

BOOK REVIEWS

Text and History: Historiography and the Study of the Biblical Text. By Jens Bruun Kofoed. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005, xiii + 298 pp., \$34.50.

Text and History is a revision of the author's doctoral dissertation (University of Aarhus, Denmark, 2002). The book is an informed response to the progressively skeptical outlook, led by the so-called Copenhagen School (Niels Peter Lemche, Thomas L. Thompson), toward the value of the texts of the Hebrew Bible for reconstructing the history of ancient Israel. Kofoed's particular expertise is in historiographical methodology, and it is in this area that the book makes its most important contribution.

The initial chapter lays out the importance of presuppositions in the historiographical enterprise. For example, the author overviews recent contributions to the "hermeneutical, linguistic, and literary aspects of historical theory" (p. 11), demonstrating that real historians do use plot and that the product of their writing is always influenced by their environment—and yet historical integrity is not necessarily compromised. The author utilizes modern historiographical output to make the point that any author, ancient or modern, "must have determined which traditions or sources to deploy and how to arrange the selected material," and that "the bringing together of already existing sources with perhaps newly written material did create a new text" (p. 29). However, "to argue that the historical information present in such a literary innovation must be considered a *literary invention* is a non sequitur" (p. 29, author's italics).

Building on his methodological critique and its realities, Kofoed suggests that "the texts of the Hebrew Bible contain reliable information for a reconstruction of the period it purports to describe" (p. 30). The rest of the book is his attempt to defend this thesis. The author presents his defense in four chapters, and he narrows the discussion to the books of Kings. Kofoed's procedure for proving his case is to isolate "markers" in the text. Specifically, Kofoed is searching for textual markers that have source-critical value and imply or evince historical intentionality on the part of the ancient author. By comparing these markers in the Hebrew text with non-biblical material, one can gauge (to varying degrees of plausibility) a *terminus ad quem* for composition and deduce whether the writer intended the product to be a record of events for posterity.

Chapter 2 ("The Lateness of the Text") focuses on the strategy of minimalist historians to discard the biblical texts as sources for ancient Israel's history based on the texts' perceived lateness (i.e. their distance from the actual events). The author first examines the methodological presuppositions guiding this dismissal and then seeks to find markers in the text of Kings to orient those books in chronological proximity to the events they describe.

With respect to methodology, Kofoed gives evidence of his considerable grasp of the scholarly literature pertinent to the issue and embarks on very worthwhile discussions of the nature of source evaluation, comparative method, the workings of oral tradition, and how genre affects these areas. The excursus on "primary" and "secondary" sources should be required reading for students in OT history courses. Kofoed explains the flaws in defining a "primary" source as a text "written at a time close to an event," and a "secondary" source as "removed in time from the events they narrate or to which they testify" (p. 41). These definitions, argues Kofoed, "fail to acknowledge another important

distinction in heuristic terminology—namely between ‘primary’/‘secondary’ and ‘first-hand’/‘secondhand’ sources” (p. 42). The point of this comment is that “a source may still be secondary even if its information is taken from an earlier extant source” (p. 42). A source should be regarded as primary “if it stems directly from an eye- or ear-witness or, importantly, a later account that relies on an earlier non-extant source” (p. 42). A firsthand account will always be a primary source, but the opposite does not hold true.

Chapter 3 (“Linguistic Differentiation”) examines the text of Kings for source-critical markers to deduce diachronic layers within the text with a goal toward situating the text chronologically to the events described. Kofoed is well aware of the pitfalls of trying to date biblical texts via linguistic features, and so he first attempts to rule out synchronic explanations for the features often used for such analysis. He notes that the presence of Aramaisms in a text points to a sixth or fifth-century BC date of composition, but that absence of Aramaisms only tells us the text is earlier (and cannot tell us how much earlier). Grammar, dialect, and orthography are not useful for advancing clarity here, and so linguistic differentiation is an inadequate trajectory for determining whether Kings was written any closer to the events described therein than the Persian period.

Chapter 4 (“The Comparative Material”) seeks to lay out a responsible comparative method and then discern whether there is any non-biblical material that might correlate the (potentially) historiographical material in Kings. Kofoed concludes this chapter by noting, “The information in the books of Kings is in accord with the external sources wherever we can check it. . . . The author of the books of Kings . . . paints a picture that is consistent with the information of the extrabiblical sources . . . irrespective of *when* the books of Kings were written or edited” (p. 189, author’s emphasis).

Chapter 5 (“Genre”) takes on the question of intentionality; that is, are there indications that Kings was written intentionally as “history”? Kofoed argues that this case can indeed be made. He does so (following Ricoeur) by insisting that this question must be answered by focusing on the explanatory level (what the author intended) and the documentary level (eyewitness testimony), as opposed to the literary level. What he means by this is that it is methodologically incorrect to approach the books of Kings with the thought that certain genres cannot convey history. Kofoed demonstrates in this chapter that “factual texts employ precisely the same literary devices as a number of fictional genres” (p. 246).

I would highly recommend this work for a graduate-level course in the historical books. Its focus on methodology and presuppositions is much needed. This book would be an effective complement to V. P. Long’s *Art of Biblical History and Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context* (ed. J. K. Hoffmeier, A. R. Millard, D. W. Baker).

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The Jazz of Preaching: How to Preach with Great Freedom and Joy. By Kirk Byron Jones. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004, 137 pp., \$16.00 paper.

Kirk Byron Jones is jazzed about preaching with great freedom and joy! Jones teaches social ethics and pastoral ministry at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. He states the thesis of this one-of-a-kind book: “Preaching may be enhanced by exploring key elements of jazz and learning to apply those elements to the act of preaching” (p. 15).

In chapter 1, Jones narrates how he became aware of the “sacred intersection” (p. 16) between jazz and preaching. He then offers a brief survey of the book’s contents. Chapter 2 is an attempt to define jazz and preaching. Jones considers sound, story, and mystery essential ingredients in both. On the other hand, the two differ with respect to ultimate goal and audience. For jazz, the audience “appears ancillary” (p. 41) but for preaching the audience is “integral” (p. 41).

The focus of chapter 3 is the act of listening. Jones observes, “Preaching is not *saying* first. Preaching is, as it is for jazz, a matter of *listening* first” (p. 53). Creativity is the subject of chapter 4. Jones discusses four essential attributes for cultivating creativity: curiosity, openness, risks, and grace.

In chapter 5, Jones explains with keen insight the four features of improvisation: play, variety, daring, and mastery. Jones considers the dialogical elements of preaching in chapter 6. He notes, “There are four dialogical partners in preaching: the Spirit, the Bible, the preacher, and the congregation” (p. 104).

Chapter 7 deals with the task of preaching to and through trouble with honesty, perseverance, and patience. Joy in preaching is saved for the last chapter. For Jones, “Joyful preaching is found less in technique and more in our daring to become joyful human beings” (p. 128).

At the end of almost every chapter, the author includes an “Exercises and Resources” section. Many of the exercises have to do with jazz appreciation. Others are designed to enhance preaching. For example, Jones suggests, “Leave spaces for improvisation in your manuscript or notes. Go to the pulpit prepared to freshly word what you will say in places” (p. 96).

Jones’s approach is refreshingly creative. Yet, it feels a little forced. Jazz is over-spiritualized: “The same sacred impulse is operative for the saxophonist and the sermonizer” (p. 17). Are secular jazz musicians led by the Spirit (p. 66), or are they exercising a natural ability?

While *The Jazz of Preaching* contains some fresh insights, the seasoned preacher will probably learn more about jazz than about preaching. The book’s primary value is motivational. After reading it, preachers who are stuck in a tired rut just might find themselves jazzed about preaching with great freedom and joy.

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Envisioning the Word: The Use of Visual Images in Preaching. By Richard A. Jensen. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005, xi + 155 pp. + CD-ROM, \$20.00 paper.

According to Richard A. Jensen, Professor of Homiletics Emeritus at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, “We need *stereo* homiletics! We need outlines *and* pictures. We need words *and* images” (p. 85). Jensen has written a unique, substantive, and practical book that offers a rationale and methodology for “stereo homiletics.”

In the opening chapter, Jensen traces the major developments in the history of Christian art. He notes, “In the church’s earliest period, words of instruction and visual images complemented each other” (p. 20). By the medieval period, icons were believed to be mediators of supernatural power. Jensen, a self-described “iconophile” (p. 30), sees this medieval superstition as “problematic” (p. 29). Yet, he later suggests that icons may have a “sacramental character” (p. 62).

Chapter 2 deals with theology. The iconophiles argued that the creation is good; matter can mediate God’s presence; and God blessed the eyes through Christ’s in-

carnation. The iconoclasts, on the other hand, argued that the second commandment prohibits the creation and use of images; the finite cannot mediate the infinite; and images lack precision in conveying meaning.

Philosophical debate is the focus of chapter 3. For Plato, the world of the senses is a false reality. But the world of forms and ideas is “truly real” (p. 68). For Aristotle, the real world is the world of the senses. Western Enlightenment thinkers have embraced Plato’s view of reality, and it has held sway ever since.

Chapter 4 contains practical advice from pastors who have used visual images in their preaching. They recommend involving gifted laity from the very start; using high quality technology; and employing images that emerge naturally from the text (p. 119). This chapter also includes an annotated list of image resource web sites.

In the last chapter, Jensen describes three sermon types: idea, story, and image-based. In the image-based sermon, “the image itself becomes the organizing center of the sermon. The preacher . . . uses the image as the heart and soul of the sermon” (p. 135). Should not the biblical text be the heart and soul of the sermon? The accompanying CD-ROM contains the book’s text, a study guide, liturgical images, and links to web sites.

Jensen overestimates the relative worth of images as compared to the God-breathed words of Scripture. He considers visual images “a source of theology” (p. 74). Yet, for the discerning preacher who wants to use visuals in service to the biblical text, there is much here of great value. If employed with care, visuals can help illuminate the text and aid in its retention.

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Theory and Practice in Old Testament Ethics. By John Rogerson. JSOTS 405. New York: T & T Clark International, 2004, 153 pp., \$94.00 paper.

John Rogerson, a scholar of distinguished renown in OT ethics, is one for whom “biblical ethics is not just an academic exercise; it is a call to a certain kind of lifestyle and to concrete social and political commitment,” says M. Daniel Carroll R., editor of the volume and one of Rogerson’s students, colleagues, and long-time friends (p. vii). Carroll also has acquired some level of professional accomplishment of his own. He is more than qualified to edit, interpret, and contribute to this compelling volume of Rogerson’s ethics, praxis, scholarship, and personal journey. A brief summary of the work states:

This volume brings together for the first time many of John Rogerson’s contributions—both published and unpublished—to Old Testament and social ethics. The essays collected here cover a wide range of modern social issues, . . . [from] the debate about abortion and the Old Testament . . . [to] nuclear disarmament. Rogerson also offers a brief account of his pilgrimage in Old Testament ethics and outlines the basic framework for his perspective . . . (back cover).

The word “compelling” is employed somewhat guardedly. What makes the tone of Rogerson’s work compelling is his personal honesty. He demonstrates all the acumen of scholarly inquiry, and couples this with a personal deportment of a genuine follower of Jesus Christ, one who is concerned to “love your neighbor as yourself.” This tension is refreshing in today’s academic world. Throughout his various essays, Rogerson does not seek to engage in ethical study as an end in itself. He desires to bring personal questions, findings, and scholarship to bear on the ethical praxis of today’s church. He also

seeks to make sense of complex issues and to develop applications for dilemmas facing societies today from the rich, varied, and sometimes convoluted interpretations of OT thought.

A most impressive issue is Rogerson's "methodological clarity" (p. 9). Here, he employs three separate but equal means for his ethical project. The first of these is this: "Moral absolutes do exist, but these are always historically situated" (p. 9). These moral absolutes or mores are embedded into different cultural and historical contexts. Second, Rogerson concerns himself with "the motivation and strategy of Christian ethics in any given context" (p. 9) and "imperatives of redemption" (p. 9) ethic, which he uses to interpret those things that commend a particular practice because it is "based on the gracious acts of God" (p. 9). His third ethical methodology is his "structures of grace" (p. 10). By this Rogerson means "those social arrangements that are designed to work out this divine graciousness in practical and concrete ways" (p. 10). For Rogerson, "The Old Testament can best contribute to Christian ethics by its examples of moral reasoning and efforts rather than by direct, literal imitation" (p. 10).

Moral absolutes are there in Rogerson's OT construct. However, these must not be a point of "literal imitation" for contemporary ethics. He incorporates the social science's methods equally to Scripture itself for his ethical construct, and allows social science methodology to equate with that of the biblical record. This can best be observed where he uses contemporary communication theory as one of his many points of departure from the "literal imitation" grid.

Rogerson turns to Jürgen Habermas, using "the discourse or communicative ethics of . . . Habermas" (p. 37). He senses that Habermas and his followers "can shed new light on moral discourse in the Old Testament" (p. 37). For him, Habermas's communicative ethics is "an attempt to define the conditions under which ethical norms could be agreed [upon] by all those who had a legitimate interest in a matter, without coercion" (p. 38). Rogerson adopts Habermas's approach because it "is directed especially against ethical relativism" and "lays particular stress upon [those who have a] willingness to be persuaded by the force of the better argument" (p. 38).

Rogerson's third ethical method, coupled with his use of Habermas's discourse ethics, shows how he accords equal credence to Scripture and to the social sciences. Those who hold to the ETS doctrinal statement will find this a very interesting read. How far should one go to apply recent social thought to social ethics and biblical interpretation? Rogerson shows he is willing to put both on the same level. And more times than not, Scripture does not remain the standard for social interpretation.

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God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation. By Terence E. Fretheim. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005, xvii + 398 pp., \$29.00 paper.

Few theological books today profess or attempt to reclaim creation as a serious OT theological theme. "A Relational Theology of Creation" is a book subtitle that lifted my hopes, as one who for more than a decade has taught college undergraduates about the theology and the science of creation. At last, someone was flagging a theological territory abandoned by most Protestants for over a century, due to the peer pressure of academics and ecclesiastics who passively subscribe to (and often even actively advocate) Darwinian epistemologies and their conclusions.

I will mention up front one particularly positive note. The book has a useful author index (pp. 369–74), as well as a very useful Scripture citation index (pp. 375–98).

Terence Fretheim has correctly identified the lack of a biblically sound creation theology (pp. ix–xiv) as a theological and axiological foundation problem in the world view theology of most Protestants. It is this problem Fretheim attempts to resolve, as his book surveys (with peripheral meanderings into ancient and not-so-ancient mythologies) various OT passages.

But why do many see God's role as the world's Creator as a mere component of his role as Redeemer? (p. xv). Fretheim observantly answers this question, with quantified support (showing how little attention is given to non-human aspects of biblical theology), by concluding that "scholarly consensus" theologies routinely suffer from anthropocentric imbalance. Thus, the introductory portion of Fretheim's lengthy treatise acknowledges the incongruity of the OT's cardinal definition of God as the creation's Creator (as Charles Chesnutt says: "In the very first verse of the Bible, God defines himself as Creator!"), with the diminished role ascribed to him, as such, by modern Protestants displaying anthropocentric "scholarly consensus."

Ironically, however, in trying to identify how this systematic theology problem can be corrected, Fretheim's analysis looks primarily to the same anthropocentric "scholarly consensus" ilk whom, in effect, he half-heartedly blames for the selfsame theological shortcoming. For example, representative authors Fretheim cites include the following: Gerhard von Rad (cited 35 times!), Paul Tillich, Rudolf Bultmann, various JEDP hypothesis promoters, Martin Buber, John Sanders, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Luis Studelmann, Lynn White, G. Ernest Wright, Henri Frankfort, Emil Brunner, Carol Newsom, Walter Brueggemann, and others. Nowhere in his book does Fretheim frontally address the how or why of the abandonment of creation theology, to a large degree, by Protestant churchmen and academics, when it became politically fashionable to amalgamate Darwinian concepts into one's religious world view. (Fretheim could have avoided this fatal flaw in his analysis of his book's core problem if he had studied Terry Mortenson's historical scholarship on that topic.)

