whether the disciples progress in their understanding as the narrative unfolds to its conclusion. Brown likewise evaluates the function of the disciples in Matthean narrative perspectives by using Syreeni’s three-tiered model. Within the textual world, narrative critics focus on the relation between the disciples and the implied reader, where they either conclude that the implied reader identifies with or maintains a distance from the disciples. As might be expected, Brown finds that the disciples are not transparent for the concrete Matthean community, since most narrative critics argue that the Matthean disciples cannot be equated with the implied reader. There is little consensus among narrative critics regarding Matthew’s symbolic view of discipleship, with some equating Matthew’s characterization of the disciples with discipleship and others understanding their portrayal to be one part of a positive and negative example of discipleship.

In a helpful, passage by passage analysis (chap. 3), Brown demonstrates that the disciples do display characteristics of non-understanding as the narrative of 16:21–20:28 unfolds. Jesus’ debriefings of the disciples highlight their continual non-understanding but also assure the reader that his continual presence and teaching will be with the community to bring them into a more authentic discipleship. This analysis of the characterization of the Matthean disciples demonstrates their incomprehension but on the narrative level also shows how their incomprehension is a foil for the reader, who can come to understand the true nature of discipleship.

Brown goes further to show the connection between the disciples’ portrayal in 16:21–20:28 within the context of Matthew’s overall Gospel narrative (chap. 4). This continues to press the point that on the narrative level the disciples persist with littleness of faith and incomprehension, and progress little, if any, throughout the Gospel

toward understanding Jesus' identity and mission. It is here that Brown's contribution is most telling as it advances from earlier redaction and comparative studies: it establishes the difficulty of Jesus' disciples in believing and understanding.

The last major part of this study summarizes the function of the Matthean disciples (chap. 5), where Brown reiterates that on the textual level the disciples' more negative portrayal functions as a foil to highlight Jesus' teaching and authority, as well as his effective presence. On the concrete level of the community, Brown rightly emphasizes that the first Gospel is not a communication *about* Matthew's audience but a communication *to* his audience: ". . . what Matthew offers is a *portrait* of discipleship rather than a *window* into the community behind the gospel" (p. 134). On the symbolic level, the negative aspects of the disciples' portrayal form a backdrop against which the ideal of discipleship shines through Jesus' teachings, the disciples' positive characteristics, various exemplary minor characters, and the model of Jesus himself in words and actions.

Brown's attempt to go beyond earlier redaction/comparative-critical analyses of the Matthean disciples is largely successful. She demonstrates the added value that a careful, nuanced use of narrative analysis brings to the exegetical process, primarily because of the broadened emphasis upon the development of themes narratologically throughout the Gospel as a whole, not just focusing upon specific sections of the Gospel or upon differences between Matthew and the other synoptics or upon the use of limited terms. Brown hints at further directions that could be even more wholistic (chap. 6), which might be expanded beyond what she suggests. Specifically, this narrative kind of analysis leaves a flat reading of the disciples. She acknowledges that narrative criticism's methodological commitment to bracketing out historical issues can lead to a tendency to ignore dialogue with methods that employ historical inquiry (p. 150). Unfortunately, that is largely the case with her own study. Syreeni's three-tiered model that Brown employs is helpful but could be modified to emphasize that the text is also a window (to use the old metaphor) to the historical disciples, in order to help understand what accounted for their condition historically. That would provide an additional perspective about what Matthew wanted to communicate *to*, as Brown rightly contends, the concrete world of his community, which in turn would lead to a richer understanding of the symbolic level that illuminates the conceptual nature of discipleship. Brown provides an excellent narrative perspective that moves forward the study of the Matthean disciples and rightly suggests that future study can go beyond a solely narrative approach.

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The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary. By Francis J. Moloney. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002, xviii + 398 pp., \$29.95.

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., professor of New Testament and recently appointed Dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., has completed what will be for many a useful resource for understanding Mark's Gospel. Moloney's exegetical concern is to "trace literary and theological connections across the Gospel" (p. 21). These literary and theological threads point to a reading of the Gospel that encourages its reader (whether first century or twenty-first century) to "hope in the midst of ambiguity and failure" (p. 24).

The commentary is presented in typical modern biblical commentary format. The introduction lasts for twenty-four pages. In comparison to other recent commentaries

this is brief, but Moloney succinctly presents the necessary background information one needs to better understand his approach to reading Mark's Gospel. Moloney begins by offering a concise but valuable review of the previous century of Markan scholarship, and in doing this he defends his rationale for why a narrative reading of the text is most faithful to Mark's purpose in writing. While skeptical of the value of redaction criticism (p. 8), Moloney will regularly make reference to items being "Markan" or "pre-Markan." "As the commentary will show, Mark may have edited sources, but he is to be regarded as a creative author in the best sense" (p. 12, n. 44; e.g. p. 86). An example of the value of a literary/narrative approach is seen in the intertextual relationships between 14:43–52, 7:1–13, and 11:15–19 (pp. 297–98). Introductory matters continue with discussions of authorship, location, and date. Concerning authorship Moloney states, "We have no cause not to refer to the book as the Gospel of Mark, and to its author as 'Mark'" (p. 12). He accepts Markan priority to the synoptic question and concludes that the Gospel was written shortly after 70 CE (p. 14), to an audience in "southern Syria" (p. 15).

Given Moloney's narrative-critical concerns, the bulk of the introduction is devoted to the issues of plot and the literary shape of the Gospel. Moloney identifies four sections to the Gospel. Mark 1:1–13 serves as a prologue. Mark 1:14–8:30 focuses on the question, "Who is Jesus?" Mark 8:31–15:47 expands the understanding of Jesus to that of a suffering and vindicated Son of Man, who is both Christ and Son of God. The final section, the epilogue, is Mark 16:1–8. This division of the Gospel is understood as the structure upon which the author tells the story of Jesus, a narrative that is also the story of human failure: the apparent failure of Jesus, the failure of the disciples, and the failure of Israel (p. 22). However, while there is much failure Jesus "has led the way into the only enduring success story: resurrection" (p. 22). "Much of this gospel's story is about Jesus' attempts to draw other people into a following of this way—a loss of self in the cross, a service and a receptivity that produces life" (p. 22).

The remarks on the text of the Gospel are written in a fairly easy-to-read narrative, rather than a phrase-by-phrase or word-by-word analysis. This approach seems most appropriate given the literary/narrative concerns of Moloney. Generally speaking, not more than a couple of pages are devoted to any single pericope or episode in the Gospel. While there is regular use of the Greek text (untranslated), most occurrences of Greek are translated. Such thoughtfulness may expand the usefulness of the commentary to those who are not "biblical scholars." However, untranslated foreign language phrases (e.g. *vaticinium ex eventu* or *ipsissima verba Jesu*) may be discouraging to those readers unfamiliar with such phrases.

There are a few places where I would question Moloney's reading of Mark's Gospel. Most of them have to do with the rejection of the historicity of episodes or details within episodes or the theologizing of narrative detail. Examples include the temple cleansing (which is said to "strain all imagination," p. 224), the Mark 13 discourse (p. 251, n. 182), Mark 14:12 (p. 283), and flight of the naked man (pp. 299–300).

In his opening comments on Mark 2:1–12, Moloney rightly identifies a link between this episode and the prior episode of the cure of the leper (1:40–45). However, Moloney goes on to say that there are logical and chronological tensions between the two scenes. He cites two examples. "In 1:45 the narrator said that Jesus could not go about openly in the towns, but that is exactly what he does in 2:1" (p. 60). However, the text of 2:1 does not suggest that Jesus is going around openly in Capernaum. He is at home, minding his own business, and "it was heard that he was home" with the result that and a large crowd gathers. There is nothing in the text to suggest that Jesus' return was with any fanfare. It seems that the point of 1:45 and what is implied in 2:1 by the report of him being home is that Jesus did not do things to draw attention to himself. Moloney's second example of an alleged tension between chapters 1 and 2 is that 1:39 suggests an extended itinerary while 2:1 suggests "a very brief time." The validity of this argument depends upon the word "all" in 1:39 and the "several days" of 2:1.

Overall, I find Moloney's thoughts and comments about Mark's Gospel insightful, helpful, and valuable. Even though there are differences in opinion about questions of historicity, these do not greatly interfere with the question of what Mark was trying to accomplish with his Gospel. Moloney rightly sees the importance of discipleship being determined by Christology (p. 193, n. 102), but perhaps at times disappointedly downplays the Christological thought for the discipleship focus (e.g. Mark 8:22–26). Two brief excursions are given on the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant (pp. 212–13). Finally, unlike other recent commentaries on Mark, Moloney includes twelve pages on Mark 16:9–20, albeit only at the request of his editors (p. 355, n. 1). I trust that Moloney's contribution to Markan studies will be well received by those seeking to understand and appreciate Mark's story of Jesus.

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The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts. By Guy D. Nave, Jr. Academia Biblica 4. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002, viii + 241 pp., \$32.95 paper.

This short volume by Guy D. Nave, Jr.—Assistant Professor of Religion at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa—presents his 2000 Yale dissertation in one of the early installments in the recently reorganized Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series (SBLDS), renamed as Academia Biblica. The book is laid out in four chapters: (1) History of Research regarding New Testament Repentance (pp. 1–6); (2) Repentance within the Narrative Structure of Luke-Acts (pp. 7–38); (3) The Meaning of Repentance (pp. 39–144); and (4) The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts (pp. 145–224). An appendix charts the occurrences of the *boulh*/ family of words in Luke-Acts (Table 1), select pro- compounds in Acts (Table 2), and the NT occurrences of *μετανοέω* and *μετανοοία* (Table 3). Nave categorizes his bibliography (pp. 224–41) by reference works, ancient sources, and secondary literature.

Chapter 1 succinctly reveals the problem Nave wants to address (and makes his study reminiscent of Beno Przybylski's treatment of "righteousness" in Matthew). The failure of scholarly investigations of repentance in the NT, says Nave, is that most attempt to find *the* meaning of repentance rather than specific authorial nuances. Especially as embodied in *μετανοέω* and its cognate, "Repentance is without question a fundamental aspect of Luke-Acts" (p. 3), having a prominence lacking in the rest of the NT, except for the book of Revelation. Despite his attention to the vocabulary, Nave does not want his work to be mere philological study; rather, he wants to go beyond Jon Nelson Bailey's 1993 Notre Dame dissertation (*Repentance in Luke-Acts*) and study the varying imagery and the contextual design for repentance in the Luke-Acts narrative, particularly its progressive development in the narrative compared to the historical world of Luke's original audience. Thus, Nave uses primarily redaction- and narrative-critical methodologies with some sociological analysis to get at the narrative world of Luke-Acts.