Revealingly, it is the "missing bibliography"—the Protestant evangelical authors who have recently seriously written about the need for a biblical theology of creation from non-anthropocentric perspectives—whom Fretheim inexplicably ignores. For example, there is no mention in the book's author index (pp. 369–74) of these well-published evangelical creation theologians: John Whitcomb, Henry Morris, Francis Schaeffer, Bill Cooper, Terry Mortenson, Tommy Ice, and John J. Davis—to name just a few glaring omissions. (Reformers Luther, Calvin, and Knox are also silently bypassed as irrelevant.) One wonders: How and why were John Whitcomb and Henry Morris ignored altogether by Fretheim? Their theological analysis of the Genesis flood, a theological watershed publication (pardon the pun), has largely catalyzed, if not also defined, the creation theology debates for 45 years!

More disappointing than Fretheim's cited bibliography, however, is his lack of rigorously focused exposition and analysis of the primary Scripture texts that, when integrated, define what we call "creation theology." A couple of examples may illustrate.

For example, Fretheim's low view of Scripture allows him to belittle Genesis as "pre-scientific," as if the modern propositions of today's scientific community's better-funded majority automatically preempt Scripture's data, epistemologically speaking, whenever any conflict in data (or interpretations thereof) exists. At least Fretheim admits such conflicts often occur. See, for example, Fretheim's bashful discomfort on pp. 27–28, where he writes, "Difficulties arise when it becomes evident that not everything in these chapters can be made congruent with modern knowledge about the world." In other words, Fretheim is embarrassed whenever modern scientists disagree with in-

formation in Genesis, because the epistemological force of modern scientists' "knowledge" trouble Fretheim with "difficulties."

For another example of a missed "relational" theology nugget, Fretheim recognizes that Psalm 19 directly informs us about creation (see pp. 143–44, 264, 335 n. 38), but he omits mention of Ps 19:4's citation by Paul in Rom 10:18, which equates Ps 19:4 with the gospel itself—a very significant component of the creation's "relational" theology, one would think!

Disappointingly, the book ubiquitously strays from analyzing what the OT itself says about God's work and care of creation, and creation's "relational" relation to God. Fretheim does try to analyze the first and second chapters in Genesis, although he fails to address the most basic issues addressed since 1961 by Whitcomb and Morris (*The Genesis Flood*) and subsequent creation theologians. Worse, though, the longest uninterrupted teaching on nature, directly spoken by God to a man, is the "nature sermon" preached by God to Job (Job 38–41), yet Fretheim uses only fifteen pages out of 398 to comment on this critical OT creation theology text (pp. 233–47).

Likewise, the book of Genesis rockets forward from Creation to Abraham, spending only eleven chapters to reach Abraham, then it chronicles only four generations from Genesis 12–50, showing the condensed outline nature of chapters 1–11. Yet three of those eleven chapters focus on the worldwide flood, so obviously the flood is a mega-theme in OT creation theology. However, Fretheim shrugs off the flood, utilizing only eleven pages to discuss it (pp. 79–89). Accordingly, because a systematic theology of creation should "balance" with the attention and emphasis that doctrine is given in Scripture, I find myself disappointed by Fretheim's simplistic treatment of the flood.

In sum, Fretheim has identified a gaping hole in the systematic theology of many, if not most, Protestant evangelical theologians—the need for a Bible-based theology of creation. Having done so, however, Fretheim's attractive book title falls disappointingly short of the title's target, and the lack of a thoroughly researched (much less thoroughly analyzed) coverage of the core topics, especially what the OT itself actually says about creation, may leave the reader concluding that Fretheim's book title was a "bait-and-switch."

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New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture. Vol. 1B: *Genesis 11:27–50:26*. By Kenneth A. Mathews. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2005, 960 pp., \$32.99.

Kenneth A. Mathews has produced a well-written, detailed commentary on the patriarchal narratives that should appeal to both pastor and scholar. This volume is a continuation of Mathews's *New American Commentary* series (NAC) commentary on Genesis 1:1–11:26 (1996). While the commentary is based on the text of the NIV, Mathews interacts with the Hebrew Bible throughout. Issues of authorship and literary structure were covered in the previous Genesis volume in the NAC series. Nonetheless, a brief synopsis of introductory matters in the present volume would have been helpful.

A 58-page introduction covers issues related to the patriarchal narratives. Of major importance is the ongoing debate with the so-called "minimalist" school that denies the patriarchal narratives have any historical value whatsoever. Mathews surveys the history of the dialogue between those who place value on the biblical literature as well

as archaeology and those who emphasize the archaeological record to the exclusion of the biblical material. He interacts with several recent texts that attempt to answer the minimalist argument, such as K. A. Kitchen's *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 2003). According to Mathews, the minimalists' problem is their *a priori* dismissal of religiously motivated literature. If followed consistently, no written records of any ancient people would be allowed to help write a history (p. 34).

Mathews points out several elements of the patriarchal narrative that are compatible with the archaeological record: the names of persons and towns; the migration of Terah; customs from Mari; the settlement of Canaan in the second millennium BC; Hurrian family law; and the distinctive features of patriarchal religion. This last point receives a more in-depth analysis in a later section of the introduction. Mathews contrasts the religion of the patriarchs with that of the later Mosaic period. While he finds many elements of continuity, enough distinctive elements appear that suggest a later writer would not likely have created these stories. For example, with respect to worship, Abraham planted a tamarisk tree and built a personal altar as did Jacob, despite the fact that these things are forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Gen 21:33; 28:18, 22; Exod 23:13; 34:13; Lev 26:1; Deut 7:5). No centralized religious location or cult site appears in the patriarchal narrative. Abraham married his half-sister (Gen 20:12), and Jacob married sisters (Gen 29:21–30), yet the Law also forbids these practices (Lev 18:9, 11, 18). With the exception of circumcision and two instances of tithing, the patriarchs practiced very little of what would become important boundary markers in the Mosaic Law. These religious contrasts form a powerful argument for an early date of composition for Genesis. An exilic or post-exilic writer may well have sought to eliminate these non-Mosaic practices.

A number of places in the text of the commentary highlight the historicity of the patriarchal narrative. While discussing the composition of 23:1–20, Mathews briefly deals with parallels to Hittite and Akkadian burial practices and concludes the section is “consistent with the general pattern known of deeds and transference of property at many different periods” (pp. 312–13). There is therefore no reason to assume the story is a creation of the first millennium BC. In his discussion of the descendants of Esau (Genesis 36), Mathews argues the “kings” ought to be understood as tribal kings rather than monarchs in the traditional sense, thus removing a potential anachronism in the text (pp. 633–35).

Mathews states the theme of Genesis as “God’s promissory blessings upon Israel’s ancestors that have their *partial* realization in the lives of the patriarchs and the rise of the nation Israel” (p. 72). This working theme for the book of Genesis follows D. J. A. Clines’s *Theme of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield, 1997). This theme is clearly announced in Genesis 12:1–3 and is well developed by Mathews in the body of the commentary. Abraham is promised his children will be a great nation and possess the land of Canaan. Mathews makes clear both the tension in the story where there are threats against the promise as well as the partial fulfillment noted by the text of Genesis. For example, when Jacob is forced to leave the land (Gen 28:14–15), Mathews suggests Jacob waited for the command to return because he trusted in God’s promise (p. 452). In commenting on the return of Jacob’s body to Canaan in Genesis 50, Mathews notes the trip to Egypt did not relinquish the claims of the patriarchs on the land of Canaan because “the land was the promissory gift of God” (p. 920).

The body of the commentary is divided into major sections based on the use of the term *toledoth* (“generations”), with each *toledoth* section broken into a series of pericopes. For each of these subsections, Mathews first treats the composition of the text. While these short sections give an account of higher critical studies (JEDP), Mathews consistently rejects a late date of composition. Mathews interacts with major scholars on higher critical issues, including recent works by Thompson and Van Seters, although

only English language works are cited. For example, in dealing with the composition of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18–19), Mathews concludes the whole section is the work of a single author and the details of the story correspond to a second millennium BC origin (p. 211). Regarding the Joseph stories, Mathews rejects various attempts to describe the section as a “novella” cobbled together out of as many as three sources and full of internal contradictions. After a concise review of the history of such attempts, Mathews concludes there is “sufficient evidence to conclude that the Joseph narrative was originally the central part of the Jacob *toledoth*” (p. 679).

After dealing with composition issues, Mathews describes the structure of the unit. Typically framing devices exist for each section—repeated or similar sounding words and phrases. Mathews occasionally observes brief chiasmic structures or other rhetorical devices, but the commentary is not obsessed with finding such elements. Each unit is then divided further into subsections or “scenes” based on a repeated motif or key word.

After setting the structure for the subunit, Mathews gives a verse-by-verse commentary on the text. Hebrew is transliterated in the main text, but grammatical, lexical, and textual details are treated in the footnotes in Hebrew. When appropriate, a section will include a section on the history of interpretation among both early Jewish and Christian writers. He discusses the sacrifice of Isaac (pp. 304–6), the rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 (pp. 578–82), and various Jewish and Christian traditions concerning Joseph (pp. 669–74). Occasional forays into NT theology can be a distraction. For example, while Mathews’s brief comments on Abraham’s faith in Romans 4 are interesting and for the most part useful, they seem to go beyond the text of Genesis 15 by discussing Pauline theology of faith (p. 169). In dealing with the idea of covenant, Mathews briefly discusses the Pauline references to Genesis (pp. 195–97). Neither does justice to the NT text nor to scholarly discussions of those texts.

The commentary contains seven helpful excursuses on such topics as: Abraham’s Career and Legacy; The Patriarch’s Wealth; Melchizedek; Faith and Obedience; The Sacrifice of Isaac; Edom and the Edomites; and Levirate Marriages. A select bibliography is included along with a subject index, person index, and Scripture index. An index to Jewish sources and the Dead Sea Scrolls would have been helpful. Overall, the commentary is carefully written and pays close attention to contemporary scholarship. While clearly on the “conservative” side of the debate about biblical history, Mathews interacts well with current scholarship. This commentary will be a valuable tool for both scholar and pastor.

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Numbers. By Rolf P. Knierim and George W. Coats. FOTL 4. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, 367 pp., \$34.65 paper.

This commentary on Numbers comes as a combined effort from the desks of Rolf Knierim (professor emeritus, School of Theology at Claremont) and George Coats (professor emeritus at Lexington Theological Seminary), two seasoned scholars making their contribution to the FOTL series (The Forms of the Old Testament Literature). To understand this commentary is to understand that it flows very directly from the objectives articulated for the series itself. The FOTL series seeks to apply form criticism to each book of the OT so as to lay bare its literary form and describe the social and historical setting suggested by that form. This social and literary setting is not the “historical situation” implied in the text (i.e. reflections on the wilderness journey flowing from the

hand of Moses) but the conditions of the writers who lived almost a millennium after the events they report. The intentions or meaningfulness of the text is then postulated by examining the intentions of the literary form within that later writer's social and historical context.

In the first chapter, the authors articulate their view of Numbers as a whole. Here Knierim and Coats propose that Numbers is a complex composition whose material is derived from a variety of sources. Much of the material was transformed through a stage of oral transmission before finding its way into print. The text of Numbers they analyze includes material from the J and P sources dating to the time of the monarchy, which were edited and put into the present form by priestly writers (P) in the days following the Babylonian Exile (ca. 587 BC). Knierim and Coats propose the sources are manipulated and organized by the priestly authors in a bid to organize the Israel cult-military campaign community around the central sanctuary. As this is being done, the priestly writers seek to validate their own authority by demonstrating the way in which the authority of Aaron is derived from the authority of Moses. In serving those goals, Knierim and Coats propose the text be divided into two main sections under the theme "The Saga of the Migratory Campaign." Part one is entitled "The Legend of the Organization of the Sanctuary Campaign (1:1–10:10)." Part two is entitled "The Saga of the Campaign Itself (10:11–36:13)."

In the pages that follow the introduction, the commentary chapters respond to and illustrate these premises related to organization of the text and to the intentions of the author(s). Each chapter's organization follows a consistent and clear outline. The text unit under discussion is defined and placed in outline form. A detailed defense of that outline and structure follows with frequent reference to the details found within the Hebrew text. (While knowledge of Hebrew is not assumed by the authors, some of the evidence in this section of the commentary will only be intelligible to the reader with knowledge of that language.) Following this initial conversation on structure, the authors then suggest a genre identification for that text unit (e.g. report, instruction, saga, story, or etiology). From that identification, the authors next propose a social setting for the authorship of the text unit. This setting consistently reflects their views of priestly authorship in the days following the Babylonian Exile. The reader will then meet a summary of the intentions of the priestly writer composing in that social/historical context. Each chapter concludes with a lengthy bibliography specifically related to that unit of text.

As a whole, the commentary is well organized, true to the goals of its series, and passionate about defining the structure of individual text units. That definition always consumes the greatest number of pages in any one of the chapters. For the scholar seeking a form-critical treatment of Numbers, this is clearly the book to buy. It also may serve the evangelical Christian, but in a more restricted way. Evangelical scholars collecting a bibliography on an individual unit of text or who would like to explore the fine textures of a text unit will find the suggestions in this commentary helpful. Nevertheless, the same readers will be disappointed if they select this volume intending to hear a discussion on the meaningfulness of this narrative as it flows from a desert context, anticipating entrance into the Promised Land in the days of Moses. Since the evangelical reader and the authors part company on the fundamental matter of authorship and setting, they will be tracking very different directions when it comes to the matter of understanding the meaningfulness of a text as it flows from that social and historical context. Thus, while the book may prove a helpful reference source for the evangelical scholar, one would be hard pressed to call it an essential source.

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The Triumph of Grace in Deuteronomy. By Paul A. Barker. Waynesboro, GA: Pater-noster, 2004, 269 pp., \$33.99.

This monograph, a largely unchanged version of the author's 1995 Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Bristol, is a synchronic textual analysis of selected passages in Deuteronomy. Barker investigates the theological relationship between Israel's failure and Yahweh's faithfulness in three episodes (Deuteronomy 1–3, 8–10, and 29–30). These passages are chosen because they describe three major failures on Israel's account: the retelling of the spies incident (failure to possess the land); the retelling of the golden calf incident (failure to keep the law); and the future prediction of failure and exile. Even though each of these texts recites a key paradigmatic failure on the part of Israel, Barker's thesis is that in each of these accounts, hope is grounded not in any change or repentance on Israel's part, but specifically in Yahweh's faithfulness to the promises to Abraham. Thus, even though God's people are expected to be faithless, Yahweh's faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant is juxtaposed in these passages and is determinative to maintain an ongoing relationship.

This study offers a corrective to the majority of critical diachronic approaches that are often unconcerned with theology. Barker argues that Deuteronomy has a theology that encompasses and integrates both Horeb and Abraham, both law and promise. He lays out a strong and convincing case that law derives from promise, which Barker then defines as "grace" (p. 5).

A key argument of Barker's thesis is the use of the theme of circumcising the heart found in Deut 10:16 and 30:6. He argues that Yahweh will do for Israel what she is incapable of doing in her own strength or ability. In other words, Yahweh will act on Israel's heart to enable her to do what she is otherwise unable to do, namely, that which is required to keep the covenant (p. 164). This circumcision of the heart is thus an act of grace. Deuteronomy has appropriated this physical sign and applied it metaphorically to Israel's heart, recognizing that the covenant relationship depends upon the internal state of the nation's heart and not mere external obedience (p. 169). Barker thus attempts to relate Abraham and Sinai theologically, and argues that in Deuteronomy there is a priority of grace over law, for it is in Yahweh's actions upon which Israel must ultimately depend rather than her own obedience and effort. Law and obedience are then to be regarded as the response to grace. Barker takes a theocentric approach to solving the dilemma of Israel's unfaithfulness since Israel is incapable of obeying the law on her own.

There are on average six footnotes per page, so this work is obviously well researched and documented. The bibliography contains a comprehensive list of scholarly commentaries and articles on Deuteronomy up until 1995. Barker marshals a host of exegetical tools such as structure (chiasm and parallel panels), *Leitwörter*, and other literary features (such as word plays) to go along with his lexical, grammatical, and syntactical study. Therefore, there is a sense that "no stone is left unturned" in each of the seven chapters of Deuteronomy under study. Barker does a solid job comparing the differences between passages in Deuteronomy with parallel passages in Numbers and Exodus, and in so doing uncovers much of the theological richness of this key book of the Pentateuch.

On occasion, Barker does bring in highly speculative arguments, only to then quickly dismiss them. This makes following his line of thinking somewhat disjointed at times. He is often critical of other scholars' attempts to lay out chiastic structure, but since he frequently uses such structural displays as main supports for many of his arguments, he would probably be better served if he would clearly display his view of a passage's structure first. Barker also has a tendency to rely heavily upon secondary sources to discuss matters of Hebrew grammar and syntax instead of upon the standard lexicons and advanced grammars. And while this book would help many pastors frame the grace/

law debate, the multitude of untranslated German and French phrases used throughout may hinder a number of readers from fully following Barker's line of argumentation.

One wishes Barker would have taken the time to address the implications of his arguments for reading what is commonly called "Deuteronomistic history," because his book so cogently challenges the presuppositions of diachronic critical approaches. He is to be commended for treating Deuteronomy canonically and for also seeing the intertextuality of these verses with later passages like Jeremiah 31 and Romans 10.

Those who are interested in the law/grace discussion as well as those who desire to see a good model of a synchronic biblical-theological approach would do well to consult Barker's important contribution on the book of Deuteronomy.

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Joshua to Chronicles: An Introduction. By Antony Campbell. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004, vii + 267 pp., 29.95.

Joshua to Chronicles is another contribution by Campbell, who serves as Professor of OT at Jesuit Theological College, Austria, to the historical books of the OT. Apart from this work and *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History* (2000, co-authored with Mark O'Brien), Campbell has written most extensively on 1–2 Samuel and Kings (1975, 1986, 1988, 2005).

The brief introduction (pp. 1–13) to *Joshua to Chronicles* outlines Campbell's agenda for his work. The introduction is a discussion of the process of interpretation that he likens to getting to know family members (p. 1). Just as we need to know our family from the inside, so we need to know the Scriptures in this way (p. 2). For Campbell, an inside look at the Scriptures involves a commitment to the historical-critical method and to literary analysis. His overview of *Joshua to Chronicles* is an attempt to broker a successful marriage between these two interpretative paradigms (p. 9).

Given the nature of the historical-critical and literary paradigms of interpretation, Campbell explains the role of faith in the interpretative process. Although Campbell never defines faith, he does see it as critical to one's tradition and central to how the Bible is viewed. In addition, faith will determine how the difficulties of sacred texts are handled. According to Campbell, faith discerns the presence and activity of God but is not given access to the evident and the unmediated revelation of God (p. 10). Using the creation material as an illustration of how faith works, Campbell claims that faith believes that God is Creator, but it does not need to know how God created.

Within this interpretative grid, Campbell surveys *Joshua to Chronicles* as texts that recount the struggle of Israel for its destiny, its faith, and its meaning as the people of God. Although these books look like history, they are better described as theological texts in which the thinkers within Israel attempted to interpret people's experience to stake out their territory (*Joshua*); to find behaviors that enable them to keep old ways; and to find new prosperity in the land (*Judges*), to have a monarchy (*Samuel and Kings*), and to understand the temple story (*Chronicles*). In each canonical section, Campbell pursues his task of exploration and interpretation. Campbell's interpretative task does not include observing historical reliability.

Following the introduction, Campbell crafts five chapters to explore and to interpret *Joshua to Chronicles*. First *Chronicles* 1–22 is discussed in connection with 1 and 2 *Samuel* (chap. 4), while 1 *Chronicles* 23–2 *Chronicles* 36 is presented in connection with 1 and 2 *Kings* (chap. 5). Ruth is concisely handled in three pages since its canonical place is with the Writings (p. 107).

The overall structure of each chapter within the book fits the secondary title, "An Overview." The chapters follow a common pattern of investigating the textual markers that govern its interpretation (p. 20). Campbell's overall understanding of Joshua to Chronicles is regulated by a commitment to a Josianic deuteronomistic history (p. 53). Campbell adeptly crafts each chapter in light of relevant resources and biblical references. References are imbedded in the text, bibliographies conclude each chapter, and the book includes a final bibliography of select commentaries along with a Scripture index.

Campbell's treatment of each book in the overview is brief, leaving the reader to sympathize with Campbell's lament regarding not being able to do more (p. 198). In the brevity of his presentation, Campbell resists interpreting Israel's experience, perhaps to leave it for the reader to do so within his or her own tradition (p. 2). The chapters demonstrate little or no attempt to articulate the relevance, the need for, or the use of the story. For example, when discussing the stories of David's middle years, Campbell reminds the reader that the focus of the material is not on the history of the text but on what story is and how the story is told. He offers no suggestions as to how to interpret the story (p. 159).

Throughout the work Campbell underscores the fact that the canonical texts of Joshua to Chronicles have little or no historical relevance (pp. 52, 62, 99, 157, 159). This undercurrent leaves the reader with the impression that the text is a literary ruin. For example, on page 63, Campbell writes, "Joshua 1–12 is a highly inadequate portrayal of taking 'the whole land' (Josh 11:23)." When commenting on Judges, Campbell observes, "Overall, the uncertainties associated with these texts are too many and the hypothetical aspect of any reconstruction is too great do more than observe the signals in the text and ponder" (p. 90). Similar comments can be read on pages 94, 142, and 232.

On a more positive note, Campbell has contributed a concise close reading of the historical material from Joshua to Chronicles. His focus on text signals is profitable and does provide the reader windows into areas of further study. Although I do not share Campbell's pre-understandings or interpretative commitments, I can appreciate how his pre-understandings cause me to pay more attention to the biblical text I am reading.

With regard to how *Joshua to Chronicles* fits in the field of study with works of a similar genre, I am not optimistic. I wonder what is new after reading this work. Campbell falls short of constructing a bridge between the historical and literary paradigms, and he brings nothing new or relevant to the workings of the historical-critical method. In fact, his conclusions are predictable. On the literary side, he offers no convincing argument for not reading Joshua to Chronicles as historical narrative.

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Ruth: A Continental Commentary. By André LaCocque. Translated by K. C. Hanson. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

André LaCocque is Emeritus Professor of Hebrew Bible at Chicago Theological Seminary, but was raised in Liège, Belgium. He is the author of numerous works, including several works on the books of Daniel and Jonah.

In this offering on Ruth, LaCocque argues that the biblical book is itself a commentary on Torah, and a subversive one at that. He sees Ruth as a socio-legal commentary written during the fifth century BC and aimed at the narrow interpretation of the Torah that was commonplace during the reforms and ethnic purges of Ezra and Nehemiah. Furthermore, LaCocque classifies Ruth as a novella or a history-like story (p. 9).

However, he sees nothing truly historical about it, viewing it instead as a unified work of fiction written by a female author. He cites the creation of a Moabite ancestress of David and the migration of starving Judeans to Moab as two examples of historical impossibilities and evidence for its fifth-century authorship (pp. 13–15).

LaCocque comments on several themes in Ruth. The vast majority of them, however, hinge on the idea of *hesed*, which the author translates in several different ways, including “love,” “faithfulness,” and “goodness.” For example, one of the themes LaCocque expounds is the contagious nature of Ruth’s goodness. Her self-sacrificing love brings out the goodness in others. Related to this idea is the theme of mutual restoration. The fates of Ruth and Naomi are intertwined, and one cannot be restored without the other.

The roles of Ruth and Naomi are also illustrative of the general reinterpretation of traditional roles in the book. Women play a significant role in the book of Ruth, and the curse on Moab is obliterated. Indeed, the problem of a foreigner, understood to be someone who is both geographically displaced and someone who questions habits and traditions, is central to the book of Ruth (p. 24). This foreigner problem is the staging ground for the subversive message that the essence of Torah is *hesed* (here “love”) in contrast to the law of Ezra. The triumph of the character of Ruth leads to the principle that “God is greater than His law” (p. 28). After all, LaCocque argues, while God prohibits dealings with foreigners, his purpose is accomplished through a foreigner. Indeed, he points out that all the matriarchs were foreigners (p. 119). Therefore, *hesed* is the virtue of excess (p. 28). It goes beyond the law in order to accomplish the law.

Thus, for LaCocque, “To give priority to the commandment over the Law is absolutely subversive. Respecting the letter of the law is conservative” (p. 31). It is *hesed* that elevates the actions of Naomi and Ruth to the sacred. Here LaCocque points out similarities between the actions of Ruth and Naomi and of Tamar in Genesis 38. Yet, he is careful to note that the actions of these women cannot be understood as the end justifying the means. The actions of Ruth, Naomi, and Tamar are all justified both teleologically and in their intention. It is the desire of the women to fulfill the law and make sure that the genealogical line continues in Israel. For the author of the book of Ruth, then, only the “generous interpretation of the Torah prevails over meticulous but narrow observation” (p. 108). The key to the Law is freely-given love that refuses to categorize others. Therefore, Ruth is the exemplar of *hesed*, the basis of God’s covenant with his people, and a forerunner of the hermeneutic of Jesus.

LaCocque’s commentary does not attempt to survey the various views on Ruth but rather puts forward his own perspective and then sets out to prove his point. Conservative scholars will disagree with many of LaCocque’s assumptions surrounding the date of authorship, intended audience, and historical veracity. Yet this does not diminish the value of many of his insights. For example, LaCocque’s analysis of the relationship of *hesed* to Torah and the book of Ruth as a commentary on this relationship is valuable, even if one disagrees on the setting and date. In other words, LaCocque’s commentary makes many theological contributions and should be integrated into any discussion on the book of Ruth.

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1–2 Chronicles. By Steven L. McKenzie. AOTC. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004, 381 pp., \$36.00.

Steven L. McKenzie is Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. McKenzie’s many works on Chronicles have propelled him to

the forefront of Chronicles studies. *1–2 Chronicles* in the Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries series is McKenzie's latest contribution to the field.

The Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries seek to provide pastors and students with critical studies of the OT. The series seeks to exemplify "informed and critical engagement with the biblical texts themselves" (p. 11). The base text for the series is the NRSV. This is an attempt to maintain accessibility to the non-technical audience, but it serves to place distance between the commentary and the text. Although McKenzie at several key junctures does show his use of the Hebrew original, he generally stays within the format of the series relying on the translation for purposes of discussion.

The layout of the series follows a three-pronged discussion of each pericope. Each pericope begins with a literary analysis, followed by an exegetical analysis, and finally a theological analysis. As with other series that follow this format (e.g. WBC), the discussions can become unwieldy, as one has to read all three sections to follow through on certain arguments, instead of having an integrated argument for each pericope.

In the introduction, McKenzie discusses the normal matters of authorship, dating, setting, and theology of Chronicles. When McKenzie discusses the dating of the text, he demonstrates the strength of his exegetical tendencies, because he makes the basis of his dating the internal evidence of the genealogies and their extension into the post-exilic era. He notes that an exact time is not possible due to text-critical difficulties. For example, does the Davidic genealogy in 1 Chr 3:17–24 extend nine or fourteen generations past Jeconiah (pp. 31, 77–78)? This leads McKenzie to posit a range from 400–250 B.C., with 350–300 B.C. as the most likely period within the larger window.

McKenzie contends the main emphasis of the Chronicler is the Davidic monarchy. He sees that all other themes, while important at various levels, are subservient to this greater theme. He notes that some have argued the Chronicler is anti-monarchical and pro-temple. Instead, McKenzie avers that the means by which the Chronicler evaluates a particular king is his relationship to the temple in Jerusalem. Thus, David is elevated based upon his preparations for the temple, and Ahaz is denigrated based upon his apostasy and neglect of the temple. The Chronicler largely ignores the northern kings because he views them as a renegade faction whose infidelity to the temple identifies them as apostate from Yahweh, while at the same time northern Israelites are still within the elect people and not beyond recovery (p. 50).

Exemplary of McKenzie's treatment of the kings of Judah is Ahaz in 2 Chronicles 28 (pp. 334–39). He draws together the various themes the Chronicler finds important: the immediate punishment of rebellion against the temple and the election of all Israel. Central to McKenzie's discussion here is the Chronicler's shift of culpability for the exile from Manasseh, as depicted in Kings, to Ahaz as the "religious nadir" of Judah (p. 334). For unlike Manasseh, who repented while in exile, Ahaz dies in his rebellion. Moreover, during his reign, his deportation to Samaria and return stand as a type for the coming Judean exile. In the final calumny, Ahaz calls Tiglath-Pileser III for help instead of calling on Yahweh. To call on anyone besides Yahweh for help demonstrates a failure on the part of that king. This is the exact sin for which Saul lost the kingship in 1 Chronicles 10 (although McKenzie fails to make this link).

While McKenzie generally sticks to the text of Chronicles, several shortcomings arise. Some of these, however, are the shortcomings of the series and not of McKenzie. First, the use of the critical approach is inimical to the construction of a positive theology, especially with its reliance upon the hermeneutics of suspicion, which leaves final judgment and authority in the hands of the reader and not with the author of the biblical text. Its atomistic and naturalistic presuppositions preclude a faithful understanding of Scripture and cannot lead to finding Scripture "meaningful and instructive" (p. 11). Critical scholarship has only served to enervate the trustworthiness of Scripture in the "communities of faith" (p. 11). Second, as with most other commentaries, it would be helpful to reproduce the text under discussion in the commentary itself. Third, at

several points McKenzie makes assertions and assumptions without the least bit of argumentation. For example, he assumes the Chronicler composed the speeches and prayers to convey his theological purposes (p. 43). This presupposes both a bad memory and a low alphabetization rate among the ancient authors. This is not to suggest the Chronicler has not been selective; all writing by its very nature is selective. However, McKenzie does not even argue for their invention *ex nihilo*, but merely assumes it.

McKenzie's commentary will serve as an entry into the discussion for a novice interested in the current state of Chronicles scholarship. However, contrary to Patrick D. Miller's comments in the foreword, it will not serve the pastor or congregational leader who wishes to have a helpful commentary on 1–2 Chronicles for church ministry.

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Proverbs. Believers Church Bible Commentary. By John W. Miller. Scottsdale and Waterloo: Herald, 2004, 351 pp., \$24.99.

With this commentary in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, John W. Miller shows that historical-critical study of the OT is not dead among evangelicals. Though the series and volume are committed to expounding the plain sense of Scripture, Miller advances the idea that Solomon, the men of Hezekiah, and an unknown editor provided the canonical form of the book of Proverbs. Miller is clear, however, that his affinities with source criticism do not question the inspiration of the text (p. 13).

Miller's main thesis is that Hezekiah's men, who were Levites Hezekiah enlisted to help in his reforms (2 Chronicles 29–31), supplemented Solomon's original edition (much of Prov 1:1–22:17) with poems reflective of their pietistic eighth-century BC views (p. 18). The result of this shaping is a "Yahwehized" book that has a semi-balanced structure of three major parts: Prov 1:1–9:18 (256 verses, Introductory Collection); Prov 10:1–22:16 (375 verses, Main Collection); and Prov 22:17–30:33 (253 verses, Supplemental Collections). Following most scholars, Miller suggests Proverbs 31 was added in the post-exilic period.