Chapter 2 launches into the narrative function of repentance in Luke-Acts by way of studying the intentions of narrative structure in literature in general. With an appropriate nod to the New Criticism, Nave stresses that the *what* of a narrative (its characters and events) and its *way* (the discourse by which it is expressed) must serve in discovering the *why* of the narrative (the author's reason[s] for writing). While background studies are helpful and important, "it is the narrative itself that reveals the *why* of the narrative" (p. 11). Nave strives to ascertain the *why* of the Luke-Acts narrative

before addressing how repentance serves that purpose. The specific purpose for Luke-Acts identified by Nave (following many others) is the divine plan of salvation at work in history (pp. 25–29), which is evidenced by Luke’s vocabulary (pp. 13–18) and literary devices (pp. 18–24). Repentance plays a key role in God’s plan of salvation. “Since in Luke-Acts the universal saving purpose of God is the plan of God, repentance must also be understood as part of that plan. Repentance is commanded of all people because repentance is that which secures the salvation of God in the lives of all people” (p. 36). Jesus came to call sinners to repentance (Luke 5:32), to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10), so that repentance can be preached to all nations (Luke 24:46–47), and it is God who gives repentance to both Israel (Acts 5:31) and to Gentiles (Acts 11:18); indeed, all are to repent (Acts 17:30).

This focus on the function of repentance in Luke-Acts begs the question of the definition of repentance, which Nave explores in Chapter 3, particularly the uses of μετανοέω and μετάνοια. Against the tendencies of other scholars, he argues (quite well and with sufficient examples) that the NT use of these terms (however uniquely applied to Christianity) does, in fact, have its roots in the classical and non-Christian Hellenistic Greek usage (pp. 40–70). Even in the classical and non-Christian understanding, repentance could be a sign of wisdom, an occasion for rejoicing, and a prerequisite to reconciliation between estranged parties.

In surveying the Hellenistic Jewish literature (pp. 70–118), Nave points out that, contrary to the general expectation, μετανοέω and μετάνοια are never used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew terms with the root נָחַ (“to turn”). “Turning” accompanies, or is part of, repentance but the emphasis was on the remorse and regret with תַּשׁוּבָה as the root translated by the μετανοέω terms.

Finally, in its broader NT usage, Nave summarizes that “repentance entails a change in thinking and behavior by people who realize that their present way of think [*sic*] and behaving is displeasing to God” (p. 136). The other early Christian literature reflects this same understanding (pp. 119–44). Thus, Nave’s earlier complaint that modern scholars find too much unity in the NT regarding repentance is not about its definition *per se*, but about the usage of repentance in the particular authorial corpuses (p. 145).

Chapter 4 bears the title of the whole volume. In Luke-Acts, repentance functions “to help fulfill God’s plan of universal salvation and to help establish a community embracing all people” (p. 145). In the preaching of John the Baptist, of Jesus, and of the disciples, Luke makes clear that repentance is available to all people—Jew and Gentile—and that repentance requires formerly adversarial persons to live in harmonious community with God’s people.

Rather than a conceptual study of repentance in Luke-Acts, this work is largely a word study, which has some notable shortcomings in methodology and in conclusions. As to his methodology, certainly μετανοέω and μετάνοια are not the only ways to access and assess the concept of repentance. Nave’s argument about the role and function of repentance in Luke-Acts might have become more secure had he examined the concept of repentance via other avenues as well. He does, in fact, briefly incorporate other approaches in handling the accounts of Paul’s Damascus road experience and the Peter/Cornelius episode as accounts of repentance even though the μετανοέω terms are not used there (pp. 208–214). Such argumentation could be expanded. Similarly, in his treatment of the plan of God, a more careful analysis of the θέλω terms in Luke-Acts, especially where they function synonymously with the βουλή words, could strengthen the argument (p. 15).

As to Nave’s conclusions, some have a suspicious overstatement flavor about them—something that Nave himself at times seems to qualify. One serious qualification is to his argument that μετανοέω and μετάνοια are never used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew terms with the root נָחַ. In his closing remarks on that section (p. 118 and

n. 380), Nave notes that Jewish authors began to move their emphasis from the remorse element to the change in thinking and behaving element and that later Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible did use μετανοέω to translate the Hebrew terms with the root נח.

While avoiding the worst of it, Nave does come close to the dangers of illegitimate totality transfer in his vocabulary survey (e.g. pp. 69–70 and 85). These dangers could have been better avoided had he adopted the language of semantic domains rather than speaking in such ways that the reader might assume that μετανοέω (and μετάνοια) always means the same thing everywhere. To his credit, at times Nave does use more careful wording in his conclusions (e.g. regarding Philo's various usages of these terms, p. 95).

Nave also seems to exhibit confusion in some of his theological conclusions. In particular, he says several times that lack of repentance *and not sin* is the reason for God's condemnation of a person (e.g. pp. 178 and 222). Since he argues that sin is what makes repentance necessary to avoid condemnation, it seems that Nave has constructed a false disjunction to say that sin is not the reason for condemnation. Similarly, he presses for a strained distinction between Jewish and Gentile repentance: Jewish repentance requires a change in thinking about Jesus while Gentile repentance is merely a new belief in Jesus (p. 224). However, is not the Gentile's new belief in Jesus some kind of a change in thinking about Jesus and is not the Jew's change in thinking about Jesus a new belief in Jesus?

Despite these few shortcomings, Nave's book is both a fine work in biblical scholarship (particularly in Luke-Acts studies) and an excellent model of dissertation scholarship. As such, Nave's work is a fitting volume for the Academia Biblica series and for the desks of would-be dissertation writers and scholars of NT studies.

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Jacob and the Prodigal: How Jesus Retold Israel's Story. By Kenneth E. Bailey. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003, 232 pp., \$17.00 paper.

Serious students of the parables of Jesus should be acquainted with the previous work of Kenneth Bailey on the Lukan parables in general, and on Luke 15 in particular. Bailey's two major books, *Poet and Peasant* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) and *Through Peasant Eyes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) demanded a hearing as works from a top-rate scholar who had extensive experience living in a rural Middle Eastern setting. (These books are now available in a single volume edition from Eerdmans.) Bailey's earlier thrust had been that many details in the Lukan parables that puzzle twentieth-century Western scholars were self-evident to members of rural Middle Eastern culture. This point was based on the premise that while thousands of years have passed since the time of Jesus, the patriarchal social milieu of this part of the world has changed little, at least in the countryside. Bailey's work was defined further with the publication of *Finding the Lost* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), which posited extensive connections between Luke 15 and Psalm 23.

With his latest book, *Jacob and the Prodigal*, Bailey has taken his work in a new direction. While building on the conclusions from his previous work, Bailey now states, ". . . my intention [is] to examine carefully the way in which Jesus takes the great saga of Jacob and reflects it in a new story composed with himself at its center" (p. 13). What follows is an original exploration of significant relationships between the parable of the

prodigal and several OT themes, primarily the Jacob cycle as found in Genesis 27–36. Bailey believes that the prodigal parable is a creative retelling of the Jacob story by Jesus. This allows Jesus to cast his opponents in a harshly unfavorable light. As Bailey comments, “. . . if Jesus is retelling the Jacob saga, in that story the older son is Esau (that is Edom). It then follows that *Jesus’ audience*, if it rejects sinners, *becomes Esau* and thus *Edom*” (p. 192). Jesus’ critics, therefore, become bad guys like Esau.

Those who wade through this study will be rewarded with many good things. Bailey certainly sharpens our understanding of the cultural background of Luke 15, particularly the prodigal parable. His experience and research allow him to bring insights to the table that are otherwise unavailable to the vast majority of Christian scholars. Bailey also gives a strong exposition of the relationship between these parables and Jesus’ controversy with his Jewish opponents. Against the Luke 15 backdrop of Jesus being criticized for eating with notorious sinners, Bailey finds Jesus making this parabolic point: “Jesus does not eat with sinners to *celebrate their sin*. He does so to *celebrate his grace*” (p. 182). Bailey has made a valuable contribution by introducing material from several Middle Eastern Christian scholars, both ancient and recent. Furthermore, this book may become part of the current discussion in Jesus studies. Bailey is well informed about such important writers as James D. G. Dunn, and especially N. T. Wright.

There are, however, some substantial weaknesses with this book that should not be overlooked. While I disagree with Bailey on numerous small matters of interpretation, I will limit my discussion to three major problems with the study.

First, the Jacob-prodigal parallels are interesting, but not convincing. There are far too many incongruities that are not adequately explained. For example, the prodigal parable lacks any parallel to Jacob’s mother, Rebecca. Bailey’s explanation is that the prodigal’s father acts as a “motherly father” (p. 146), thus incorporating the mother figure into his character. But Rebecca is not portrayed in a flattering light in Genesis. She is a scheming trickster who facilitates Jacob in his dishonest pursuits. Bailey is probably correct in concluding that some images of the prodigal parable are drawn from the Jacob cycle, but allusions and the use of familiar language do not demand that we understand the parable as a retelling of the Jacob story.

Second, Bailey promotes theories of Jesus’ understanding of “sin” and “repentance” (based on his study of Luke 15) that are both idiosyncratic and unpersuasive. For Bailey, “sin” is “. . . desiring the death of God and wanting to take his gifts without reference to the giver” (p. 137). This is based on the assumption that in Middle Eastern culture to ask for an early inheritance would have the effect of telling the father, “I wish you were dead.” Yet nowhere in the parable does the prodigal seem to want his father dead. There is quite a jump from a selfish desire to get one’s hands on an inheritance inappropriately to a cry for the father’s death. These two are not necessarily connected.

Bailey states many times that Jesus teaches, “. . . repentance equals acceptance of being found” (p. 80). In all three Luke 15 parables, a lost one is found and brought back. This argument is based on several novel interpretations of various texts. For example, Bailey believes that the lost sheep parable is based on Psalm 23 and that the phrase “restores my soul” should be translated “returns me” (p. 104). Furthermore, Bailey argues that the prodigal’s return to the father is nothing more than a manipulative scheme without any true repentance. It is not until the father greets the prodigal with love and compassion (i.e. “finds him”) that the prodigal truly repents. These parables, however, serve as an inadequate model for a biblical understanding of repentance, for that is not their purpose. To conclude with Bailey that repentance is “being found by God” flies in the face of many other texts and the basic meaning of NT words used to indicate repentance.

Third, and most damaging, is that Bailey seems to miss the interpretive task of trying to understand how Luke uses these parables to help him tell his story about Jesus.

Parables are narratives within a larger narrative, and Luke is the master of the overall narrative. Bailey admits “the Gentile church did not see this deep interconnectedness with the story of Jacob” (p. 214). Apparently, Luke did not either, for he has little use for the historical Jacob. (Notice that Stephen’s rehearsal of the history of Israel in Acts 7 does not mention the flight of Jacob from Esau.) Was the audience of Luke’s Gospel a rural Middle Eastern villager for whom some of Bailey’s points would be self-evident? Or was it the Gentile church trying to understand its Jewish roots?

Likewise, Bailey seems to misunderstand the purpose of the Jacob/Esau narratives in Genesis. They are not meant to serve as a paradigm for exile and return. They serve as a warning against marrying “foreign wives” (as Esau did) and as an explanation of the animosity between Israel and Edom (which plays an important role in the Exodus narrative). It is very difficult to believe that Jesus or his Jewish contemporaries would have seen Jacob’s flight/return as the center of their national story of identity.

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John 12–21. By Gerald L. Borchert. NAC 25B. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002, 398 pp., \$29.99.

The first volume of this two-volume commentary on the Fourth Gospel appeared in 1996 by the same author (*John 1–11*, NAC 25A). Readers familiar with the first volume are well aware of Borchert’s detailed emphases on the introductory matters of the Gospel (97 pages), especially on the “historical milieu” in which the Gospel was written. In contrast to previous interpretations that assigned the philosophical influence of the Fourth Gospel to hellenistic or gnostic thought, Borchert joins the consensus of recent Johannine scholarship that now acknowledges the influence of the Jewish or Hebraic background as being the primary theological antecedent of the evangelist. Borchert firmly notes that “the place to begin a reflection on the milieu of the Fourth Gospel is with the Old Testament” (p. 61). Thus one should not be surprised to find Borchert trace the earthly ministry of Jesus with fulfillment or replacement motifs throughout the Gospel.

Readers familiar with Borchert’s first volume are also well aware of his emphasis on the literary structure of the Gospel as one of the keys to understanding the message of the book. Instead of following the trend of modern commentators by dividing the Gospel into two major sections, i.e. the “Book of Signs” (chaps. 2–12) and “Book of Glory/Passion” (chaps. 13–20) as per Brown and Dodd, Borchert divides the book by three major cycles bracketed by chapter 1 as the introductory chapter and the Passion and Resurrection chapters at the end of the Gospel. He divides the book into the Cana Cycle (2:1–4:54), the Festival Cycle (5:1–11:57), and the Farewell Cycle (13:1–17:26).

Furthermore, Borchert’s independent structuring of the Gospel is also demonstrated in his literary placement of chapter 12, which he designates as the “Centerpiece of the Gospel: The Preparation of the Passover Lamb for Glorification (12:1–50).” He sees chapter 12 as a literary link between two major sections of the Gospel rather than as the concluding chapter of the first major section.

Following chapter 12, which Borchert designates as the centerpiece of the Gospel, the major bulk of his second volume is devoted to the farewell cycle (chaps. 13–17), followed by the passion and resurrection accounts (chaps. 18–21). Borchert devotes 140 pages (pp. 71–211) of the second volume to the farewell cycle alone. Although some scholars have designated this section as the “Farewell Discourse,” Borchert correctly

points out that this section contains far more than discourse material. His emphasis on the literary structure of these five chapters is similar to a chiasm that climaxes in chapter 15, although he highlights the same point by drawing what he calls a "bull's-eye" or "target." According to Borchert, "the center of the bull's-eye would be the *Mashal* of the Vine and the Branches with its emphasis on abiding or remaining in the Vine and its reminder of the importance of love in the life of discipleship (15:1–17)." He further adds, "This theme of love in the core of the bull's-eye is also a crucial aspect of the outer ring since it is introduced in chap. 13 and is reasserted in the final petition of the prayer (17:25–26)."

Borchert's ability to handle difficult passages in a balanced manner is demonstrated in his exegesis of the seemingly difficult statements of Jesus in 14:1–3. Sayings such as "my Father's house" and the promise of Jesus' return to take the disciples with Him after his preparatory "going" or departure have been subjects of much discussion with significant eschatological ramifications. From Bultmann's commitment to a Gnostic or Mandaean-like interpretation of Johannine eschatology, to Dodd's realized eschatology, to various forms of futuristic eschatology, Borchert interacts briefly with each but gives his preference carefully, leaving open the option of other views since the text is intentionally ambiguous in the details of "the place." For instance, in contrast to those who prefer not to read any futuristic eschatological idea into Jesus' statements, Borchert concludes by agreeing with L. Morris, who noted that while John does not refer as frequently as most of the other NT writers to the second advent of Jesus, the references, when made, should not be missed. Borchert then summarizes by saying, "Clearly the details of the place are not mentioned, but the idea that Christians will dwell with their Lord is extremely significant" (p. 106).

Another example of Borchert's balanced approach in addressing controversial passages is exemplified in his interpretation of the "I am the true vine and you are the branches" saying of Jesus in the 15:1–8 passage. Borchert refers to this passage as the *mashal* of the vine instead of a parable, since parables are often interpreted to have only one point, which he considers as too restrictive here. Like the above example of the 14:1–3 passage, having interacted briefly with common proposals for the background of the vine imagery, Borchert again points to the OT background as the primary antecedent. While he does emphasize that in the OT the vine is frequently used as a symbol for Israel (e.g. Ps 80:8–9; Isa 27:2–6; Hos 10:1; etc.), he also acknowledges that there is a difference here in that Jesus is the vine, not Israel, and the disciples, the followers of the way of God, are pictured as branches. Furthermore, in addressing the status of the branches that were cut away and whether or not they were originally attached and nourished branches, as some commentators like to focus on, Borchert suggests rather that the key to interpreting this *mashal* does not lie so much in the question of status as it does in the issue of faithfulness. As Borchert concludes, "The *mashal* here sets the fruitfulness of Christians as a test of belonging in the Vine" (p. 140).

On a more general note, the commentary offers several unique features that add to the value of the commentary. First, the second volume of this commentary also begins with an overview of John 12–21, which the author refers to as "the structure and message of the second half of the Gospel." He even includes an overview of John 1–11 for the benefit of readers who may not have read the first volume. In these overviews, Borchert traces the broad argument of the evangelist throughout the main sections of the Gospel. Second, like the first volume, this volume also offers a number of "excurses" throughout the commentary where important theological concepts/issues are discussed at length. Here is a list of some of the excurses in the second volume: "The Son of Man and the Son of God"; "A Note on Glorification"; "Satan and the Prince of the World"; "John's Gospel on the Trinity"; "The 'World' in John and Gnosticism"; "The Political and Judicial Situation in Israel during the Time of Jesus"; "The Site of Golgotha"; "The

Crucifixion of Jesus”; “On Allegorical Interpretations”; “On the Reality of Jesus Christ’s Death.” Third, there are two appendices at the end of the Gospel where Borchert devotes considerable space to highlight significant aspects of the Fourth Gospel. The first appendix is called “A Summary of Johannine Theology,” where the author introduces and comments on several Johannine ideas, including: “About God in John”; “About Human Weakness and Sin”; “About Human Hostility”; “About Believing and Life”; “About Love”; “About the Community”; “About Prayer”; “About the Holy Spirit and the Divine Presence.” The second appendix is called “Characterization in the Gospel of John,” where he introduces the nature of characterization in general and characters in John’s Gospel in particular. Characters introduced in this section are John the Witness, the Beloved Disciple, Judas, Nicodemus, Peter, Thomas, and others. These features offer unique approaches in this commentary that are helpful “bonuses” to students of this Gospel.

With regard to any misgivings about this commentary, it may have been more desirable if these two volumes appeared as a single volume instead of two. Given the relatively small size of the two volumes, it may have been more cost effective and “buyer-friendly.” On a more personal note, the first volume of this commentary was immensely beneficial in the writing of my own doctoral dissertation on the Fourth Gospel, and so the invitation to review the second volume was enthusiastically accepted. This two-volume commentary on the Fourth Gospel definitely belongs on the shelf with other reputable commentaries on the same subject.

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Creation and Christology: A Study on the Johannine Prologue in the Light of Early Jewish Creation Accounts. By Masanobu Endo. WUNT 2/149. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2002, xx + 292 pp., € 54.00 paper.

Johannine scholars, evangelical and otherwise, have long wrestled with determining the theological background for the prologue of the Fourth Gospel. Masanobu Endo’s recently published doctoral dissertation, written under the supervision of Richard Bauckham at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, is another attempt at wrestling with this question.

Endo argues that the prologue of the Fourth Gospel is a Christological interpretation of the Genesis creation account that has remarkable parallels to early Jewish non-canonical exegetical texts. He concludes that there is evidence for an early Jewish stream of exegetical thought that reflected on the meaning and significance of various aspects of the Genesis creation account and that this exegetical tradition was adopted and developed by the writer of the Fourth Gospel. His conclusion, that the Johannine prologue finds its theological background in the Genesis creation account as mediated through an early Jewish exegetical tradition, puts him at odds with those who have argued for a Gnostic theological background (Bultmann *et al.*), those who have argued for a Greek philosophical background similar to what is found in the writings of Philo (Dodd *et al.*), those who have argued for a connection with the concept of personified wisdom as found in the Jewish wisdom literature (MacRae *et al.*), and even those who might argue for a primary connection with the “word of God” concept in Isa 55:9–22.

Creation and Christology contains nine chapters, a bibliography, an excursus, and three indexes (of sources, of names, and of subjects). Particularly helpful is the excursus,

which points out significant differences between Philo's use of *logos* and the Fourth Gospel's use of *logos*.

Chapter 1, the introductory chapter, gives a brief survey of how the *logos* background of John's prologue has been interpreted since Bultmann and gives a brief introduction to some of the early Jewish exegetical traditions of the Genesis creation story. After this survey of the history of interpretation, Endo lays forth his methodology. First, it is his intent to examine some of the early Jewish exegetical texts that reflect upon Genesis 1 with a view toward determining how a first century AD Jewish reader (i.e. the writer of the Fourth Gospel) might have understood the theological function of the creation account. Then, after establishing a first century AD Jewish theological reading of Genesis 1, it is his intent to identify parallels with John 1.

Chapters 2 through 4 analyze a host of early Jewish writings that interpret the Genesis 1 creation story. These Jewish writings are broken down into three categories: narrative accounts of creation (analyzed in chap. 2), descriptive accounts of creation (analyzed in chap. 3) and brief references to creation (analyzed in chap. 4). These three chapters are an impressive interaction with the primary literature. I counted at least forty non-canonical Jewish texts that were analyzed, including Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls literature, and a variety of pseudepigraphical texts.