Miller then works through the text of Proverbs with a tripartite approach: notes on the text (exegesis); the text in biblical context (historical-critical); and the text in the life of the church (application). He notes that the "source indicators" for Solomon's poems in Proverbs 1–9 are the term "sons," reference to teachers, the watchword of acquiring wisdom, and an absence of references to Yahweh. Conversely, the supplemental poems of Hezekiah's men are denoted by the phrase "my sons"; references to father and mother; the watchword of the "fear of the Lord" as the beginning of wisdom; and a home setting. Miller argues that Solomon's primary purpose was to educate young courtiers. However, he holds that Hezekiah's men enlarged the target audience of the book to those seeking continued education and a homeschooling contingent. While Solomon's original poems are in Prov 1:1–7, 4:1–5:14, and 7:24–9:18, the men of Hezekiah produced Prov 1:8–3:35 and 5:15–7:23. Also, these men added Prov 1:5, 1:7, 8:13, possibly 8:19, and 9:7–10.

Miller approaches Prov 10:1–22:16 thematically. He groups each of the 375 proverbs into one of eight categories: wisdom; nationhood; speech; family; economics; personal relations; matters of the heart; and knowledge of the Holy One. Though Miller holds that many supplemental inserts exist in this section, he does concede that knowing exactly how many additions exist is less clear (p. 323). Though the idea is not belabored, Miller holds that Prov 10:1–22:16 contains three subsections: Prov 10:1–16:1 (37 units of five

proverbs); Prov 16:2–6 (five centric proverbs that focus on Yahweh); and Prov 16:7–22:16 (37 units of five proverbs). With the original Hezekiah edition of the scroll of Proverbs ending at Prov 30:33, the physical center of the scroll, when unrolled for reading, would be the theocentric verses of Prov 16:2–6.

Regarding Prov 22:17–31:31, Miller posits that nameless teachers produced both collections of the sayings of the wise in Proverbs 22–24. He also holds that Proverbs 25–27 are from Solomon but not part of the original Solomonic edition. He argues unconvincingly that Proverbs 28–29 are not Solomonic due to content differences with Proverbs 25–27. Regarding Agur, Miller postulates that this character is not a skeptic, but a devout believer and metaphysically wise Levite who might be responsible for the final editing of the Hezekiah edition of Proverbs. Miller grants Agur this honor since Agur's name occurs at the end of the Hezekiah edition (cf. Deut 34:10–12; Ps 72:20; Eccl 12:9–10). The unique heading of Proverbs 31, the use of Aramaic words, and the unique content of this chapter reveal a post-exilic addition (p. 293).

Miller's approach has excellent organization, an intriguing numeric hypothesis (organization based on the number five), and solid, broad application of truth for the modern church (e.g. socialized Canadian medicine, proper world view, and sexuality fidelity). Regarding gender issues, Miller is bold in stating that the language of Proverbs is geared toward educating young men due to the particular difficulties faced by young males (pp. 26–28). His thematic approach to Prov 10:1–22:16 would be particularly helpful in the classroom.

The work, however, does not provide detailed exegesis like Waltke's recent NICOT volumes. The approach is thematic, yet moderately thorough. Lexical detail is not the focus. However, Miller demonstrates erudition in poetic and structural understanding. Perhaps a rhetorical approach to Proverbs lies in the future.

Though the thesis is insightful, I do question the presuppositions about Solomon. Why assign the seemingly secular passages to Solomon, and what is the basis for saying a watchword for Solomonic authorship is the areligious phrase "acquire wisdom"? If eighth-century BC prophets and an eighth-century BC republication of Deuteronomy demonstrate the impetus for Hezekiah's men to produce pietistic verses, then Solomon's sermon in 1 Kings 8 can certainly demonstrate his piety. Source theory contains the possibility of circular reasoning, and it can provide certain unnecessary hermeneutical challenges.

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Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. Edited by J. Robert Wright. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament 9. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005, xxix + 434 pp., \$40.00.

The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture makes available resources in early Christian exegesis from Clement of Rome in the late first century through John of Damascus (c. AD 750), materials that have been largely inaccessible and therefore disregarded in most recent commentaries. Drawing from analogous collections in the Jewish Talmud, as well as in the medieval and Reformation commentary traditions, this series seeks to respond to what its editor, Thomas Oden, regards "an emerging awareness among Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox laity that vital biblical preaching and spiritual formation need deeper grounding beyond the scope of the historical-critical orientations that have governed biblical studies in our day" (p. xi).

The series, then, sets out to guide the reader to meditate with early Christian writers on the plain sense, theological wisdom, and moral meaning of scriptural texts. The text is divided into pericopes, making use of the RSV translation. The volume editor presents an overview of the patristic comments on the text, tracing the threads of discussion. That is followed by the collection of patristic comments arranged by topical headings. Footnotes are provided to direct the reader to additional relevant patristic data.

The volume under review encompasses the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. A helpful 13-page introduction by the volume editor, J. Robert Wright, summarizes the main patristic commentaries pertaining to these biblical books. Wright notes, "Whereas today the Old Testament is often presented as the Hebrew Scriptures and taught historically only within an ancient Near Eastern context, the material from these earlier commentaries dates from a period when the entire Bible was thought to be a book about Christ and for the church—past, present and future. It is this older wisdom that this series seeks to recover from the earliest Christian times down to the mid-eighth century, drawing from the doctrinal treatises, paraphrases, catechetical instructions, pastoral writings, letters, homilies, and other works of all those writers, as well as from their running commentaries whenever they happen to survive" (p. xxviii).

When measured by the intention of the series, this volume is more than faithful to its stated goal. It is marked by clear organization of the material, useful overviews, and ample and relevant selections of a wide range of patristic texts. In addition, the volume contains several valuable appendices, including a list of all the early writers cited in the book along with their documents, a timeline of the writers of the patristic period together with their geographical locations, brief biographical sketches of the writers, short descriptions of anonymous works, an extensive bibliography of the cited works in their original languages, and indices for authors, writings, subjects, and scriptural references. Although the series claims to be addressed primarily to the laity, this volume contains ample resources for scholars as well. It opens up a valuable body of early commentary that up to now has been available only to patristic experts, and by this means it fills a gaping lacuna in the history of interpretation of the biblical text.

The body of the volume, however, is really a compendium of patristic comments rather than a true commentary on the text of the Bible. No attempt is made to evaluate the comments that are cited, and it is unlikely most laypeople are in a position to critique them. The reader, then, is left asking what to make of all this information. Which comments truly illumine the text, and which actually obscure its meaning? Which comments bring out the Bible's textual meaning, and which import other meanings into the text? Which patristic claims have been supported by subsequent Christian reflection on the text, and which claims have been rejected by the consensus of God's people? In general, the approach taken by this series begs the question of how the consideration of this patristic commentary data fits into the overall hermeneutical process of determining the meaning and significance of the biblical text.

In many respects, this book may be compared with the inaugural volume of *The Church's Bible* series (Eerdmans, 2003), in which Richard A. Norris edited a collection of patristic and medieval commentaries on the Song of Songs. Norris's work is more narrowly focused than is Wright's, in that Norris considers only one biblical book and the comments he includes are more lengthy but less numerous than the selections included in Wright's compendium. Both Wright and Norris present the comments without analysis or interaction with the biblical text or with the discussions of other scholars.

Both of these works attempt to fill an obvious gap in biblical scholarship. For example, two fine recent commentaries on Song of Songs by Richard Hess and Tremper Longman survey briefly the main patristic and medieval commentaries in sections on the history of interpretation in their introductions. However, the bodies of the commentaries do not interact with the early commentary tradition to any significant degree, but

instead draw almost exclusively from scholarly discussions over the past generation. Wright and Norris, on the other hand, present samples of the early commentary texts, but they do not connect them with the biblical text or with recent scholarly critical literature. What remains to be produced is a commentary that integrates exegesis of the text with its total subsequent interpretive history. Traditional textual study must not be abandoned, but it must be brought into conversation with the meditation of God's people throughout the ages, including those voices from the patristic and medieval times that have for the most part been ignored.

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Mythology and Lament: Studies in the Oracles about the Nations. By John B. Geyer. Society for Old Testament Study Series. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, xiii + 214 pp., \$99.95.

John Geyer offers the results of an intensive study of the Oracles against the Nations (or as he prefers, the Oracles *about* the Nations) in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (abbreviated as ON-IJE). The present study incorporates an earlier article (1986) by the author devoted to the ON-IJE with further investigation building upon recent studies of lament passages in the Hebrew Bible set against their larger Near Eastern background.

Geyer holds that the ON-IJE must be investigated, somewhat like an archeological site, at two levels: the most recent is creation mythology, widespread in the ancient Near East; the underlying and foundational level, however, is the Sumerian psalms of lament (p. x). These, Geyer claims, are the key to understanding the intention and meaning of the ON-IJE. He advocates a myth and ritual approach to the OT and is deeply troubled by our modern world and its religious wars. If I have heard Geyer correctly, he wants to contribute to a safer, more humane world by heading off a misappropriation of ancient religious texts for political, nationalistic agendas, a laudable endeavor.

Does Geyer's methodology really expose the intention of these texts? In my opinion, his approach is fundamentally flawed. First, Geyer assumes that myth and ritual lie at the very core of human existence. Everything in the ancient world (and the modern, too) is subconsciously and consciously dictated by certain archetypal patterns. The ON-IJE were preserved because they make a theological statement about the Year of Jubilee, deriving from an inferred New Year festival in ancient Israel (pp. 113–14, 129, 148, 176). This festival had its origin in rituals going back to ancient Sumer. The intention of the ON-IJE is not political; it is theological. They express the conviction that in the end God will restore and reconcile all peoples (pp. 179–82). It must be seriously questioned whether this is so.

Second, Geyer thinks a minute comparison of linguistic phenomena in both ON-IJE and ancient myths and laments points to an elaborate New Year ritual celebrated in the Jerusalem temple (p. 74). This assumption flies in the face of a stubborn fact: there is no *prima facie* evidence in the HB that such a festival ever existed! This supposed festival has been inferred from linguistic parallels and a creative reading between the lines (cf. p. 181). Is it not extraordinary, assuming Geyer's thesis, that we have not one clear reference to the festival either in Israel's cultic texts or historical narratives?

Third, the argument from linguistic parallels is hardly as persuasive as Geyer thinks it is. Simply because we have similar vocabulary in ON-IJE, creation myths, Jerusalem temple rituals, and Sumerian laments does not mean we have discovered the origins

of the ON-IJE. Virtually all OT scholars recognize that the Hebrew prophets and poets incorporate mythopoeic and ritual imagery in their writings. But the historical contexts of the ON-IJE determine their meaning and significance, not an inferred Jerusalem temple ritual and its associated myths.

Geyer's approach reminds me of Origen's allegorical method. Like Origen, he knows what the texts are really about. As an exegete, he wants to show us what is really there behind and beneath the text. Origen, of course, discovered Christian truth everywhere embedded in the text of the OT; Geyer finds the primal myths and rituals that explain these ancient writings. In fact, he has explained nothing.

Geyer affirms that God is holy and desires for all to be restored and returned to Eden. Evangelicals affirm what Geyer affirms but lament what he does not. God's historic and eschatological judgments get short shrift because particularism is not Geyer's frame of reference. Universalism is clearly his preferred theological orientation. In short, the theological message of the ON-IJE has been neutered.

This is not to say there is no profit in the book. Geyer can help evangelical interpreters be more aware of the mythical and ritual imagery prophets have incorporated into their oracles—a tribute to their literary creativity. But their oracles are grounded in the firm soil of historical realities; they are both theological and political.

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Isaiah as Liturgy. By Michael Goulder. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004, 153 pp., \$95.00.

This small volume is one of a series of monographs by members of the Society for Old Testament Study. The author assumes the critical opinion that the book of Isaiah, though begun in the land of Israel in the eighth century BC by the son of Amoz and supplemented by a "Deutero-Isaiah" (DI) of exilic times (early sixth century BC) among non-transported Jews, was completed among returnees in Israel by a "Trito-Isaiah" (TI) in the late sixth century BC. The author proposes Isaiah delivered his messages orally, evidently as an officer of the king's court, at the time of the annual fall observance of the feast of Sukkot. Goulder postulates a day of national humiliation on the 14th of Tishri to begin what then would be eight successive days. He finds support for this arrangement in Isaiah's time in Psalms (Pss 42–49, 84–85, 87–89). He refers to his earlier book, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah*, where he argued these psalms were originally used in rituals at the sanctuary at Dan, and after the fall of Samaria were transferred to Jerusalem.

Goulder proposes a new analysis of Isaiah into eight parts, each part of a "liturgy" for one of the eight days of the fall feast. According to the author, Isaiah publicly presented a distinct message for the ceremonies of each of the eight days. These were spoken at some designated place in the ceremonies in Jerusalem.

Isaiah himself spoke the core messages. These were glossed, modified, and enlarged by his disciples through the generations to fit the greatly changing conditions of the nation of Judah, chief of these disciples being DI and TI.

Professor Goulder proposes the rites of the Jerusalem festival were elaborate affairs employing "lengthy rituals" (pp. 7–10). The burden of the book is to set forth how the book of Isaiah in final form came to existence, through the changing times, as liturgy (e.g. ritual speech and chant) for the eight days of Sukkot.

Goulder's introduction sets forth his eight sections of Isaiah by suggesting they were attached sequentially to the feast's eight successive days. He relies mainly on the problems with the widespread "literary theory" (p. 1) and the cogency of his eight chapters to follow, one chapter on each of the proposed eight liturgical units composing the book of Isaiah. The chapters are as follows:

(1) The Reproaches (Isaiah 1–5): This section provides liturgy for the postulated day of national repentance. Goulder transfers certain features of Yom Kippur to this day. The reproaches of Isaiah 1 are joined to those of Psalm 50. This is probably the best fit of all eight days in Goulder's construction.

(2) The Royal Oracles (Isaiah 6–12): This section is designed to glorify the royal monarchy, the house of David. Goulder provides no comments regarding the son of Mary as Immanuel.

(3) The Nations (Isaiah 13–20): Goulder suggests the oracles against the nations are from different periods, since Isaiah could not have prophesied against Babylon long before Babylon was an important enemy.

(4) The Myth of the *Völkersturm* (Isa 21:1–30:7): The German word means "attack of the peoples." The eschatological prophecy of Isaiah 24–27, an OT parallel to the book of Revelation sometimes called the "Little Apocalypse," falls in this section—all limited by Goulder to OT horizons.

(5) The City of God (Isa 30:8–39:8): Goulder supposes these prophecies were recited to or by assembled crowds, perpetuating "the national myth of God's inviolable city" (p. 95).

(6) Good News of Victory (Isaiah 40–48): According to Goulder, much in these chapters was "composed, or at least brought together by, a different author from our 'basic,' eighth-century Isaiah: a mid-sixth century prophet who speaks of Cyrus and the coming fall of Babylon, whom we know as Deutero-Isaiah" (p. 111).

(7) Return from Death (Isaiah 49–57): Up to this point, DI's vision (chaps. 40–48) has been "addressed to the Jews in Judah" promising to "restore the survivors of [in] Israel." Now "the proclamation must be to the Diaspora also, therefore to the Gentile World." The suffering servant of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is "his servant the exiled Jehoiachin, Israel's representative both in past suffering and future rule" (pp. 136–37), a future rule DI expected but that never happened.

(8) Triumph (Isaiah 58–66): "DI had [written or spoken] the material of 60–62, three triumphant chapters . . . but such fantasies grated against the realities of the late sixth century" (p. 139). So TI and other redactors put together these final chapters to fit the times. The author then summarizes what he deems to be the results of his survey and arguments (pp. 147–49).