Chapter 5 summarizes what was discovered in chapters 2 through 4. Endo argues that a common theme in the early Jewish exegetical literature is the notion that God created life out of nothing by means of the spoken word. In speculating on this theme, some of the exegetical literature blends together the concept of "word" and "life." An example that Endo points to is *Jos. Azen.* 12:1–2, in which the word that God spoke is "life." Parallel to the speculation on the "word of God" is speculation on the theological meaning of the creation of "light." In the early Jewish literature, this light motif was often linked to the divine nature of the Torah.

After a structural analysis (chap. 6) and a thematic analysis (chap. 7) of the Fourth Gospel, Endo enters into a discussion of the relation of the prologue to the rest of the Fourth Gospel (chap. 8). Although one may question the relevance of this eighth chapter to his overall thesis, it is an important contribution. Commentators on the Fourth Gospel have long struggled over why the *logos* idea is presented in the prologue and then apparently disappears. Against such a skeptical reading, Endo shows how the themes introduced in the prologue carry forth throughout the rest of the Fourth Gospel.

In chapter 9, titled "Summary and Conclusions," Endo attempts to bring together the data. He concludes that there are some remarkable parallels between what the writer of the Fourth Gospel does and what much of the early Jewish exegetical literature does. The focus of the Fourth Gospel on themes such as "word," "life," and "light" clearly relate to the themes speculated upon in the early Jewish exegetical literature. However, in Endo's view, the writer of the Fourth Gospel modifies some of these themes in light of his understanding of Christ. For example, in the early Jewish exegetical literature, the "light" theme is often connected with the giving of revelation through the Torah. In the Fourth Gospel, however, the "light" theme is connected with the giving of revelation through Jesus Christ.

The major contribution of this book is its presentation of the clear thematic parallels between the prologue of the Fourth Gospel and early Jewish interpretation of the creation account. It reminds us of the inadequacies of Bultmann and his appeal to a Gnostic background for the prologue. However, this book also raises some interesting questions that are left unanswered relative to the relationship between the Jewish speculative literature and the author of the Fourth Gospel. For example, as evangelicals, might we be a bit uncomfortable if Endo is arguing that the prologue of the Fourth Gospel was developed based on this early non-canonical Jewish exegetical literature? Might we be

more comfortable if we say that perhaps the writer of the Fourth Gospel was in some way “taking over” the existing Jewish speculation on the creation story as a foil and bringing it to fullness for a Jewish-Christian audience in light of Jesus Christ? These and other related questions can be pondered as a result of this research.

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Paul: His Life and Teaching. By John McRay. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003, 479 pp., \$32.99.

Dr. John McRay is professor emeritus of New Testament and archaeology at Wheaton College Graduate School. At the publisher's request, he has written *Paul: His Life and Teaching* on the level of a college text. The book is divided into two parts of approximately equal length. The first, “Paul's Life,” consists of 239 pages and covers the apostle's background, conversion, call, commission, and ministry. The second, “Paul's Teaching,” consists of 184 pages and explores nine topics related to the apostle's thought as well as reviewing recent study on Paul in a tenth chapter.

Beginning with biographical statements from Acts and Paul's letters, McRay builds a comprehensive account of Paul's early life, conversion, and call in the first two chapters. The third chapter seeks to construct a chronology of the apostle's ministry. Chapters 4 through 8 work systematically through that ministry from his time in Syria, Arabia, and Cilicia, through his three “missionary journeys,” to his arrest, voyage to Rome, later travels, and death. McRay's archaeological background comes through strongly in these chapters as he supplements the biblical data with historical, geographical, and cultural information and includes photos taken during his travels around the Mediterranean basin.

Topics addressed in the second part of the book include the form, function, and canonicity of Paul's letters, apocalyptic thinking and demonology, the apostle's teaching on the incarnation and atonement, the theology of Ephesians, the faith (fulness) of Christ in Paul's letters, his view of the law, the composition of the churches he planted, eschatology, and the work of the Holy Spirit in Paul's thought. These chapters vary in length and often extend the discussion well beyond Paul's letters to set the topics in the larger context of Scripture. Each of the chapters includes extensive bibliography in the footnotes.

As an introduction to Paul's life, McRay's book should be a welcome addition to the field. He provides a coherent account of the apostle's movements and provides helpful background for them. His discussion of chronology draws heavily on extra-biblical evidence to reach its conclusions. There are no major surprises in the first eight chapters, although McRay suggests that Galatians 2 corresponds to neither the famine visit of Acts 11 nor the conference visit of Acts 15. Instead, it refers to a visit (unrecorded by Luke) which took place sometime between those visits. Such a sequence explains Galatians 2:11–15, in that Peter's actions happened prior to the Jerusalem conference. McRay also suggests that Paul visited Illyricum during the latter portion of his third journey, thus explaining his statement in Romans 15:19 that he had preached the gospel “from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum.”

One shortcoming of the first section is the minimal discussion of the letters to the Galatians, the Thessalonians, and the Philippians. Interestingly, there is no discussion at all of either the date of Paul's letter to the Galatian churches or the location of those churches. With the emphasis on historical, geographical, and cultural background in

the first part of the book, this omission is surprising. Similarly, McRay's discussion of proposals related to the order of the Thessalonian letters gives the impression that he favors the conclusion that 2 Thessalonians was written first but leaves the reader wondering whether that conclusion is, indeed, the one the author reaches. One practice that some readers might find annoying is McRay's insistence on translating the verb *baptizō* as "immerse" with little or no discussion of the decision. This habit is resumed in the discussion of Romans 6 (chap. 16), where he implies that the practices of sprinkling and pouring reflect a denial of the resurrection of the body.

As an introduction to Paul's teaching, McRay's book is uneven. His chapter on eschatology and the work of the Holy Spirit, for example, is first rate. It deals extensively with Paul's letters and offers a provocative interpretation of *to teleion* in 1 Cor 13:10. The chapter on the faith(fulness) of Christ provides an excellent overview of the discussion, up-to-date bibliography on the topic, and a good summary of the evidence in support of the subjective genitive interpretation. The chapter on Ephesians as "the epitome of Paul's thought" includes an intriguing argument related to the specialized use of pronouns in that letter as the key to Paul's theology.

The shortcomings of the second part, however, tend to outweigh the positive aspects. In many instances, large portions of the discussion focus on non-Pauline material. The chapter on atonement, for example, consists of thirty-two pages. Of those pages, the six on sin provide no data at all on Paul's use of the term, eight pages are devoted to atonement theories proposed by systematic theology, and seven pages are devoted to the concept of atonement in the letter to the Hebrews. Similarly, the chapter on the organization and practices of the churches Paul planted devotes one half of the discussion to material which is either extra-biblical or non-Pauline. In many instances the bibliography provided is dated. In general, the most recent bibliographic items tend to be from the mid-1990s—in other words, they are eight to ten years old. The chapters on epistolary analysis and apocalyptic thinking are particularly deficient in this regard, with the most recent items being written in the 1980s.

The reader's view of the usefulness of *Paul: His Life and Teaching* will depend on the expectations brought to the book. If emphasis is placed on Paul's life, this book will provide an informed overview of the topic. If, however, the search is for a balanced introduction to Paul's teaching, there are better options available.

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Paul: The Letter Writer. By M. Luther Stirewalt, Jr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, v + 159 pp., \$22.00 paper.

M. Luther Stirewalt, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Classics and New Testament Greek at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, contends in this brief volume that Paul was a highly literate person who corresponded with geographically scattered groups of people through the adaptation of the official Roman letter and the employment of it in his apostolic correspondence. The book contains four chapters (pp. 1–125), an appendix of examples of official letters (pp. 127–39), a bibliography (pp. 140–54), and a Scripture index (pp. 155–59).

The book opens abruptly with chapter 1, which is devoted to the logistics of ancient Greek letter writing—the means by which the Greek letter was composed, delivered, and received. Stirewalt maintains that in Hellenistic society there was a marked difference between the logistics of personal letter writing and official letter writing. He further

maintains that the logistics of personal letter writing offered no really reliable or consistently available model for Paul's sense of authoritative call. Instead Paul fashioned the logistics for his communication after the examples of official correspondence by adapting official epistolary form and function as a means of discharging his apostolic ministry.

In chapter 2 Stirewalt provides a comparative analysis of the five units that indicate to him that Paul adapted the conventions of official correspondence: (1) identification of the primary sender; (2) naming of the co-senders; (3) multiple address; (4) dual structure of the letter body; and (5) subscriptions. Whereas the sender-identity discloses an official's position in the political order, Paul employs it to present himself as an intermediary in the divine kingdom. Paul employs co-senders not in the official function of a governing body but rather as witnesses to the epistolary event and the message. Paul's employment of multiple address is similar to that of the official who addressed a jurisdiction, with his receptor congregation serving as the corporate group that receives the message and thereby shares the responsibility of compliance or the reward of commendation. Paul freely adapts the dual structure of the letter body typical of official letters (background information and message) in his own correspondence "by incorporating into the necessary background and into the intended messages a wide variety of other units suitable to his purposes" (p. 55). To his subscriptions, which in official letters confirmed the writer's identity and authenticated his message, Paul added personal touches by composing them in a modified epistolary sub-form, consisting of salutation, body, greeting, and farewell.

In chapter 3 Stirewalt extends his discussion on the official letter-form and settings by making general epistolary observations on Paul's seven uncontested letters (1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon). Stirewalt adopts the chronology of J. Becker, who affirms the temporal priority of 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians. Against this chronological backdrop Stirewalt detects a development in Paul's facility in employing the epistolary form. In 1 Thessalonians Stirewalt detects hesitancy as Paul is only beginning to discover the use and force of the independence of oral and written messages in official communication. With 1 Corinthians Paul finds a great deal more confidence in using the written word to carry out his ministry. Stirewalt considers epistolary analysis of 2 Corinthians difficult due to textual problems. In contrast to the direction of current discussion, Stirewalt's analysis of Philippians in the light of official correspondence leads him to conclude that Paul was only indirectly and partially influenced by the conventions of personal friendship letters. Rather, "Paul's modes of expression are those of an official speaking within the context of a community in which he is an authority" (p. 89). Stirewalt detects in Philemon a striking combination of personal/pastoral and recommendation/official styles. Galatians too bears the marks of official correspondence. Paul's adaptation of official forms reaches culmination in Romans, which Stirewalt describes as an example of the letter-essay.

In chapter 4 Stirewalt offers brief reflections on Paul and his apostolic, epistolary ministry. For the conduct of his epistolary ministry Paul combined the forms and functions of personal and official letter writing. Paul wrote letters at times because he was absent from his congregations and at times because he considered writing to be a preferable means of addressing problems in the assemblies. The letter of reconciliation and consolation to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 1-7) provides a fitting paradigm of his apostolic ministry.

Stirewalt provides a wealth of helpful parallel material combined with a number of interesting insights speckled throughout this study. As a result, this is a volume that will be worth consulting on matters related to the conventions of ancient epistolography and for his various insights on seven of Paul's letters. At the same time readers may

not find Stirewalt's broader thesis that Paul adapted the official Roman letter and employed it in his apostolic correspondence easy to evaluate, because he does not appear to be consistent in his argument. On several occasions Stirewalt concedes that Paul combines the forms and functions of both personal and official letter writing (e.g. pp. 91, 107, 113), and hence the readers must wonder to what degree his initial strong dichotomy between the logistics of personal and official letters (cf. pp. 1, 18) breaks down in application to Paul's letters. Many readers will likewise question, on historical grounds, the trajectory with which Stirewalt works (1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians as Paul's earliest letters), the speculative development he finds in Paul the letter writer (hesitancy in 1 Thessalonians, growing confidence in 1 Corinthians, and the like), and some of the critical assumptions with which he operates (e.g. the composite nature of 2 Corinthians [pp. 11–12, n. 47; 77–80]).

Stirewalt's decision largely to limit his treatment to seven generally uncontested letters, it should be further noted, influences his interpretation of some of the data at points, and his delimitation is not always consistently observed (e.g. p. 13, where Col 4:7–9 is said certainly to describe a Pauline custom, while Col 4:16 is considered post-Pauline [p. 18, n. 17]). Regarding 1 Thessalonians Stirewalt claims, "Only in this letter does Paul name two-co-senders: Silvanus and Timothy" (p. 59); yet this is accurate only if 2 Thessalonians is non-Pauline, for in 2 Thess 1:1 the same two co-senders are named. On p. 119, in the midst of discussing the relationship between letter writing and speech writing, Stirewalt observes, "Finally, it may be noted here that Paul called his communications letters, and he does not request that they be disseminated beyond the people named in the salutation or be preserved." The accuracy of this assertion is again determined by the scope of the Pauline corpus. If Colossians is considered Pauline, then Stirewalt's statement would need to be modified in the light of Col 4:16.

Three features might have further enhanced the presentation and usefulness of the volume for various readers: an introduction to the volume, multiple indices (ancient sources, authors, and subjects) beyond the lone Scripture index, and a key for the abbreviations employed throughout.

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Faith in Jesus and Paul: A Comparison with Special Reference to "Faith That Can Move Mountains" and "Your Faith Has Healed/Saved You." By Maureen W. Yeung. WUNT 2/147. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002, xiv + 341 pp., € 59.00 paper.

This recent offering by Maureen Yeung—the published version of her Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the University of Aberdeen—contributes to the ongoing discussion regarding the degree of historical continuity/discontinuity between Jesus and Paul. Her aim is to sound an emphatic "no" to the question, "Is Paul the founder of Christianity?" She acknowledges the discussion of the issue since the significant contribution of David Wenham in 1995 and notes that the question remains far from settled. It is not enough to demonstrate that the general theological thrust of Jesus and Paul are quite similar if one wishes to conclude that Paul's teaching depended directly on that of Jesus (p. 9). For methodological rigor, Yeung employs six controls on her study (pp. 13–14) in order to "enable us to isolate the influence of Jesus on Paul" (p. 13). It is necessary to do the following: (1) eliminate false parallels; (2) distinguish between finding parallels between Paul and the Gospels, and Paul and Jesus; (3) determine how much of their similarity is due to common Hellenistic and Jewish backgrounds; (4) find out how much of their

similarity is due to Paul's use of early Christian tradition; (5) look for what is distinctive in Jesus' teaching that also shows up in that of Paul; (6) find what is distinctive or central in Paul's teaching that is found in seminal form in the teaching of Jesus.

Yeung looks for two kinds of similarity or continuity between Jesus and Paul—historical and theological. The first major section of this work (Part 2) deals with the historical continuity. Yeung claims that Paul's words regarding mountain-moving faith in 1 Cor 13:2 are dependent on Jesus' similar words (Matt 17:20; Mark 11:22–23). In the second major section (Part 3), she claims that Paul's use of Hab 2:4 and his related teaching on justification by faith is dependent on Jesus' saying, "your faith has saved/healed you" (Matt 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42). Beside contributing to the discussion regarding the relationship of Jesus to Paul, Yeung's study speaks to several other nagging problems in NT scholarship since Bultmann, such as the false dichotomies in the nature of faith between the OT and the NT, as well as between Jesus and Paul, and the dichotomy between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.

Yeung's work is valuable in that she dissects the proposals regarding the nature of faith offered by historical-critical scholars who worked in the middle of the last century, most notably Bultmann. Her exposition of the nature of faith shows definite continuity in the NT, both in Jesus and in Paul. She demonstrates ably that Jesus called for faith in himself and that Paul was a faithful interpreter of Jesus.

On her more specific proposals concerning the direct dependence of Paul on Jesus, however, Yeung is less than convincing. While she demonstrates that both Jesus and Paul were dependent on similar traditions concerning "mountain-moving faith" and that Jesus' words have an eschatological orientation, she fails to prove that this eschatological note is sounded in Paul's words in 1 Cor 13:2. Further, she fails to convince that—given that the image of faith moving mountains would not have been uncommon in first-century Judaism—Paul must have been dependent on Jesus' words rather than merely dependent on the tradition from Zech 4:6–7.

A second drawback of Yeung's work is that it is slightly lopsided, in that the first major section (Part 2) is 30 pages long, while the second major section (Part 3) is 230 pages. Much of her work in the second major section is taken up with developing the Hellenistic and Jewish backgrounds for Jesus' sayings regarding the faith that heals/saves. While this is arguably necessary, there are several other discussions in her work to which more space should have been devoted.

One of these areas shows that Yeung's expertise is clearly Jesus studies, in contrast to Pauline studies. From the beginning of her work Yeung speaks of justification by faith as the main issue in Paul's letters. While this is a common assumption, the last thirty years of Pauline scholarship make it compulsory for anyone making such a claim to prove that this indeed is the case. She claims that "Paul deals with the treatise of justification by faith systematically" (in Romans and Galatians) (p. 15) and that "Paul is preoccupied with the issue of justification by faith" (p. 16). She makes no effort to justify these claims despite the weighty challenges to the notion that Paul's theology is systematic (Beker) and that justification by faith is the center of Paul's theology (Schweitzer, Wright). Further, she does not explain why it is that Paul is preoccupied with justification by faith when he discusses this issue in only two letters. Lastly, she does not deal with the objection that Galatians (at least) and Romans (most likely) are situational letters that are quite polemic and not exactly systematic treatments of a doctrinal issue. This is not to say that failure to discuss each of these issues is devastating to Yeung's case, but her failure to even mention in a footnote that these are "live" issues is quite stunning, given the present state of Pauline studies.

This lack of awareness of the lay of the land in Pauline studies hurts her in her discussion of Paul's understanding of faith and her decision to interact mainly with

J. Dunn as “the brains” (p. 227) of what is known as “the new perspective.” While this is certainly justifiable, Dunn is far from the most interesting proponent of this broad school of thought, and she completely neglects so much other fresh work that has been done on Paul in the last twenty years. Had Yeung’s discussion displayed greater awareness of the field, her conclusions concerning Paul’s understanding of faith would have been more satisfying and nuanced.

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Either Jew or Gentile: Paul’s Unfolding Theology of Inclusivity. By Eung Chun Park. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003, x + 116 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Eung Chun Park, Associate Professor of New Testament at San Francisco Theological Seminary, describes this brief study as “a focused retelling of the story of a particular segment of [Paul’s] life, that is, the struggle to include ‘others’ in the fold of God’s people” (p. ix). Park’s primary goal is to provide a coherent narrative of Paul’s struggle to defend his gospel, the quintessential principle of which is said to be the acceptance of “others” as they are. Park further maintains that the story of Paul’s struggle and the theological development that accompanies it have a profound message for contemporary Christians who face the challenge of redefining their own identity in relationship to “others” in an increasingly pluralistic, postmodern, global village.

The story that Park presents to his readers is really two stories of two gospels in early Christianity. In broad sympathy to the familiar trajectory of F. C. Baur (cf. pp. 6, 25, 81 n. 3), the gospel of the circumcision and the gospel of the uncircumcision struggle for preeminence in a series of landmark events: the apostolic council in Jerusalem, the Antioch incident, the Galatian incident, the Corinthian incident, and Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem. Following two brief introductory chapters in which Park surveys particularism and universalism in Mediterranean antiquity (chap. 1) and the beginning of Christianity (chap. 2), the structure of the remainder of the book is organized around the five incidents previously mentioned (chaps. 3–7). A brief conclusion closes the text of the book (chap. 8). Endnotes are appended to the text (pp. 81–101), along with a select bibliography (pp. 103–6), and three indices: references, modern authors, and subjects (pp. 107–16).

The main thrust of Park’s thesis, for which he argues throughout the heart of the volume as he treats the five aforementioned events, is implicit in the subtitle: *Paul’s Unfolding Theology of Inclusivity*. Park contends that Paul’s theology unfolded or changed over time, signifying to Park that Paul’s theology was always a “work in progress.” The particular form of change for which Park contends is that the horizon of Paul’s soteriology substantially broadened in the last phase of his life so that he came to “accept *both* the ‘Torah-bound gospel’ *and* the ‘Torah-free gospel’ as ways that proclaim Christ” (p. 2, italics his; cf. p. 79).

The seemingly contradictory nature of this central affirmation of Park’s thesis is argued on the basis of a number of highly doubtful interpretations. The apostolic council in Jerusalem, the subject of chapter 3, allegedly sanctioned the legitimacy of two different gospels (here Park appeals to Gal 2:7). The Antioch incident (Gal 2:11–14), which Park maintains *followed* the apostolic council, was precipitated by two different interpretations of the meaning of the council. The Galatian incident (chap. 4), which Park locates during Paul’s Corinthian stay, was prompted by the infiltration of Judaizers who denied Paul’s apostleship and opposed his universalistic soteriology. The Corinthian

incident (chap. 5), located during Paul's Ephesian stay, is reconstructed on the basis of a six-fragment hypothesis stitched together from the content of 2 Corinthians (see the succinct summary on p. 58). Park maintains that these fragments represent Paul's communication to the Corinthians between his writing of 1 Corinthians and Romans. Paul's resumption of the collection project (chap. 6) was his attempt to repair the serious breach between universalistic Pauline Christianity and the Torah-bound Jerusalem church. Park's aftermath (chap. 7) is a brief sketch of the continued rivalry that characterized the Pauline and Jamesian branches of Christianity. It attempts to explain how the Pauline branch became mainstream Christianity, integrating other differing Christian traditions, and how the then dominant Gentile Christianity subsequently marginalized Jewish Christianity and the Jamesian legacy, leading to an eventual break between Judaism and Christianity.