The book ends with a few pages of bibliography, mostly of literary criticism not of exegesis or exposition, and an index of authors cited.

The author concludes by saying that prophecy, written down after the oral speaking of it ceased, became "a dead letter, fit for the learned to turn over in a *beth-hamidrash* or a university" (p. 148). No applicability to Christmas, Passion Week, or Easter enters Goulder's text. This is a book for antiquarians.

It appears to me that the reading of this book, though perhaps of interest to those whose specialty might be higher criticism or related topics, is of small benefit to anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the book of Isaiah for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction.

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Jeremiah. By Louis Stulman. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005, xxi + 400 pp., \$39.00 paper.

The Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries series seeks to supply a compact, critical, OT commentary collection for theological students and pastors, hoping it will also be helpful for “upper-level college and university students and those responsible for teaching in congregational settings” (p. xiii). The volumes of this series are meant not only to provide basic information and insights into OT writings, but also to “exemplify the tasks and procedures of careful interpretation” (p. xiii). Writers from differing theological, educational, and professional backgrounds have been selected, including university professors of religion, which is the current position of the author of this volume: Louis Stulman is Professor of Religion at University of Findlay, Findlay, Ohio.

After 35 pages of introduction to the book of Jeremiah, Stulman divides the text of Jeremiah first into two large thematic units of chapters 1–25 and 26–52 (associated with “plucking up” and “pulling down,” “building” and “planting,” respectively). He then divides each major unit into smaller units that usually consist of several chapters (e.g. chaps. 2–6), and further into subsections (e.g. 2:1–4:4; 4:5–6:30), discussing each subsection. He follows the format established by Abingdon for the series, using the headings of “Literary Analysis,” “Exegetical Analysis,” and “Theological and Ethical Analysis.” These subsections are broken down into smaller consecutive units in the exegetical section for comment. This volume is not a verse-by-verse commentary. At the end of the book the author includes a list of works cited (one must look closely to find any evangelical sources), and a short list of briefly annotated commentaries from widely differing points of view.

The reference version used for this commentary series is the NRSV. Because of the compact nature of this commentary, relatively few passages of Jeremiah are cited in full, and no footnotes appear. Stulman comments on the Hebrew and Greek texts of Jeremiah in connection with the problem of differences between the MT and LXX versions of Jeremiah and in connection with a few places where the Hebrew has serious problems. A number of Hebrew words are mentioned throughout but usually only where Stulman sees issues of motif or theological importance.

Stulman’s approach to Jeremiah is similar to that of a number of other current scholars, including A. R. Pete Diamond and Kathleen M. O’Connor, with whom he has been associated. Stulman notes that they challenge the “assumption that understanding of the workings ‘behind the text’ provides the key to its present form” (p. 12); they are not very concerned with historical questions about such things as which passages were originally from Jeremiah himself and the authorship and dating of the material that makes up the book of Jeremiah; and they assume that “meaning is derived from the text ‘in front of us’” (p. 13). He sees the MT as an expansion of a shorter text, not the LXX as a condensation of the longer MT. He believes that in its present form the text of Jeremiah is the product of many voices, with widely differing views, crafted into an understandable unity after the 587 BC destruction of Jerusalem, initially for the theological encouragement of Jewish deportees who resided in Babylon. This crafting process may have continued for several centuries.

Stulman seems to see the book of Jeremiah as a theological work which attempts to state divergent opinions on how to deal with, among other things, the social and religious losses connected with the events of 587 BC, including “temple, system of worship, covenant, election, land claims, royal theology” (p. 15), and how hope for the future can be found in these losses. He is concerned with the passages where theodicy is addressed, often stating the situation in such a way that one gathers that reconciliation of the issues are near to impossible, with God being on the edge of being the unjust one. The author reacts negatively to the idea of violence, giving little attention to the ongoing concept

of “terror” and “terror on every side” that runs throughout the book of Jeremiah. In his theological and ethical comments on Jeremiah 16–17, which are concerned with the Sabbath, he goes so far as to bring the current international situation into his cross-hairs, condemning both the terrorists and “imperial exploits” for the “seemingly unending cycles of violence” that have come out of the 9/11 events, decrying the losses in international cooperation (pp. 178–79).

His treatment of the passages where the Hebrew word *shub* (“to turn,” “to return,” “to repent”) is used is helpful, as are other word and concept summaries throughout the book. The author would not have had to work so hard explaining several passages if the secondary meaning of *shama* (“to obey”) had been noted straightaway. While printing errors do manage to find their way into a published work, one consequential example should be noted here where four errors of transliteration occur in the last paragraph on page 147: “Sheol” and the verb “to ask” or “to inquire” should end in the letter ל and not ד .

The strongest aspect of this volume is the author’s effort to show the unity of the book of Jeremiah in the face of many past commentators’ contentions to the contrary. Stulman recognizes that prose seams of common material frame literary units of what may be called symbolic tapestry. At times, on the other hand, I wondered whether the defense of this observation was more important to the author than explaining the meaning of the text. Perhaps more effort should have been made to restrict the material in the literary, exegetical, and the theological and ethical analytical sections to the appropriate section; the overlap of literary and theological information into the exegetical section seemed excessive and repetitive.

These observations notwithstanding, many university students would probably enjoy reading this book that challenges both conservative and established scholastic views.

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A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed. By James D. G. Dunn. Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005, 136 pp., \$12.99 paper.

In 2003, James Dunn, now Emeritus Lightfoot Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham, published his prodigious *Jesus Remembered*, the first volume in a projected trilogy on *Christianity in the Making*. As has become common among recent writers of large books on the historical Jesus, Dunn has now provided a readable “digest” of some of his most significant contributions in that bigger volume, as a part of the Hayward Lectureship in the Acadia Divinity School and in the Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology series.

The first of three main chapters introduces Dunn’s thesis that there never was a time when the Gospel tradition was free from faith. That is to say, the pre-Easter tradition of Jesus’ words and deeds, as transmitted by his followers, involved faith commitments from the start—faith to leave home and families, faith to follow him, and faith to go out even while he was still alive and begin to replicate his ministry. Thus the commonplace of the various historical Jesus quests that one must separate the Christ of faith from the Jesus of history is in fact a chimera. The only Jesus historians, or anyone else, will ever have access to, through the Bible and through all other relevant historical sources, will be the *remembered* Jesus—the figure as he appeared and was recalled by his followers (and others).

The second chapter argues that the historical Jesus quests have been improperly dominated by exclusively literary paradigms. True, form criticism, whose heyday is well past, studied the earliest period of the transmission of Gospel tradition, namely, the oral stage. However, subsequently most critics have assumed that, after the first Gospel sources began to be written, all changes proceeded by conscious editorial redaction of existing *documents*, and today *literary* criticism has supplanted both form and redaction criticism as the regnant paradigm in Gospel studies. The almost exclusively oral/aural culture of the first-century Mediterranean world is tacitly abandoned in the process. Dunn helpfully surveys the most important recent studies of the varying degrees of fixity and flexibility in ancient oral tradition in general and in the Gospels in particular. He finds Kenneth Bailey's work particularly helpful, as on the one hand it stresses the checks and balances within a traditional *community's* responsibility to preserve its sacred traditions intact, while on the other hand giving considerable creative freedom in each new setting's retelling. By Dunn's own admission, the more disturbing of these two results is the latter, because it calls into question even the concept of one original, fixed version of any story.

The third chapter laments the tendency in historical Jesus research to focus too much on the *distinctive* Jesus at the expense of the *characteristic* Jesus. So much scholarship throughout the twentieth century was influenced by Germany, and so much of twentieth-century Germany was influenced by anti-Semitism, that we should not be surprised to discover a preference for the least Jewish elements of Christ. A second flaw of the quests has been to look for one key element in the Gospels that forms bedrock authentic tradition and then build one's entire portrait of Jesus on top of it. Instead, one should compile a full cluster of characteristic Jesus themes, such as his interest in typical Jewish debates, a public mission centered in Galilee, the preaching of God's present and future royal rule in history, the Son of Man, parables, the use of "amen" to introduce many of his sayings with the aura of solemn pronouncement, his starting point in the mission of John the Baptist, exorcisms, and the announcement of coming judgment on the apathetic in Israel should they not repent.

A chapter-length appendix adds a revised version of Dunn's 2003 *NTS* article, itself stemming from his SNTS presidential address of 2002, on "Altering the Default Setting: Re-envisaging the Early Transmission of the Jesus Tradition." Herein lies a more technically sophisticated plea to replace the exclusively literary paradigms in Gospels scholarship with ones that leave sufficient room for the oral/aural culture of the day. As in his big book, Dunn helpfully excerpts segments from a synopsis so that readers can compare the parallels that he thinks most likely reflect the developing oral tradition rather than the evangelists' redaction of their sources. Yet his thesis is modest (and therefore plausible) enough to still allow for Markan priority and the Q hypothesis, just without allowing those theories free reign over every last scrap of data!

Readers familiar with Dunn's leading role in the so-called "new perspective" on Paul might be forgiven for thinking that this book heralded something comparable with respect to Jesus. In fact, there is nothing new in this book about *Jesus* at all; indeed, the characteristic features Dunn highlights in his third chapter have often proved central to previous reconstructions of the man from Nazareth, even when *distinctives* came more to the fore. Rather, this small volume represents a new perspective on the Jesus tradition or, better, a return to what Martin Kähler stressed more than one hundred years ago in his *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, as Dunn himself points out. However, the use of much more recent studies of the nature of the oral transmission of epic stories in pre-literate Middle Eastern communities provides added weight and credibility to the argument.

It is unfortunate that the Fourth Gospel still remains the outsider to this and most similar discussions, especially in light of Richard Bauckham's persuasive *via media* between pure independence and pure dependence of John on the Synoptics. It might

have been nice had Dunn entered into explicit conversation with N. T. Wright or Gerd Theissen and Anette Merz, with their equivalent “double similarity and dissimilarity” criterion and “criterion of historical plausibility.” Clearly, we need *both* the distinctive *and* the characteristic. The door remains wide open for some researcher to follow up Dunn’s suggestive presentation of those Synoptic parallels, in which he thinks oral tradition accounts for the conceptual similarities without too much verbatim parallelism better than redaction of sources, with a more rigorous empirical analysis to see if a list of features could be amassed that signaled when one rather than the other process was at work. Yet these *desiderata* for future scholarship merely testify to the programmatic and fresh nature of Dunn’s study.

As in many of his other works, there are a few too many sentence fragments to attribute them just to a vivid (oral?) style of writing (see e.g. the back-to-back “sentences” immediately after the first complete sentence on p. 31). However, these scarcely overshadow the immense value of this slim book. Scholars must come to grips with *Jesus Remembered*; everyone else can choose if they want to do so or not, after a careful reading of this more concise offering. In either case, Dunn has provided a crucial corrective to many scholarly “consensus” claims.

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Jesus, a Jewish Galilean: A New Reading of the Jesus-Story. By Sean Freyne. London: T & T Clark International, 2004, xiii + 212 pp., \$24.95 paper.

Contemporary depictions of the “historical Jesus” are often flawed by the same tendency Schweitzer had earlier exposed in the liberal lives of Jesus. That is to say, Jesus is conceived and presented with modern (postmodern?) sensibilities and predispositions. In chapter 1 (Jesus, Jews and Galilee) Freyne is acutely aware of this tendency and seeks to avoid it, not by achieving some impossible state of objectivity but by seeking what is historically plausible and honest.

The study of Jesus during the twentieth century was heavily influenced by the criteria of authenticity, which were taken to an extreme and tendentiously applied by the Jesus Seminar. In particular, the criterion of dissimilarity has received a great deal of attention. Yet Freyne rightly finds this criterion too restrictive. In place of a rigid application of dissimilarity (see the Jesus Seminar) Freyne, following Theissen, suggests a more reasonable criterion of “contextual plausibility” (pp. 11–12). It is, according to Freyne, quite likely that Jesus was informed and influenced by the stories and culture of Judaism as he experienced it (p. 22). It would be highly implausible to think that none of this religious, cultural, social, and historical tradition was to be found in his teaching.

Freyne sees an informed understanding of Galilee as essential for a contextually or historically plausible portrait of Jesus. In the past too little attention has been given to such an understanding. Rather, Galilee was simplistically presented in terms compatible with the purposes of the scholar who happened to be writing. This oversight is being corrected, since there has been a significant increase in interest in Galilee and a great deal of informative archaeological work has been done. Of course, much work remains, and Freyne warns that we should be cautious in any reconstruction based on limited evidence (pp. 13–16).

Drawing on the work of Halvor Moxnes, Freyne attempts to explore Galilee as “contested space” in which Jesus sought “to challenge the prevailing sense of place that was Herodian Galilee” (p. 19). Instead of the dominant sense, Jesus attempted to present

an alternative conception that encompassed religious categories, social order, geography, and even ecology.

In chapter 2 (Jesus and the Ecology of Galilee) Freyne attempts to place Jesus fully within the Galilean context. He discusses at length some of the economic and geographic aspects of first-century Galilee (e.g. the fishing industry, pp. 50–53). In addition to this he explores Jesus' relationship to the natural environment of the region. Lest one think this is simply based on a modern ecological agenda, Freyne establishes the connection between concern for the natural environment of "the land" and the teaching of the Hebrew scribes and prophets (e.g. Deut 8:11–16, cf. pp. 30–31; Jeremiah 24, 31, and 32, cf. pp. 33–34). He establishes the importance of the land not only as the place of God's blessing but also as a measure of the spiritual condition of the people.

Freyne maintains that the teaching of Jesus, especially that found in the parables and wisdom-type sayings, may well be informed by this concern for the land. While he does not fully develop this theme, it appears there is something to be said for investigating it further. If nothing else, it may serve as a needed corrective to the "semi-agnostic" tendency to think of Jesus as merely concerned with the "souls" of his people, as if the rest of their existence was inconsequential.

Chapter 3 (Stories of the Conquest and Settlement) examines literary and archaeological data to determine the probable population composition of first-century Galilee. In his earlier work Freyne had accepted that the Galileans were descendants of the Israelites with a virtually uninterrupted Israelite presence in the region. He has since revised this view and concludes that there was no substantial evidence of such an ongoing presence in Galilee (p. 62).

In light of the Gentile/pagan presence in Galilee, Freyne considers how Jesus would have viewed this region and its people. He suggests a dichotomy between two Pentateuchal narratives with respect to pagan presence in the land. In the Abraham narrative (Genesis) Freyne finds an acceptance and universalistic openness (pp. 68–69), while in Deuteronomy and conquest narratives there is a marked nationalistic tone (pp. 70–73), which encompasses an anti-Gentile attitude. Freyne willingly accepts that Jesus was active in the region of Galilee, and he is convinced that Jesus was more in keeping with the Abrahamic sense of universalism, although he does not think Jesus was involved in any overtly Gentile mission (p. 83).

In chapter 4 (Zion Beckons) Freyne explores "the possibility that Jesus' attitude to Zion and its associated traditions were indeed influenced by Isaiah, as Luke's idealized picture had suggested" (p. 109). He begins the chapter by attempting to show that Luke's account of Jesus' use of Isaiah accords well with other Jewish literature of the period. Freyne disagrees with those who assume a "deep-seated opposition between Galilee and Judea/Jerusalem" and finds it more plausible that Jesus as a Galilean Jew retained an understanding of the symbolic importance of Jerusalem (pp. 93–94).

Freyne proceeds to survey the book of Isaiah in order to develop Isaiah's theology of Zion (pp. 97–108). He identifies "three major aspects of the Zion tradition in Isaiah" that he finds significant for understanding the received tradition to which Jesus would have been exposed. These are: (1) the pilgrimage of the nations and the restoration of Israel; (2) the symbol of Zion and its application over time; and (3) the "servant community" of Zion (p. 97). Freyne develops these three themes throughout the chapter, and he finds it plausible that Jesus would have adopted and adapted the Isaiah material that displays a receptive attitude of openness to Gentile involvement in Zion (pp. 97–101). Thus even though Jesus did not explicitly engage in a Gentile mission, his attitude as revealed in his teaching and actions would have led to a Gentile mission as a "logical extension" of his mission (p. 111; quoting Sanders).