In addition to a series of doubtful interpretations set forth in support of the details of his reconstruction, Park's study also raises a number of methodological questions. On a smaller scale one could take issue with his selective and restrictive use of the Pauline corpus (Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, and Philemon), on the one hand, and his view of Acts, on the other, which he characterizes as having "a theological agenda to present an idealistic picture of the pristine period of early Christianity" (p. 3). Yet it is the neo-Baurian interpretive framework which Park employs that is the most open to question. Park's reconstruction demonstrates that the broad superstructure of F. C. Baur (cf. pp. 6, 25, 81 n. 3) remains remarkably resilient and is still capable of post-modern, as well as modern, appropriation. The resultant story line that it yields, however, whether modern or post-modern, is no more historically and theologically persuasive than the initial (and very modern) dialectical portrait of Jewish-Christian struggle *en route* to *Frühkatholizismus* (early Catholicism) typical of earlier proponents of the Tübingen School. While Park's objectives are seemingly well-intended in his attempt to apply the implications of the Pauline gospel to the contemporary context, it is simply unpersuasive to suggest that Paul's struggle for Gentile inclusion can be reduced to the moralistic platitude that "God accepts human beings just as they are" (p. 78). Nor can one embrace the implications that Park draws from his doubtful reconstruction of events, namely, that "the conventional, exclusivist Christian soteriology will have to be revised through careful historical constructions as well as existentially meaningful theological appropriations" (p. 80). In the end, specious historical reconstruction provides little justification for revisionist soteriology.

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Romans. By Charles H. Talbert. Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary. Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2002, 360 pp., \$50.00.

The intention of this commentary is to bring the insights of a reputable biblical scholar to lifelong students of God's Word. A multimedia approach is used, bringing together art, photographs, maps, and drawings, all of which are helpful for a visually oriented generation of believers. The commentary seeks to avoid the problem of being so technical on the one hand that the general reader cannot grasp the meaning or on the other hand being so on the surface that the reader is not helped. The basic focus is the biblical text itself and on the wording and structure of texts. The cultural context is considered along with other information from archaeology, ancient history, geography, comparative literature, history of religions, politics, and sociology. A CD-ROM is

included with the commentary and provides a very helpful tool for searching the text. This feature could be utilized in preparing a class or in personal research.

An introduction to Romans provides information about the historical setting, literary design of the epistle, and theological emphases. Each chapter follows the logical divisions of the book, without relying on chapter and verse headings. The different divisions reflect the literary structure of each chapter, while discussion of each chapter in Romans centers around two basic sections: *Commentary* and *Connections*. Sidebars are a valuable feature of the commentary, providing additional insights on history, literary structure, definitions of technical words, notes on the history of interpretation, and other helpful information. The commentary is user-friendly with a basic bibliography, an index of the sidebars, a Scripture index, an index of topics, and an index of modern authors. The pictures, maps, and drawings are in black and white, while the sidebars are red, which sets them off from the regular font.

Talbert follows the generally accepted view that after the expulsion of the Jewish Christians in 49 CE by the edict of Claudius the church became primarily Gentile in orientation and make-up. After those who had been expelled returned early in the reign of Nero they found a dominant Gentile Christianity in place. This new situation helped create some of the tensions within the church that Paul hoped to diffuse by writing his epistle. In the forefront of Romans, therefore, is the unity of Christian Jews and Gentiles in Rome. No discussion, however, is given in the introduction as to how the general situation of the letter connects with Paul's proposed trip to Spain.

The author agrees that Romans displays rhetorical features. Although describing Romans as "a rhetorical act," he is, however, cautious about forcing Romans into one or the other rhetorical approaches. It is hard, he suggests, to figure out how various sections of Romans fit into the ancient rhetorical categories, and in taking this position he finds good company with Stanley Porter and others who advise caution in trying to fit Paul's epistles into certain species of ancient rhetoric.

Talbert follows the general consensus that Rom 1:16–17 furnishes the theme of the epistle. He, however, deviates from many commentators on Romans in his messianic interpretation of the phrase "but the righteous will live by faith." This phrase is usually taken to be the believer in general who is made righteous by his own faith. Tied in with Talbert's interpretation here is the translation in Rom 3:22 and 26 of *pistis Christou* (or related phrase) as a subjective genitive, "faith of Christ." Although this understanding is debated by many scholars, Talbert's analysis makes sense in that the believer's faith is made possible by the "faith" or "faithfulness" of Christ. In line with this argument, believers participate in the faith that Jesus not only makes possible but also models in his own life.

Talbert's discussion of baptism differs from the North American mainline Baptist interpretative tradition of which he is a part. He, much like British Baptists, connects baptism, at least in some ways, with conversion saying in Romans 6 that it is "synonymous with conversion." Talbert understands baptism as something having a manifold effect on the Christian and not as merely a symbol of conversion or simply an act that puts one into the church without connection to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

This commentary has many obvious strengths including a helpful layout, fair treatment of most subjects, sections relating to contemporary application, and the accompanying CD-ROM. As excellent as it is, however, it has a few weaknesses. Since the commentary revolves around a discussion format rather than a verse-by-verse detailing of Romans, it is difficult to find the comments on a particular verse. A listing of the verses covered could perhaps be added to the side of the page or in a subheading at the top to make scriptural searches more user-friendly.

Another strength of the commentary is also one of its potential weaknesses. Talbert has masterfully marshaled reams of extra-biblical material and background details into

his analysis. While this is very helpful and informative, I wonder if the target audience will not become lost in some of the longer discussions. Many will, however, appreciate the rigor of his discussion. At several points Talbert's work would be helped by interaction with current discussion of the Paul's anti-imperial rhetoric such as Richard Horsley highlights in *Paul and Empire* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997).

Talbert's commentary favorably compares with other recent commentaries on Romans (e.g. Thomas R. Schreiner's) in terms of scholarly acuity and obvious knowledge of the text. Visually, however, this work far outstrips most commentaries, and the publishers are to be congratulated on a production that gives so much insightful and helpful information but at the same time touches the eye. The mature student will appreciate the detail of this work and the attempt to make Romans relevant to the contemporary age. This is a commentary that I enthusiastically recommend for anyone interested in learning more about Romans. Overall, the goal of providing solid scholarly insights in a well-written format has been achieved.

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Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. By John Fotopoulos. WUNT 2/151. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003, xiii + 298 pp., € 54.00 paper.

This revised version of a doctoral dissertation directed by David Aune at Loyola University of Chicago is one of several recent studies which undermine the popular view that Paul regards the eating of idol food as an *adiaphoron*.

Fotopoulos begins with a review of past research and helpfully summarizes various scholarly positions in tabular form (chap. 1). Then, in five dense chapters, he offers an extensive analysis of archeological and social-historical data regarding temples and cults in and around Corinth to ascertain the locations and social meanings for idol food consumption. He concludes that the most plausible context for Paul's reference to temple dining was the Asklepieion. The temples of Isis and Sarapis were also attractive, though questionable, candidates, whereas the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore was a virtual impossibility. His interpretation thus differs significantly from that of Roebuck in his report on excavations in Corinth as well as those of Peter T. Gooch (*Dangerous Food* [Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1993]), Bruce W. Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001]), and Derek Newton (*Deity and Diet* [JSNTSup 169; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998]), etc., and must be seriously reckoned with by subsequent researchers. On the social implication of idol food there is less disagreement: since idol food was served not only in temples but often also in private meals, the avoidance of sacrificial food altogether would be extremely difficult and socially detrimental (pp. 177, 258). Because of the religious meaning of such food, Paul would expect the Corinthians to abstain in order to avoid idolatry.

Next, Fotopoulos examines the social-rhetorical context for Paul's argumentation (chap. 7). Based on Margaret M. Mitchell's (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991]) classification of 1 Corinthians as a piece of deliberative rhetoric, he conducts an exegetical study of 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 (chap. 8). Against various partition theories, Fotopoulos maintains that Paul's argumentation is a coherent whole, seeking both to prohibit intentional idol food consumption and to unite the weak and the strong factions, who are divided over the issue. Paul consistently rejected temple dining because it made the Corinthians partners with pagan deities

and hence guilty of idolatry. However, food purchased at the market or served at meals in pagan homes could be eaten unless it was known to be sacrificial food, in which case the rhetorical force of Paul's instructions about idolatry would apply, effectively prohibiting its consumption. In this way Paul allowed the Corinthians to continue social relations with pagans while guarding against idolatrous consumption of sacrificial food. The final chapter offers a convenient summary of Fotopoulos's major findings.

The book is well-researched, clearly written, and conversant with most of the relevant studies on 1 Cor 8:1–11:1. The only major omission is Peter J. Tomson's *Paul and the Jewish Law* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990, although it is listed in the bibliography but not discussed in the text), whose thesis that the texture of Paul's instruction in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 is halakhic presents a serious alternative to Fotopoulos's reading Paul according to Greco-Roman rhetorical conventions.

Since the findings of the book are in general agreement with much of my own work (*Idol Food in Corinth* [JSNTSup 176; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999]), as Fotopoulos acknowledges (p. 34), I would like to comment on two main areas of disagreement that he highlights. First, Fotopoulos may well be right in his criticisms of certain details of Gooch's interpretation of the archeological data and my reliance on it. Nevertheless, some of his key disagreements rest on a misreading of Gooch (partly because he interacts with Gooch's book rather than with the latter's much more detailed dissertation). For example, by arguing that sacrifices were central to Asklepios's cult and that sacrificial dining occurred on site, he disputes Gooch's assertion that consumption of sacred food was not integral to the cult. This overlooks Gooch's distinction between the (important) sacrifices per se and the (incidental) *consumption* of sacrificial food in the sanctuary. Since dining halls were absent or were built decades after the completion of other facilities in some Asklepieia, I think Gooch clearly has the better of the argument.