In exploring and developing these themes in Isaiah and in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' teaching, Freyne goes a long way toward refuting some contemporary depictions

of Jesus that ignore his Jewish context and attempt to present him as disinterested in Jerusalem (e.g. Crossan; see p. 94). Furthermore, this discussion demonstrates the plausibility of a high degree of continuity between the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g. Isaiah) and Jesus, which is contrary to a simplistic application of the criterion of dissimilarity. Freyne thereby provides some helpful insights into the heritage from which Jesus drew much of his material and understanding of his prophetic mission.

Chapter 5 (Confronting the Challenges of the Empire) considers "the manner in which imperialist values from the Assyrians to the Herodians had continued to shape the Galilee of Jesus' day, and how he responded to that situation" (p. 126). In pursuing this aim, Freyne discusses various options of an apocalyptic worldview that he sees as essential for understanding Jesus and his first-century Jewish contemporaries. Following John Collins, Freyne identifies three basic options: (1) "the triumphalism of imperial power as the fulfillment of history"; (2) "the deferred eschatology of those hoping for a utopia, but who are prepared to accept the status quo"; and (3) "the revolutionary expectation of imminent and radical change" (p. 127).

Freyne identifies the third option as the most interesting for understanding Jesus, but he rejects any Zealot-style involvement by Jesus (p. 135). Instead, he argues that Jesus desired to create an alternative social structure in which Yahweh was king and his people pursued justice and equality for all. Human rulers were to be servants to those over whom they ruled. Thus Jesus' teaching on the kingdom served not only to condemn the contemporary abuses of the Roman/Herodian regime but also to present a viable alternative in which the people fully trusted God to meet their needs (exemplified through Sabbath year and Jubilee observance) and the "rulers" acted in accordance with servanthood (p. 149).

In chapter 6 (Death in Jerusalem) Freyne considers whether Jesus anticipated his death and how he would have understood it. In doing so, he draws on earlier conclusions regarding Jesus' relationship to Jewish tradition, his attitudes toward Jerusalem and the temple, and the theme of martyrdom in Jewish literature (e.g. Daniel, 1 Enoch). Freyne concludes that, although Jesus did not offer a definitive teaching about his impending death, he likely anticipated his death to be in accordance with the *maskilim* motif of Daniel, which was itself influenced by the suffering servant motif of Isaiah (p. 166).

The epilogue (Return to Galilee) brings the discussion to a close by reiterating some of the main points that Freyne attempted to establish. He calls attention once again to the idea of contextual plausibility and claims that Jesus is best understood in the prophetic tradition of Isaiah's suffering servant and Daniel's *maskilim* (p. 174). While fully rooted in the Jewish religious context and tradition, Jesus was free to reinterpret and reapply the teachings of these earlier prophets. According to Freyne, Galilee played an important role in Jesus' ministry and in the developing mission of the Jesus movement.

There is much to commend in this work. As usual, Freyne demonstrates a mastery of all the relevant literature. His use of the criterion of contextual plausibility leads to conclusions that appear much more reasonable and likely than many of the more critical portraits. Although he engages in virtually no discussion of the Christological aspects of Jesus' self-understanding, he does present a picture of Jesus that squares reasonably well with a so-called "theologically conservative" approach.

As with most any work there are minor criticisms. Some readers may find his acceptance of historical-critical methodologies and "assured results" problematic (e.g. his easy references to divisions of the Pentateuch along the lines of JEDP; his willingness to accept community-created sayings of Jesus; his references to the concerns of the Q community, etc.). Although none of his major points are dependent on any of these assumptions, they do occasionally interfere with the flow of his discussion. As mentioned,

these are minor criticisms, and in general this book provides a helpful discussion regarding Jesus and his Jewish context, including Galilee.

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Presumed Guilty: How the Jews Were Blamed for the Death of Jesus. By Peter J. Tomson. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005, xiv + 146 pp., \$15.00 paper.

When Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* was released in February 2004—and even before it opened—there was significant furor throughout the Jewish and Christian religious communities. The turbulence eventually subsided, only to resurface with the massive sales of the DVD version of the movie during the summer of 2005. The uproar the Gibson film unleashed grew out of a still-simmering tension that has existed for nearly twenty centuries between these two interrelated faith communities. Against both this recent and ancient backdrop, the appearance of *Presumed Guilty* is a most welcome addition to the historical and modern discussion of the responsibility for the death of the Jew, Jesus of Nazareth.

Peter Tomson is well qualified to deal with this sensitive and volatile issue. Not only is he Professor of New Testament and Patristics at the University of Brussels, but he is a significant scholar in the field of Jewish-Christian relations through history. He served as co-editor of *The Image of the Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature* (Mohr Siebeck, 2003) and authored *Paul and the Jewish Law* (Fortress, 1990). The latter is an important text demonstrating the rabbinic nature of the works by the influential apostle and Rabbi.

In summarizing *Presumed Guilty*, it is quite tempting merely to quote the entire preface. The summary and approach of this volume are most ably described there. Tomson sets out to address three aspects of the interrelationship of Jesus and the Jews. These involve: (1) Jesus' significance; (2) his trial and crucifixion; and (3) the conflict between Jews and Christians. Although these various aspects remain distinct, the consideration of each overlaps with, and impacts, the others. The nine chapters deal with these three areas.

Chapter 1 briefly summarizes the birth and early spread of the Jewish Jesus movement. It then traces the development of that movement, and its effects, as it became a source of conflict from the days of the early Church through the Middle Ages and on into the present.

Chapter 2 examines the question of the "historical Jesus." It assesses the sources and their interpretations, investigating both the Gospels and other ancient Jewish writings. It concludes with an evaluation of what the "real Jesus" was like. This entire process is carried out from a historical-critical approach.

Chapter 3 outlines the milieu in which Jesus and his followers lived and describes the setting from which the Gospels emerged. It sketches the histories of the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman empires and the life of the Jewish people in their own homeland. It also briefly surveys the place of the Pharisees and the role of rabbinic literature.

Chapter 4 focuses on Jesus and his disciples. It relates his activities and teachings, and sketches how he was viewed by others and how he viewed himself. His relationship to John the Baptist, to his own disciples, to Jewish tradition, and to the temple is also discussed.

Chapter 5 delves into Jesus' trial and considers the involvement of the authorities, the date of the events in connection with the Passover, and the nature of the verdict. This chapter examines the sources themselves and attempts to discover their tendencies. It assesses the respective roles of the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin and attempts to discern more precisely the identity of Jesus' "enemies." It analyzes both "trials," the one before the Sanhedrin and the one before Pilate, and then draws some conclusions.

Chapter 6 addresses the post-resurrection apostolic testimony and its insights into Jesus' significance. It then traces the history of the first Jewish congregations and the spread of the new message among non-Jews. It sketches the development of the "churches" related to Peter and James, those connected to Paul, and those that were part of the Johannine community.

Chapter 7 begins the discussion of the history thereafter. It analyzes the drastic influence of the Jewish war(s) against Rome and the rise of the general conflict between Jews and "Christians." It deals with the emergence of Rabbinic Judaism and outlines the inception of Christian anti-Jewish theology.

Chapter 8 describes the common assessment of the "divergent" attitudes toward Jews and Judaism found in the pages of the NT. Some writings are categorized as anti-Jewish and others as not. The issue of the unity or diversity of these writings is briefly addressed as part of this process.

Chapter 9 explores how readers of the NT can respond to this "diversity" of attitudes described as inherent in its pages. It offers some general suggestions regarding the use of Scripture, the presentation of the gospel, the structure of liturgy, and the role of the church in addressing the issues of anti-Jewishness.

The book also contains an appendix and two indices. The appendix is a helpful survey of the various Jewish movements current in the time of Jesus. The indices list both names and subjects, as well as ancient sources.

In the preface Tomson specifically identifies his intended readership and the consequent approach of this volume. This information must condition any critique of the reviewer and must influence the expectations of the reader. The book is clearly written for the general reader, not for the scholar or professional. It seeks to address both Jews and Christians, and assumes that people not at home with the Bible are among its readers. Therefore, it is intended to be a brief treatment and general overview of the issues. As the author states, "in this book I aim for clarity and conciseness." Those desiring further justification for his positions and documentation of his presentations are asked to consult his more massive work *"If This Be from Heaven . . .": Jesus and the New Testament Authors in Their Relationship to Judaism* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

In a sense, the book's strength is at the same time its weakness. Tomson presents his material in a clear, but very basic, summary fashion. As a result, the general reader will have little trouble understanding the nature and significance of the issues involved. A more informed reader, however, will find the book's approach too elementary and quite simplistic at times.

Moreover, Tomson makes statements and draws conclusions that cry out for further demonstration and documentation, and even correction. This is especially true for the reader who does not share all his critical assumptions. Based as they are on fairly standard historical-critical perspectives, Tomson's evaluations and resolutions will be less than satisfying to an informed reader coming from a more conservative approach to the biblical texts.

There is another major area of critique I would offer. The book does not adequately recognize and interact with the thoroughgoing Jewish nature and content of the biblical texts it treats. This becomes even more glaring when the author treats the perceived "tendencies" underlying the individual Gospels and "discovers" anti-Jewishness in some

of the NT texts. It would also have been helpful to see a greater acknowledgement of the highly Jewish nature of the “Messianic” movement of the first couple of centuries, as well as an understanding of its viability and vitality until the rise of Islam.

A reader interested in the various aspects of the interrelationship of Jesus and the Jews would be better served by reading other books such as Darrell Bock, *Jesus according to Scripture* (Baker, 2002); Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (InterVarsity, 2002); and John and Patrice Fischer, *The Distortion: 2000 Years of Misrepresenting the Relationship between Jesus the Messiah and the Jewish People* (Lederer, 2004). Despite these caveats, *Presumed Guilty* remains an important—though introductory—book on a very significant topic.

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Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God's People Intertextually. By Kenneth Duncan Litwak. JSNTSup 282. London: T & T Clark International, 2005, xii + 234 pp., \$125.00.

Following the lead of Richard Hays in his groundbreaking *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Yale University Press, 1989), Litwak studies the intertextual connections between the Scriptures of Israel (the Septuagint) and the text of Luke-Acts. The first chapter introduces his thesis that echoes from the Scriptures of Israel pervade Luke-Acts from beginning to end in a way that goes beyond mere quotation or allusion. These echoes function hermeneutically to “frame the discourse”—a technical term that refers to the cues an author gives his readers that enable them to discern the context and interpretation of a statement. The echoes in Luke-Acts signal to the reader that certain ancient themes and events form a foundation for interpreting the message of Luke-Acts. When the echoes are clearly heard, it becomes evident that the primary function of the Scriptures of Israel is not to provide a promise-fulfillment or proof-from-prophecy scheme that focuses on Christology but to establish continuity between the events recorded in the Scriptures concerning Israel and the events in the lives of Jesus and his followers. The echoes show that the first Christians and the predominantly Gentile audience of Luke-Acts are true Israel and stand in continuity with the ancient people of God. The major contribution of this book, therefore, is to argue for a shift from Christology to ecclesiology as the primary function of Luke's use of the OT. Luke-Acts probes the identity of the people of God rather than the identity of Jesus. Litwak believes that previous authors such as Bock and Talbert failed to grasp this perspective because (1) they focused on explicit quotations rather than echoes; (2) they began with a pre-understanding that embraced the Christological function of the Scriptures of Israel; and (3) they failed to properly define what they meant by fulfillment.

The second chapter briefly outlines the assumptions and approach of the study. The author embraces the unity of Luke-Acts, an understanding of the work as a historiography, and a definition of narrative as a genre that includes a beginning, middle, and end. Litwak's stated approach is to study the whole range of intertextuality (including echoes, traditions, allusions, and quotations) in an attempt to analyze how the Scriptures of Israel frame the discourse of Luke-Acts and in so doing contribute to Luke's theology.

Chapters 3 through 5 apply this approach by examining the beginning of the narrative in Luke 1, the middle of the narrative in Luke 24:44–Acts 1:12 and Acts 2:16–21, and the end of the narrative in Acts 28:16–31. These crucial sections frame the entire

work and form the foundation for the interpretation of the rest of the narrative. Two illustrations will serve to summarize the approach and illustrate the conclusions. First, the narrative of Zechariah and Elizabeth in Luke 1 records several echoes from biblical annunciation stories concerning Abraham and Sarah, Hannah and Elkanah, and Manoah and his wife: the piety of barren parents, the appearance of God, the announcement of pregnancy, and the command to name a child. These echoes frame the narrative in such a way that the readers of Luke's narrative would expect God to once again be working in salvation history to produce a special child. The readers would understand that a repeated biblical pattern is continuing in the narrated events. The echoes then form an interpretative grid that shows continuity between God's true covenant people in the past and God's true covenant people in the present. The people in the narrative and, by extension, the readers are identified and validated as true Israel.

Secondly, Litwak argues that Luke 24:44–47 provides a hermeneutic for Luke's use of Scripture. He argues that the fulfillment statement in Luke 24:44 does not mean that Scripture predicted specific events in the life of Jesus that are being fulfilled (a prophecy-fulfillment interpretation); it means rather that Scripture echoes a pattern—righteous people have always been persecuted, killed, and vindicated—and that the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus fits this pattern. Jesus' statement is presented as the hermeneutical key to the way in which the OT Scriptures should be understood. Likewise, the quotation of Joel 3 in Acts 2 does not point to a fulfillment of that text. In a way that reflects the pesharim texts at Qumran, the text of Joel is reworked and interpreted in terms of the new situation. In Peter's "revisionary reading" of Joel 3:1–5a, the introductory statement of Acts 2:16 means that "the preceding events provide a new understanding of Joel's words" (p. 156). The new understanding is that Gentiles are now part of the new community of the true people of God—a thought that had not entered into the mind of Joel.

Litwak has convincingly argued that Luke has more to say about ecclesiology than is usually acknowledged. Those who are interested in the use of the OT in the NT, along with the continuing discussion of echoes within Scripture, and Luke-Acts specialists who are particularly interested in hermeneutics will benefit from this well-organized study.

Although the stated parameter of the study is the hermeneutical function of the Scriptures of Israel rather than an exegetical analysis, the resultant ecclesiology needs to be confirmed by exegesis. Certainly the repeated use of "house," "kingdom," and "throne" in 2 Sam 7:12–16 (LXX) generate an echo (or should this be an allusion?) that is clearly heard in Luke 1:32–33. Litwak acknowledges that Luke is making a Christological statement in this text, but he performs an exegetical leap to conclude that "talk of a king *implies* those who make up the kingdom" (p. 95; italics mine). The focus of the context, however, is on the identity of the king who will rule rather than the subjects of his rule. In other words, when Litwak occasionally does acknowledge a Christological statement in Luke-Acts, his hermeneutical framework compels him to downplay the Christology and to interpret it in the service of ecclesiology even when the context does not support the interpretation.

Litwak also makes a leap from the application of Scripture toward the followers of Jesus and the early Christians to an application directed toward a predominately Gentile audience. The connection is repeatedly made only "by extension" or as "an assumption." One wonders how a Gentile audience with their lack of preunderstanding when it comes to the Scriptures of Israel would either hear or understand the echoes in Luke 1:32–33 to mean that they were now part of the house of Jacob. If there is an implied ecclesiology, it is an intramural discussion within Israel. These echoes point only to a continuity between ancient Israel and the *Jewish* people involved in the story of Jesus and the development of the early Church. The contextual reference to David

(Luke 1:32) and the house of Jacob (Luke 1:33) as well as the force of Mary's hymn ("He has helped *his servant Israel* . . . as he spoke to *our father*, to Abraham and to *his offspring* forever"; Luke 1:54–55) point to this conclusion. Litwak's conclusions, therefore, need to be tested by the dictates of context and compared to hermeneutical systems that see more discontinuity between the testaments.