More disconcerting is Fotopoulos's repeated criticism of Gooch's statement that non-sacrificial food might be available at the dining rooms of the Asklepieion (pp. 65, 67–68, 252), erroneously implying that it is a key conclusion of Gooch and one that I followed. In fact it is a throw-away line, a mere possibility that Gooch raises in the interest of objective assessment of the archeological evidence—a possibility that he (and I) regard as highly unlikely in the light of the totality of archeological and literary evidence (*Dangerous Food*, pp. 80–82; *Idol Food*, pp. 36–38). Fotopoulos somehow overlooks Gooch's main conclusions that avoiding idol food was extremely difficult and that if ordinary meals at home were often explicitly religious, it can safely be presumed that temple dining involved sacred rites. These conclusions, which I repeatedly emphasized, are virtually indistinguishable from Fotopoulos's, regardless of differing interpretation of the archeological evidence. This last point somewhat raises the question, given the ambiguity of data, of how important it is to ascertain the precise locale of Paul's reference to temple dining. Is the Pauline passage itself not indicating clearly enough the ever present temptation and pressures to eat idol food?

Second, Fotopoulos argues from Paul's use of anti-factional rhetorical terminology that he sought to unite two opposing parties. I question the viability of a sustained rhetorical analysis of 1 Corinthians, in which rhetoric was *prima facie* disavowed by Paul. It is easy to fall into traps of parallelomania and equivocation as one expects analyses of form and vocabulary to yield highly specific determination of content. A clear example is Fotopoulos's uncritical acceptance of Mitchell's claim that Josephus and Philo (and hence, Paul) use Israel's wilderness experience as an example of factious behavior (στάσις). However, the "factionalism" mentioned in the relevant passages of Josephus and Philo refers primarily to the murmurs and jealousy of some Israelites against their leader Moses with consequent harm brought on the community rather than to divisions among the Israelites. Even if those passages were relevant for understanding Paul

(who, by the way, does not even use the term *στάσι*), the analogy for Corinth is surely not quarrels within the church, but quarrels between the Corinthians and their founder Paul! Similar equivocation plagues Fotopoulos's discussion about the role of the weak. For me, the existence of the weak as vulnerable individuals is very different from their existence as a party challenging the strong. Paul's vital concern, presented with such great pathos in the text, is that the weak, by imitating—not opposing—the strong, are spiritually endangered. Even Fotopoulos's rhetorical analysis recognizes that the bulk of Paul's deliberative argument consists of *Refutationes* of the strong's position. If by "anti-factionalism" one means Paul's rebuke of the strong for harming the weak, I can live with it. However, the term becomes so broad and slippery that it obscures rather than highlights the disposition of Paul's rhetoric, which is clearly one of dissuasion. It also unfortunately leads commentators to downplay Paul's uncompromising denunciation of the Corinthians' involvement in idolatry.

These quibbles aside, the book is a worthy addition to a notable series, providing a wealth of useful information and fresh interpretations on temples and cults in Corinth. Along with other recent studies, it successfully challenges the view that Paul sat light to the eating of idol food—a former consensus that is fast becoming a minority position.

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Sharing in the Inheritance: Identity and the Moral Life in Colossians. By Allan R. Bevere. JSNTSup 226. London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003, x + 294 pp., \$120.00.

The professor, seminary student, or pastor who wants an intelligible survey of recent scholarship on Colossians will find Bevere's work a helpful companion. This revision of a 1998 doctoral thesis (supervised by James D. G. Dunn at Durham University) specifically examines the nature of the "Colossian philosophy" (Col 2:8) and the paraenesis of the letter. Bevere finds the new perspective on Paul (championed by Dunn) a helpful key in understanding Colossians.

Timothy is presumed to be the author of Colossians, but the document reflects authentic Pauline theology (p. 59). Bevere variously identifies the writer of Colossians as "Paul," "Paul and Timothy," or simply "the authors." Specific date and place of origin are not discussed, but Bevere thinks the epistle to be among the later letters of the NT. Colossians furnished the writer of Ephesians with language for his discussion of Jew-Gentile relations. Controversy that involves the Christian and marks of Jewish identity is at the heart of Colossians, as it is in Galatians.

After a survey of Dunn, Sappington, and Wright (all of whom posit a Jewish background to Colossians), Bevere conducts his own inquiry. He concludes that "it would appear that those in the synagogue, the advocates of the Colossian philosophy, wanted to disqualify the Colossian Christians from sharing in Israel's heritage because they were not playing by the rules necessary to obtain the prize of that heritage (2.16)" (p. 258). Various theories suggesting that the Colossian heresy is some sort of syncretism fail to dissuade Bevere that Paul addresses a question that is essentially one of Jewish identity. While not denying that first-century Judaism was affected by various other influences, Bevere maintains that the Colossian philosophy fundamentally is nothing more than opposition from the synagogue. He rejects suggestions that the Colossian philosophy is Jewish-Pythagoreanism (E. Schweizer, A. Wedderburn), Jewish-Christian Middle Platonism (R. DeMaris), magical angel-veneration (C. Arnold), or a Cynic critique of the church (T. Martin). According to Bevere, the emphasis in the letter on cir-

cumcision (Col 2:8–15), Sabbath and special days (2:16), and food laws (2:16, 21–22) demonstrates that the controversy focuses on these badges of Jewish identity. Paul and Timothy argue that, since Christ is sufficient for the Colossians, no such badges are needed in order for the readers fully to share in the heritage of God's people. The new-perspective reading of Galatians informs Bevere's interpretation of Colossians here.

Bevere believes that the paraenesis of the epistle is also strongly Jewish in character: the apocalyptic nature of the above/below terminology in Col 3:1–4 sets the stage for the vice and virtue lists of 3:5–17 and for the *Haustafel* of 3:18–4:1. Just as Torah observance signified identity in the people of God for the Jew, a Christian's adherence to the concrete instructions in Colossians signifies what it means to be ἐν κυρίῳ. Avoidance of sexual immorality and idolatry (3:5) is a typical Jewish concern; its mention reflects Paul's adaptation of an amorphous Jewish catechetical tradition. That tradition is also reflected in other vices that Paul mentions, and in the virtues that he lists (e.g. compassion and humility, 3:12).

Throughout the work, Bevere exhibits an admirable command of the OT, of Jewish intertestamental literature, and of the secondary literature on Colossians. His argument, however, that the Colossian philosophy should be traced to the synagogue (and that it is thus not some form of syncretism) is, in my opinion, unconvincing. Most of Bevere's interlocutors would agree that Jewish elements appear in the Colossian philosophy and that obviously Jewish characteristics are inherent in the moral instruction of the letter. The question arises whether the Colossian Jewish philosophy has excluded elements from other sources to the degree that Bevere asserts. I agree that the paraenesis is tied to the situation of the Colossians, reflects Jewish morality, and is not merely a conventional set of vices and virtues. Christianized Jewish ethical instruction, however, would be extremely valuable in combating any form of syncretism that promotes extreme asceticism, licentiousness, or both. These two moral poles apparently are represented in the Colossian heresy (2:23; 3:5). Jewish ethics in the epistle do not necessarily demonstrate that the philosophy confronting the Colossians is essentially Jewish and not syncretistic.

Surprisingly, Bevere fails to consider seriously the possibility of a philosophy with Gnostic tendencies, although he is aware of others who do consider it (p. 13–15, 150–51). Petr Pokorny (*Colossians: A Commentary* [trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991] 113–21) argues that the veneration of angels (Col 2:18) reflects Gnostic concerns for the archons. Bevere does not discuss Pokorny's view.

The student who wishes to consult Bevere on interpretive cruxes of the epistle will find mixed results. For example, Bevere is non-committal whether θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων ("worship of angels," 2:18) is a subjective or objective genitive. The author's comments are more helpful on τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (2:8, 20). As in Gal 4:3, 9, the phrase refers to "the cosmic elements of the universe which influence the daily affairs of women and men" (p. 113). Although these elements are associated with angels in both letters, Bevere maintains that one cannot say that the στοιχεῖα are identical to the angels of Col 2:18. What is clear is that obeisance given to angels is as "salvifically ineffectual" as the pre-Christian lives that the Colossians lived under the στοιχεῖα (p. 111).

The exegete will find concise and informed discussion of the vices and virtues in Col 3:5–17 (although some of the vices do not receive individual treatment). I found Bevere's section on ταπεινοφροσύνη to be insightful. Contrary to the negative associations that the term had among the Greeks, the word has positive connotations in Jewish literature, including apocalyptic texts. Thus the word "is not to be understood as weakness, as in a Greek context but as consideration of others and the surrender of one's privileges" (p. 208).

Numerous typographical errors, especially in Greek spelling and punctuation, detract from the quality of the book. The price of \$120.00 will prevent many individuals from purchasing the volume. Despite the flaws and the exorbitant price, the volume is

noteworthy. Although it is by no means a solution to the problem of the Colossian heresy, Bevere's work helpfully outlines and augments recent discussion of the question.

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Ephesians. Believers Church Bible Commentary. By Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld. Scottsdale: Herald, 2002, 400 pp., \$24.99 paper.

Because Ephesians is not typically regarded as genuinely Pauline in wider NT scholarship, it has suffered from a relative lack of attention completely out of proportion to its importance in the history of the church. The result has been a stagnant scholarship sorely in need of fresh work in order to reinvigorate discussion on this powerful letter of Paul. Yoder Neufeld's commentary is an emphatic step in this direction.

The commentary is aimed at a wide readership and is perhaps most suitable for educated pastors, though scholars working on Ephesians will want to interact with a number of the fresh interpretations he has to offer. His main conversation partners are the well-known commentaries by Andrew Lincoln, Ernest Best, Markus Barth, and Rudolf Schnackenburg, though he also engages the work of PHEME PERKINS, JOACHIM GNILKA, and RALPH MARTIN. He also interacts at a number of points with Letty Russell's 1984 feminist commentary on Ephesians, along with a variety of Anabaptist and Mennonite scholars, thus effectively bringing a range of voices to bear in helping the church to avoid turning a deaf ear to potentially uncomfortable portions of Scripture. The format is useful and helpful. He first gives an outline of distinct portions of the text, which he then discusses verse by verse, before moving to relate certain themes in each passage to their wider biblical-theological context. Finally, each section closes with a consideration of the text in the life of the church, in which Yoder Neufeld reflects on how the church might faithfully respond to the teaching of Scripture. The issues he chooses to highlight and the manner in which he appropriates the text reflect his Mennonite background, and in this he provides a perspective that is a minority voice among evangelicals but one that will be heard with great profit.

An extended outline of Ephesians, schematic translation, and collection of essays close out the volume. Each of the essays is both accessible to any reader and well-informed by contemporary scholarship, and they function like articles in a theological dictionary. They are immensely helpful and provide vital information for interpreting Ephesians, covering authorship, the apocalyptic worldview of the letter, and the identity of "the powers," among other topics.