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Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith. By Francis Watson. London: T & T Clark International, 2004. xvi + 584 pp., \$34.95 paper.

The role of the OT in Paul's thinking has been of great interest in recent years. Some of the questions that have drawn the most attention are: How influential is Scripture in his writing? How does Paul understand Scripture in relation to early Judaism? How does he interpret it in relation to his Christian experience? These questions are all addressed in this volume by Francis Watson. It is a remarkable achievement that is sure to be used by many who are studying the use of OT in the NT as well as those interested in Paul's theology.

Watson approaches Paul's understanding of Torah by developing the idea that Paul is a first-century Jew. While others have considered this premise in part, Watson develops this idea more fully. "Paul and other Jewish readers participate in an ongoing conversation about how to read the Torah and the prophets, and the fact that they read differently is just what makes the conversation possible and necessary. This is the point where Paul's Jewishness becomes hermeneutically significant. As a Jew, Paul is involved in critically reading the Torah along with other Jews of his time" (p. 2).

From this premise, Watson then proceeds to examine portions of Paul's letters that reveal his interpretation of the Torah. Instead of considering these Pauline passages in isolation, Watson considers two other Jewish viewpoints alongside of Paul's. The first is a canonical understanding of these passages from the Torah. Jewish writers at Paul's time would have attempted to understand the importance of each passage canonically. While some modern scholars have criticized canonical interpretations of the Torah, a canonical grasp of Scripture would have been important for Paul and other contemporary Jewish writers. Thus, Watson engages in a search for the canonical understanding of the passages from the Torah that Paul saw as important.

The second viewpoint that Watson considers is that of contemporary Jewish writers. He considers how they understood the same passages from the Torah that Paul deemed significant. While this exploration can be lengthy at times and can be challenging to follow, particularly for those less familiar with Second Temple Jewish literature, this part of *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* is unique. Some scholars take time to consider some relationship between Paul and early Judaism, but no one to my knowledge has devoted such time and space to considering how Paul's contemporaries understood particular Torah texts.

Throughout this volume, then, Watson maintains this three-way conversation between Paul, a canonical understanding of Torah texts, and the viewpoints of non-Christian Jewish authors. This dialogue is well illustrated in Watson's first chapter, which establishes the pattern. In this chapter, he considers Paul's understanding of the Hab 2:4 citation "the just shall live by faith" in Rom 1:17. He begins here, because he finds this citation critical for Paul's entire discussion of the Law and justification by faith as found in the book of Romans, particularly Rom 1:18–3:31.

After making his case for the importance of grasping Hab 2:4 for understanding the Law, Watson proceeds to consider this particular Scripture first in relation to its immediate context, then within the canon, and finally within early Jewish literature. As a result, Watson looks at the Habakkuk citation within the book of Habakkuk and the Book of the Twelve (i.e. the Minor Prophets). By examining Hab 2:4 within its immediate context, he finds this text to be a key theme of the book. When he compares it with the other prophets, he finds the idea to serve also as a central concept of the Book of the Twelve. Thus from this canonical perspective, it makes sense why Paul would have cited this particular Scripture text in Rom 1:17.

His discussion then moves to the viewpoint of a contemporary Jewish interpreter who also interprets the same text, the Teacher of Righteousness within the Habakkuk *peshet*. Watson examines this thoroughly, devoting over fifty pages to it, unlike the page or two that some would devote to this issue. Watson concludes that Paul is in agreement *and* disagreement with the *peshet*'s use of the verse. One way in which they agree is that the faith/works antithesis can be found in both readings of the Habakkuk text. They also agree on the importance of this text for salvation. They disagree in that the Habakkuk *peshet* takes and applies this text to following the Teacher of Righteousness, while Paul takes this text to apply to the universal scope of God's address in the gospel. These are some of the many conclusions that Watson draws from comparing Hab 2:4 in the Qumran Habakkuk *peshet* with Paul's use of it in Romans.

Subsequent chapters in *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* take this three-way discussion between Paul, Torah, and non-Christian Jewish texts further. The subsequent chapters focus on Paul's reading of each of the books of the Pentateuch. The key cited passages from each of the books from the Torah are then considered in relation to their discussion in early Jewish literature. This leads to lengthy discussions on the canonical understanding of the Torah as well as on books such as *Jubilees*, Wisdom, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and on authors such as Philo and Josephus.

As in his discussion of Hab 2:4 in Paul and the Habakkuk *peshet*, Watson concludes that Paul interprets the Torah in agreement and disagreement with fellow Jewish writers. This agreement and disagreement is a result of the plurality of voices that Paul as well as other Jewish authors would have heard within the Torah. Yet, this diversity of interpretations surfaces from a particular frame of reference that emerges from the Torah itself. He concludes that this is much different from others who believe that Paul read his theology into particular verses or those sympathetic to the New Perspective on Paul who see Paul's Christology altering his reading of Torah in a radically different way.

Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith is a remarkable achievement in the field of Pauline studies and the use of the OT in the NT. Watson succeeds in disarming the viewpoint that sees Paul importing his own theology when using the Torah. He also succeeds in setting forth a dialogical manner of reading the OT with early Jewish literature. This latter point especially will provide great dividends for scholars and students exploring these important areas. His conclusion about a diversity of viewpoints within the Torah is intriguing and will need further examination by others.

While this volume is a remarkable achievement, there are things that can be added to strengthen this study. Watson notes that a consideration of allusions to the Torah in Paul's writings would help. Examination of allusions to the Torah within early Jewish literature would also be beneficial. Any volume considering these matters, however, would be substantially longer.

Another aspect that would add to this volume is a more direct dialogue with others who have proposed a hermeneutic for Paul. Watson enters into conversation with Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Yale University Press, 1989), but he does not directly address the conclusions of Paul's hermeneutic as set forward

by Scott Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the Scripture of Israel* (Mohr Siebeck, 1995), Dietrich Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums* (Mohr Siebeck, 1986), or Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Mohr Siebeck, 1981). These scholars all propose slightly or even substantially different Pauline hermeneutics at the conclusion of their works. An appendix where these scholars are addressed more directly would be helpful.

Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith is important reading for those exploring Paul, the use of the OT in the NT, and the relationship between early Jewish literature and the NT. It will surely become a major landmark in Paul's understanding of Scripture.

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Paul, Monotheism and the People of God: The Significance of Abraham Traditions for Early Judaism and Christianity. By Nancy Calvert-Koyzis. JSNTSup 273. London: T & T Clark International, 2004, xiv + 173 pp., \$115.00.

This book is an in-depth investigation into the OT character Abraham in early Judaism and the Pauline texts of Romans and Galatians. It is a revised 1993 doctoral dissertation originally submitted to the University of Sheffield, supervised by Philip R. Davies and Andrew T. Lincoln. Here, Calvert-Koyzis is particularly interested in how Paul "reworked traditions about Abraham in order to forge a new identity for the people of God in Christ" (p. 1). Her primary thesis is that Abraham's monotheistic view is foundationally significant for understanding Paul's arguments in Galatians and Romans and the corresponding debates faced by both of those communities.

After a brief, but helpful introduction, the remainder of the book is an investigation in how Jewish writers in general developed and employed Abraham as a model for Israel (chaps. 2 through 6) and how Paul specifically redefined monotheism and the example of Abraham to address the communities to whom he was writing (chaps. 7 and 8). Calvert-Koyzis finds in the Jewish literature that Abraham is consistently portrayed as the prototypical example of one who forsakes idolatry for belief in the one true God and who expresses this faith by obedience to the Mosaic Law.

The Jewish literature investigated includes writings from *Jubilees*, Philo, Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*, Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. These works (spanning approximately 168 BC to AD 100) were chosen because they provide the best examples of the portrayal of Abraham in Jewish literature contemporary with Paul. As such, the rabbinic literature has been excluded from the study.

In *Jubilees*, Abraham rejects idolatry for faith in the one God and adheres to the Law, including separation from the Gentiles. He thus serves as a prototype for Israel to adhere to a monotheistic faith and covenant obedience. In this way, *Jubilees* identifies the necessary boundaries for Israel's continued existence.

Philo similarly presents Abraham as one who rejects idolatry for monotheism and obedience to the Mosaic Law. In Philo, however, Abraham is viewed as a philosopher whose reasoning is expressed in the philosophical language of the day. Since Philo equates astrology with idolatry, Abraham's ability to discern God from nature and consequent embracing of monotheism make him a prototypical Gentile proselyte.

Biblical Antiquities presents Abraham as the first good leader. Drawing from the cycle of sin motif found in Judges, *Biblical Antiquities* assures the people of God that God will be faithful to provide a leader to deliver them. In this context, Abraham serves

as one who stands against idolatry and continues to demonstrate steadfastness in his monotheistic faith. The implication is that the people should emulate Abraham and resist assimilation with the surrounding Gentile nations and their idolatrous practices, specifically with regard to the Romans who rule over them.

Josephus portrays Abraham as a monotheist in order to present Judaism well to the Hellenistic culture. As such, Abraham exemplifies a Hellenistic philosopher who proclaims monotheism by using astrology and popular philosophical proofs. His virtuous life is in keeping with the Jewish Law, which Josephus aligns with Hellenistic virtues, thus leading to a happy life. For Josephus, Abraham is the primary character that best exemplifies the most attractive features of Judaism.

Consistent with Jewish apocalypses, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* explores God's historic promises to the Jewish people and how they will be vindicated in the midst of current trouble, specifically in light of the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Within this context, Abraham is chosen to represent the faithful and becomes the true person of God. Abraham thus becomes an example of what it means to follow the one God and to reject the idolatry of the priests that led to the destruction of the Temple.

Turning to Paul, Calvert-Koyzis is particularly interested in the role played by Abraham in Galatians (chap. 7) and Romans (chap. 8). Using a criterion of multiple attestations, Calvert-Koyzis argues that the existence of the Abraham tradition both before and after the time of Paul makes this a "live option" in Paul's own situation (p. 85). As such, she asks four questions: (1) How may Paul's opponents in Galatia and the "weak" in Romans have used Abraham to define God's people? (2) Did Paul use or respond to the traditions of Abraham described above, and if so, how? (3) How does Paul use Abraham to define the identity of the people of God in Christ? (4) How does the knowledge of popular traditions about Abraham add to our understanding of the changes in identity that Paul perceives are necessary for the people of God in Christ? (pp. 85–86).

Chapter 7 starts with an analysis of Paul's opponents in Galatia and affirms that Abraham is central to the argument. Following E. P. Sanders, Calvert-Koyzis defends the "new perspective" on Paul, thus shifting the emphasis from conversion to maintaining covenant position (p. 90). She also follows J. D. G. Dunn and N. T. Wright in attesting that Paul develops a new definition of the people of God wherein they are characterized by Abraham's faith, rather than by his works (pp. 92–93). In sections analyzing 3:1–14, 15–18, 19–22, 23–29; 4:1–11; and 5:1–12, she draws some striking and interesting conclusions. For example, whereas the Jewish works reviewed above link Abraham and his works together as a prototypical example of what it means to be Jewish, Paul defines Abraham's faith *in contrast* to his works. Over and against his opponents, Paul uses Abraham to argue against observance of the Mosaic Law. Obedience to the Law in Paul's theology is now a contradiction of the oneness of God and, in fact, represents idolatry (pp. 102, 106). In this way, Paul radically reshapes what it means to be a descendent of Abraham. In addition, whereas the Jewish boundary markers previously included monotheism and law-keeping, this redefined view includes monotheism and life in the Spirit. Paul's conclusion is that those who emphasize maintaining the Law are the ones who have apostatized.

In chapter 8 Calvert-Koyzis examines Paul's approach in Romans to the crucial issues that have arisen between the "weak" and the "strong." Paul's use of Abraham is developed through textual linkage between chapters 1 and 4 wherein Abraham symbolizes the Gentiles in their sinful state (p. 125). Thus when Paul contrasts Abraham's faith and rejection of idolatry with Gentile disobedience, he is in effect using Abraham to illustrate the nature of true faith; it is not based on obedience to the Law. Rather, it is rooted in faith in the one God who is God of both the Jew and the Gentile. After noting the significant verbal similarities between chapters 4 and 14–15, Calvert-Koyzis identifies

the weak as probably ethnic, law-abiding Jews and the strong as those who adhere to a law-free gospel, primarily Gentiles (pp. 122, 137). In contrast to the Jewish literature reviewed above, Paul divides faith from the Law and, ironically, those who align themselves with Abraham based on law-keeping are actually those who bring division to the people of God. In this way Paul redefines the people of God; they are those who have departed from maintaining obedience to the Law and have instead believed in the one God who raised Jesus from the dead.

Calvert-Koyzis's work is sound and represents a thorough exploration of the Abraham traditions within the Jewish works cited. The strengths include a helpful survey of this area of study to put the present work in context, an informative summary of each of the Jewish works evaluated, and a clear advancement in Pauline monotheistic studies for both Galatians and Romans. While perhaps outside the scope of this study, more analysis would be helpful on the works excluded or any works that disagree or present a different Abraham tradition. In addition, more definitional work would be appropriate for key concepts within the study, including "Abraham traditions" and "monotheism." In any event, this work provides some unique and challenging insights into the use of Abraham by Paul and should be considered by scholars and students alike who are interested in this area of study.

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1 Corinthians. By Alan F. Johnson. IVPNTC. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004, 343 pp., \$22.00.

The IVP New Testament Commentary Series states that its purpose is to achieve "a series to and from the church that seeks to move from the text to its contemporary relevance and application" (p. 9). This series differs from the Zondervan application series by following a traditional commentary format and integrating exegesis and application in the commentary comments rather than partitioning comments into sections.

Johnson begins his volume in this series with a brief generic introduction to the Corinthian setting (pp. 13–32) and how it fits within Paul's life and ministry. The complexities of Paul's multiple contacts with the church at Corinth are not pursued, a feature one would not expect to be treated in light of the purpose for the series. The introduction concludes with an outline overview of the flow of 1 Corinthians in keeping with the epistle's structural (e.g. *περὶ δέ*) and subject-oriented divisions. The rest of the volume flows through 1 Corinthians from this outlined view in a narrative style. Johnson has achieved a style that makes for a pleasant read, often using a first-person format accessible to the audience for which the series is designed, without sacrificing a reasoned (although very short) probe of the issues that arise in 1 Corinthians. Social, historical, and cultural backgrounds that bring color to Paul's correspondence are frequently integrated into the interpretive narrative. Difficult grammatical structures are discussed briefly with clarity (e.g. 1 Cor 2:13). Johnson keeps the church-level reader engaged by interspersing personal and current event stories, hymns, and even some timely quotes from the Fathers. The author also keeps the English Bible reader informed regarding the variations of translation in major English versions. With the confusing proliferation of English translations, it is good to condition readers to understand how all translations participate in interpretation. Johnson has provided brevity without being boring, a thorough overview without being pedantic.

The history of interpretation testifies to the timeless topics that Paul encounters in Corinth. This may be the point at which works on 1 Corinthians need close scrutiny.

The topics seem so current that they are in danger of being contextualized into post-Reformation Western thinking rather than unpacked from a Roman world perspective. Sexuality, legal proceedings, divorce and remarriage, pagan temple issues, the charismata, and the nature of Paul's epistemology and of the afterlife all present compelling questions in our culture for which exegetes and theologians have framed answers. Yet are we framing these answers from Paul's world or from our own "systematic theology"?