Since he wrote his Th.D. dissertation at Harvard Divinity School on the biblical background to the imagery of the divine warrior in Ephesians 6 (later published as *Put on the Armour of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians* [JSNTSup 140; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997]), he is sensitive to this imagery as it appears throughout the letter. He rightly notes that the resurrection and exaltation of Christ by God over "the powers" in 1:20–23 is stated in terms that recall the victory of God over enemies in the OT (pp. 74–75, 84–85). Regarding "the powers," he rightly claims that they are "features of a divinely ordered cosmos," though in the present age they are fallen and evil (p. 76). He prefers to regard their identity with a measure of ambiguity between personal and structural entities (p. 355), and his extended essay on the topic is an excellent summary of the discussion to this point.

Just to mention briefly his readings of a few key texts, the "new human" (2:15; 4:24) is both Christ himself as well as the new humanity that is created by Christ and in Christ. Yoder Neufeld bases this on the "in Christ" phrase which occurs throughout the

letter (pp. 42–43, 119, 207), along with the emphasis in a number of places on the unity of Christ and the church. He reads the household code in 5:21–6:9 through the “twin lenses” of the commands to be filled with the Spirit in 5:18 and to be subordinate to one another in 5:21 (p. 255). He regards the submission as mutual, and his discussion amounts to a powerful call to the imitation of the sacrificial self-giving of Christ in Christian community life. The command to put on the armor of God, along with the entire context in 6:10–20 is directed to the corporate church, not merely to individual Christians. It is the church as God’s people that is “to be empowered with God’s own power” (pp. 290–91). An individualistic reading “limits what kind of struggle is imagined and misses the biblical allusions to God as the divine warrior” (p. 292).

As expected with any commentary, not all of Yoder Neufeld’s interpretations will be convincing. He argues that the “putting off” of the old humanity and the “putting on” of the new humanity (4:22–24) are past events since the “infinitives are in the past tense” (p. 206). On this basis he claims that this passage is a “witness to the importance of baptism in Pauline churches and to the creativity with which exhortation could appeal to baptism” (p. 206). But this misstates the significance of the aorist infinitives, which do not point to past action on their own, and it overstates the importance of baptism in Ephesians, which, many scholars argue, is not in view in the letter at all. He also translates the initial command in 4:25 as “putting off the lie” and claims that this has reference to “much more than making statements that are not true” (p. 210). Rather, “the lie” refers to “the fundamental misreading of reality by those who mistake slavery for freedom, and such ‘freedom’ for impunity” (p. 210). While this section of the commentary is compelling in its analysis of the human condition apart from Christ, some may find this particular reading unconvincing.

Yoder Neufeld does not take a position on authorship, preferring to avoid irritating those readers who might hold strongly to either position (pp. 24–28, 341–44). While this will be an improvement for some who tire of reading scholars who will not even consider that Paul may have written Ephesians, others will be put off. This would be unfortunate since there is much from which to benefit in this commentary. It is highly commended for any pastor preaching through Ephesians and promises to be stimulating for scholars working in the letter.

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Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews: The Construction and Maintenance of a Symbolic Universe. By Iutisone Salevao. JSNTSup 219. London: Sheffield Academic Press. 2002, viii + 448 pp., \$145.00.

This is the largest of a recent spate of social-scientific studies of Hebrews. Salevao’s goal is to explain and correlate the theology and strategy of the epistle with the readers’ social situation by means of the concept of legitimation as developed in the sociology of knowledge. The book consists of five inordinately long chapters. Much space is wasted by consideration of issues only loosely relevant to the argument (e.g. pp. 84–92; 159–65) and discussions attempting to establish accepted facts (e.g. pp. 273–76 argues that baptism was an initiation rite).

Chapter 1 defends the social-scientific study of the NT, introduces the reader to the sociology of knowledge, and elaborates upon legitimation. Legitimation is defined as “the aggregate of ways a social order or social world is explained and justified to its members” (p. 54). Salevao’s thesis is that the theology of Hebrews was “designed to explain, justify and sanctify the situation of the community of readers” (p. 69). The

discussion of the sociology of knowledge is sufficient for Salevao's purposes, though anyone who has studied epistemology will sometimes cringe. The defense of social-scientific criticism successfully answers many objections, but several times the force of substantive criticism is not appreciated. Some of Salevao's replies are inadequate at points crucial for his thesis. One example is his reply to criticism of the principle of correlation (p. 42–45). Salevao's reasoning is not always clear, and he endorses statements that seem to undermine his claims. At the end of the discussion what Salevao means by correlation remains vague.

Salevao recognizes that theory can be imposed on data if the data is not amenable to analysis by the proposed theory (p. 24). This is unheeded when addressing the difficulty of constructing a social context amenable to social-scientific analysis from a single text. His reply to objections is that it is both legitimate and possible to use inferences from a single writer because the biblical data is all we have (p. 45). Yet the fact that one document contains all the primary data we have does not entail that it is sufficient for the kind of sociological analysis proposed. Asserting that Hebrews is "a text with a story, a set of data that can tell its own story" (p. 45) hardly meets the threshold question. One is not surprised to see theory repeatedly imposed on data in subsequent chapters.

In chapter 2 Salevao places the readers in a house church in Rome sometime between 70–96 CE. They were experiencing political persecution, social alienation, and hostility from pagan outsiders (pp. 133, 137). There was also internal disunity caused by a theological conflict that manifested itself in the separation of some members from the group (p. 133) and an internal power struggle (pp. 331–32). Hebrews 13:9 is cited as evidence for this conflict (p. 142). The root problem causing disunity was the issue of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism (p. 144). The combination of these external and internal pressures made it difficult for some to remain within the Christian symbolic universe as originally constructed, and therefore they were on the verge of "relapsing" into Judaism. Salevao defends the relapse theory at length (pp. 109–14) and seems to think that it is proven if he can show the readers were not Gentiles (pp. 115–18).

The third chapter elaborates this socio-historical situation by arguing that the community was a sect that had long been separated and independent from Judaism. This is set within a discussion of the parting of the ways. According to Salevao, Hebrews was not a transition stage in the parting of the ways but a "methodical, calculated attempt to legitimate the identity of Christianity . . . as a religious and social entity independent of and separate from Judaism" (p. 194). This had to be done because the community could not tolerate dual allegiance to Christianity and Judaism, two religions with an "essential distinction" (p. 218). How does he know this? The community is a sect, and sect theory tells us this is the way sects operate (cf. 216). The argument displays vicious circularity.

Chapter 4 focuses on the doctrine of the impossibility of a second repentance in Heb 6:4–6 and the exegesis of this passage. Salevao's goal is to show that this doctrine "was designed to prevent the readers from leaving the Christian community" (p. 252). The exegesis is interspersed with needless explanatory jargon that adds nothing to the basic point: A second repentance was impossible because initiation into the Christian community was an unrepeatable event.

The final chapter attempts to clarify the nature of the confrontation between early Christianity and Judaism and show how the language of superiority and perfection was used in Hebrews to legitimate Christianity vis-à-vis Judaism. The symbolic universe of the Hebrews' community had become problematic because of the challenge of Judaism's competing universe; therefore the author "designed the superiority of Christianity/inferiority of Judaism dialectic to serve a nihilatory function" (pp. 343, 383). This means that the author sought to conceptually liquidate the entirety of the Jewish symbolic uni-

verse for his readers. While Hebrews did not set out to directly confront Judaism, a strong anti-Jewish polemic was nonetheless necessary in order to legitimate Christianity (p. 218). Salevao finds this alleged polemic problematic and advises that Christians give up Hebrews' superiority/inferiority construct because "it has the power to breed 'a superior race' of Christians. Such an elitist conceptualization of who and what we are does not fail to conjure up images of the type of social consciousness which gave birth to the Third Reich" (pp. 411–12).

An abundance of footnotes and pagination notwithstanding, Salevao argues his case poorly. He repeatedly bases arguments almost entirely on statements in the secondary literature. Citations of relevant extra-biblical primary literature is rare and usually secondhand. At times he makes embarrassing factual blunders, such as quoting Acts 12:1–3 as a description of the death of James [the Just] in 62 CE (pp. 179–80). In large sections of argumentation he makes surprisingly little reference to specific passages in Hebrews but instead generalizes (often erroneously). Claims about several passages key to his reconstruction can be seriously disputed (e.g. 10:25; 13:9; 13:13; 13:24). There is no attempted exegesis anywhere in the first 250 pages.

The sociological models employed are designed to explain certain phenomena. Repeatedly these are baldly asserted (though often introduced with "It is argued . . .") to be present in Hebrews. He then proceeds to explain Hebrews in terms of the models. Besides being fallacious, these sociological explanations usually consist of broad, ambiguous assertions that are uniformly unenlightening and sometimes sociologically implausible. For example, is it plausible to think that anyone in the city of Rome suffering from social hostility and exclusion would be tempted to "go back" to Judaism after 70 CE when anti-Jewish sentiment ran high, most Jews in Rome were the enslaved spoils of war, and the rest mostly lived in the poorest parts of the city?

The greatest shortcoming is the author's failure to understand Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity's place in it. Numerous times features of Hebrews are cited as evidence that the community had consciously separated from Judaism and that the author was engaged in deliberate anti-Jewish polemics. Almost every one of these is paralleled in the Dead Sea Scrolls and other early Jewish literature; they can hardly be evidence for a rejection of Judaism. Furthermore, Salevao fundamentally misunderstands the parting of the ways metaphor and what it is meant to convey. For Salevao it refers to Christianity's deliberate secession from Judaism, Judaism's intentional rejection of Christianity, and the religions' denunciations of one another—all before the end of the first century. Salevao equates rabbinic Judaism with Judaism and assumes it existed in the first century and simply continued after the Temple's destruction (p. 187). This is precisely the kind of erroneous and anachronistic construct that the parting of the ways model is intended to correct.

For years scholars have repeatedly cautioned us not to interpret the NT as if Christianity were antithetical to or clearly distinct from Judaism; Salevao frequently asserts that it was. There is no need to argue for this because to Salevao it is simply "obvious" (p. 113). The fact is, however, that Hebrews is clearly written to a Christian community distinct *within* Judaism and not distinct *from* Judaism. Hebrews was not written after the parting of the ways to legitimate Christianity, but is itself a decisive stage in the parting of the ways. Salevao misses this because, as with some other Hebrews specialists, he is simply unaware of the monumental gains that have been made in our understanding of Second Temple Judaism and Christianity's place in that environment. As a result he propounds a grossly anachronistic understanding of Hebrews that contributes nothing to our understanding of the letter. This is the kind of book that gives the social-scientific study of the NT a bad name.

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