Johnson's discussion of 1 Corinthians 6 and lawsuits does not advance beyond a traditional understanding nor does it help modern Christians decide what an appropriate use of the legal system might be. Johnson nods to Bruce Winter's work on Roman "status" (pp. 92–95) and its impact in the original setting, but he does not follow up with how this and Roman "vexatious litigation" might have made this event uniquely first-century. How does one separate between the descriptive and prescriptive aspects of litigation in this chapter? Expanded discussion of this kind of issue would be needed in a volume aimed at pastors and the laity. I also expected some expansion of how status and the Roman banquet setting might aid our understanding of sexual abuse in chapters 5 and 6, but this was not pursued.

Johnson's treatment of 1 Corinthians 7 is a good overview within the commentary's purpose. This section begins with a helpful review of the context of chapter 7, providing five key observations that assist in understanding the context (pp. 108–9). The author then helps the reader understand how 7:1 is a Corinthian sub-group slogan, which Paul will critique, and not Paul's own assertion. Johnson rightly criticizes the original NIV mistranslation of 7:1 (although the classic article by Fee on 7:1 is neither cited nor in the bibliography), "it is good for a man not to marry," and notes that the TNIV has returned to the formal equivalent rendition, "it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." Lay Bible readers seldom understand that a slogan is at work and therefore misread 1 Corinthians 7 regardless of which translation they read. Johnson helps them move beyond such surface reading. The slogan issue resurfaces in 14:33–34 but is not the favored view of the author in that section.

Johnson's treatment of 1 Corinthians 12–14 and the question of miraculous gifts is mostly descriptive. He describes the views on what the nature of tongues might have been with helpful source citations (e.g. "foreign languages unknown to the speaker"; "audible sounds but not structured language"; "rhythmic phrases"; "ecstatic speech"; and "unconscious groans"; pp. 226–29). He provides positive personal illustrations about some possible modern exercise of miraculous gifts. The author, however, resists the temptation to reiterate the arguments of the cessation and non-cessation debate and leaves the reader without a model to adjudicate this issue.

There are no indices of any kind. A subject index would assist those using the volume to locate the author's treatment of items of special interest. Nevertheless, Johnson's work fulfills the purpose of providing beginning students, pastors, and serious lay persons with an enjoyable "first read" on 1 Corinthians. Technicians will enjoy the read but will need to foray into Garland, Thiselton Fee, Collins, Winter, and other specialized works to fill out the details that Johnson can only stir up.

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The Second Epistle to the Corinthians. By Murray J. Harris. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, cxxviii + 989 pp., \$75.00.

Murray J. Harris is eminently qualified to have written the latest volume in the New International Greek Testament Commentary series. In addition to having published

the volume on 2 Corinthians in the Expositor's Bible Commentary (EBC) series in 1976, he has demonstrated his expertise in Greek grammar with his often-cited appendix on Greek prepositions in the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* and his commentary on Colossians and Philemon in the Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament (EGGNT) series. Further, his work on the theology of death and immortality in *Raised Immortal* (Eerdmans, 1985) and *From Grave to Glory* (Zondervan, 1990) has given him ample opportunity to reflect on the conceptual background to 2 Cor 4:7–5:10, one of the most important passages in the NT on the resurrection of the body.

Previous writers in the NIGTC series have sought to be thorough in their research, and Harris likewise appears to have left few stones unturned. His 102-page general bibliography (pp. xxvi–cxxxviii) contains, by my count, 287 German entries, 85 French entries, and 7 Italian entries, give or take a few—and this listing does not even include other works he cites in footnotes and in the more targeted bibliographies at the end of each of the 48 “paragraph” sections into which he divides Paul's letter. Still, his commentary does not come across as encyclopedic. To save space, Harris omits discussion of the archaeology of Roman Corinth (so his preface, p. xvi). Even on a question of great exegetical interest, namely the identity of Paul's “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor 12:7), Harris is content to summarize the theories in one-line entries (p. 858) and refer the reader to already existing extended discussions—such as the nine-page excursus in Margaret Thrall's ICC volume—instead of duplicating that material. In other words, the commentary, though massive, can be concise when it needs to be.

Harris's lengthy introduction to 2 Corinthians (pp. 1–126) covers the traditional literary issues (e.g. partition theories) and historical issues (e.g. reconstructing Paul's dealings with the Corinthians). As for the integrity of 2 Corinthians, especially the relation of chapters 1–9 to chapters 10–13, Harris says, “What remains perfectly feasible is that, though sent as a single letter, 2 Corinthians was composed in stages, not at a single setting” (p. 51). Harris speculates that Paul may have written chapters 1–7 in Philippi in the summer of AD 56 (2:12–13; 7:5–6); chapters 8–9 while organizing the collection for the poor and traveling westward in Macedonia in the late summer of AD 56 (8:1; 9:2); and chapters 10–13 in Berea in the fall of AD 56 before his projected visit to Corinth (p. 50). This, in fact, modifies the position Harris took thirty years earlier in his 1976 EBC work, where he assumed that Paul wrote the entire epistle at once. However, this modification should not be construed as wavering on the integrity of Paul's epistle—Harris offers what appears to me to be four fresh arguments for the unity of 2 Corinthians, two of which appeal directly to the Greek text (pp. 44–50).

In the same introduction section, Harris breaks new ground by proposing that Paul faced *two* sets of opponents in 2 Corinthians: “proto-gnostics” who were present in the church at Corinth all throughout Paul's ministry; and Palestinian “Judaizers” who infiltrated the church during the time of 2 Corinthians—two distinct groups that found common ground in their opposition to Paul (p. 86). This, too, modifies the position Harris took in his earlier commentary, in which he focused only on the Judaizers. While I had some unanswered questions about the exact nature of this alleged “alliance of convenience,” I did not find his theory implausible. Indeed, it accounts for most of the data we have about Paul's antagonists and avoids some of the difficulties other scholars have faced in having to combine dissimilar elements into one group (Jewish Gnostics? Jewish sophists? Jewish pneumatists? etc.).

Despite its technical nature, I was surprised to find the commentary easy to follow. Any former student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School whose years overlapped with Dr. Harris's (as mine did) knows that he is as masterful at teaching as he is at research. In several ways, his commentary presents complex material “slowly,” with the needs of the student in mind. Harris offers ample diagrams and charts (e.g. Paul's travel plans in 1:16, pp. 194–95; the interplay between the exhortations and promises in

6:14–7:1, pp. 493–94; Paul’s visions in Acts as possibilities for the one he describes in 12:2, p. 836). Further, when addressing a disputed issue, he often summarizes all that can be known about the issue in a separate section *before* discussing the various positions on it. In other words, before delving into theories about the identity of, say, Paul’s opponents, or Paul’s “affliction” (1:8–11), or Paul’s “severe letter” (7:12), Harris first lays out all the primary biblical data on these items (pp. 4–5, 67–77, 164–66), enabling the reader to distinguish objective facts from more subjective points of interpretation and disagreement. This, too, strikes me as student-friendly. In addition, Harris employs well the forgotten pedagogical tool of the expanded paraphrase (pp. 943–62), which conveniently summarizes for the student all his exegetical conclusions in one readable form. For example, his rewording of 2 Cor 2:17 (NIV: “we do not peddle the word of God for profit”) highlights how Paul’s colorful word *kapēleuontes* impugns both the motives and the activity of his opponents: “we are not fraudulent hucksters, making a profit out of proclaiming God’s message and adulterating it at the same time.” Harris’s paraphrase of 2 Cor 5:3 (NIV: “when we are clothed, we will not be found naked”) accentuates *the specific way* in which Paul’s opponents denied bodily resurrection: “once we have put on this new dwelling, our spiritual body, we shall never experience disembodied nakedness.”

As for the exegesis itself, Harris in his preface (p. xv) points out two passages where he says he wanted to devote a disproportionate amount of space: 2 Cor 1:8–11 and 5:1–10. Harris argues that the *thlipsis* (“affliction”) that caused Paul to despair for his life in 2 Cor 1:8 was a severe physical illness (pp. 171–72), which he also identifies as Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” of 2 Cor 12:7. Harris also argues that the “three times” Paul prayed for relief in 2 Cor 12:8 refers to three attacks of the illness: once in Cilicia in AD 43 (fourteen years prior, 2 Cor 12:2), once in Perga in AD 47 (which cut short his stay and forced him to move on to the Galatian region of Psidian Antioch, Acts 13:13–14; Gal 4:13), and once in Troas in AD 56 (which cut short his preaching there as well, 2 Cor 2:13–14; 7:5). Further, Harris believes this experience “forced Paul to surrender his expectation, although not his hope, of being alive at the parousia of Christ and prompted him to formulate his view of the significance of physical death for the believer (5:1–10)” (p. xv).

Whether this theory wins widespread approval or not, it certainly deepens the psychological profile of Paul that 2 Corinthians so richly preserves for us. I imagine that pastors preparing sermons on 2 Corinthians, drawing from Harris’s reconstruction, would find many places where they can “connect” their congregations with Paul’s stresses and burdens. For example, one could preach about how severe or terminal illness can cause anyone, as it did for Paul, to relinquish “self-reliance” and to trust in God who heals those who are “as good as dead” (2 Cor 1:10; pp. 157–58) or how in the midst of such trials God can personally reveal his “verdicts” for our lives (1 Cor 1:9; p. 159). Or, again, following Harris’s theory, one could also preach how severe or terminal illness can deepen our experience of God’s comfort and the “sufferings of Christ,” as it did for Paul (2 Cor 1:3–5; p. 123), or how in the midst of such illness, our thoughts, as Paul’s, can become fixed on the tent-like nature of our earthly existence and on our future possession of a “new building” from God when it comes time to depart and be with Christ (2 Cor 5:1, 8; pp. 175–76). In other words, for all its technicality, Harris’s commentary is still very useful to pulpit ministers.

On the whole, Harris is very fair in presenting the positions of others, but still persuasive when arguing for his own. His justifications are always full and well argued. Among his more interesting exegetical conclusions are the following:

(1) Text-critically, Harris departs from the NA²⁷/UBS4 text in a couple of places. At 2 Cor 1:10 he prefers the plural *tēlikoutōn thanatōn* (“encounters with death”)—the harder reading—over the singular *tēlikoutou thanatou* (“deadly peril”)—the better attested reading, despite UBS4’s rating of “B” for the singular (p. 152). At 2 Cor 5:3

Harris prefers *endusamenoī* (“when we are clothed, we will not be found naked”—which states the obvious) over *ekdusamenoī* (“though we are unclothed, we will not be found naked”), despite UBS4’s rating of “C” for “unclothed” (p. 368).

(2) Though Harris believes the terms “anointing,” “sealing,” and “giving the Spirit” in 2 Cor 1:21–22 refer to the believer’s regeneration, he is open to seeing a baptismal context for these words in Paul’s day, even though they are not clear baptismal terms until the second century (pp. 209–10).

(3) Harris does not look favorably upon recent attempts to downplay the opposition between the *gramma* (“written law”) of the old covenant and the *pneuma* (“Spirit”) of the new covenant in 2 Cor 3:6—in particular, attempts sympathetic with the so-called “new perspective” on Paul (p. 274, note 41).

(4) Harris believes the “eternal house” (= the future spiritual body of 1 Corinthians 15) of 2 Cor 5:1 is both a present possession (in an ideal sense at death) and a future acquisition (in a real sense at the parousia; pp. 378–80). For the curious, nothing in his treatment of 5:1–10 sheds any further light on the Geisler-Harris controversy of the 1980s over the resurrection body summarized in *From Grave to Glory*.

(5) Harris believes that Paul, when quoting Jer 9:22 (LXX) in 2 Cor 10:17, takes *kurios* to be Christ, not God (p. 725). (I mention this only because Harris is known for his 1992 book, *Jesus as God: The NT Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992].)

(6) Harris does not believe the group Paul calls the “false apostles” (2 Cor 11:13) is to be equated with the group Paul calls the “super-apostles” (2 Cor 11:5; 12:11)—he considers the latter group to be the Jerusalem Twelve (p. 663).

(7) Harris takes “unless, of course, you fail the test” in 2 Cor 13:5 as an “ironical aside” and does not embrace the standard Arminian interpretation (p. 921).

I conclude with one final extended comment in appreciation of Dr. Harris. The one distinctive quality of his commentary that will make it either desirable or undesirable, depending on the reader, is its thoroughness in the study of the Greek text. I believe that the treatment of the Greek in the commentaries of Margaret Thrall (ICC), Ralph Martin (WBC), Victor Furnish (AB), and, through their footnotes, Paul Barnett (NICNT) and David Garland (NAC), is rather selective. These authors tend to make their grammatical identifications only when there is some opaqueness or ambiguity. By contrast, Harris seeks to grammatically “tag” as many Greek words as possible, revealing every nuance of meaning from beginning to end. Thus, at 2 Cor 1:15, Harris (and none of the other commentators mentioned above) tells us the aorist subjunctive *skēte* (“so that you might have”) is an “ingressive” or “inceptive” aorist, justifying his translation “so that you might gain” (p. 192). Is such a comment superfluous? Not if you assume Harris’s normal pedagogical stance—the same stance he assumed in his EGGNT commentary on Colossians and Philemon—seeking to *model* not just Greek *exegesis* but Greek *literacy*, something that is becoming increasingly rare among theological students today. The impression is that Harris is “talking” through the Greek text as he normally would in the classroom, not just to resolve interpretive difficulties (though this task is important) but to demonstrate how a mature reader of Greek reasons through his translation and to show how the entire reading process must be grounded in a knowledge of Greek grammar. They just do not make commentaries like this anymore, not since the days of H. A. W. Meyer, when NT professors were first and foremost Greek grammarians.

Two more examples will show how this aspect of Harris’s work can be either endearing or frustrating, depending on the user. On the phrase *tēn nekrosin tou Iēsou* (“the dying of Jesus”) in 2 Cor 4:10, Harris notes (in his text, not in a footnote) that the definite article before the proper name “Jesus” is not typical in the epistles (where *Iēsous* is usually anarthrous) but adds that its presence is explained by Apollonius’s canon (p. 349). Again, no other commentator mentions this (I checked). Yet why even

bother, especially if the presence or absence of the article has no bearing on the meaning of the verse? Could it be that Harris simply loves, and is committed to promoting, the study of the Greek NT and takes the opportunity to show that old standbys like Blass-Debrunner-Funk and Moulton-Howard-Turner can explain its apparent oddities? That this is the case is suggested by an exercise in which Harris engages at the end of his discussion of 2 Cor 10:17 ("Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord"), where he classifies the twenty uses of the key verb *kauchaomai* in 2 Corinthians according to construction: transitive instances (with an accusative direct object) and intransitive instances (used absolutely, used with the dative, and used with prepositions; pp. 726–27). As far as I can tell, this foray does not contribute to solving any exegetical "problem." I conclude that Harris offers it simply as a step in proficiency in the Greek language—the student learns not only an important verb in 2 Corinthians but also a helpful language acquisition technique that would provide a deeper knowledge of *any* verb in the NT. Love it or hate it, reading Harris's commentary feels like attending a seminar in advanced Greek grammar.

And I loved it. I have taught an undergraduate course in Greek exegesis for the past five years, and there were still many points of grammar that I either learned for the first time, or saw illustrated in 2 Corinthians for the first time, from Harris's commentary. I was amazed and grateful for the amount of work he did to take me to a "deeper level" in Greek-reading maturity. The NIGTC format was the perfect showcase for his talents and a perfect platform for him to shine. It appears that Dr. Harris knew his strengths as a commentator and wisely stuck with those strengths as he penned his commentary. Those of us who long to see the study of Greek revived in our theological schools are all in his debt.

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Ancient Rhetoric and Paul's Apology: The Compositional Unity of 2 Corinthians. By Fredrick J. Long. SNTSMS 131. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, xix + 291 pp., \$80.00.

In this book, Fredrick Long sets out to do for 2 Corinthians what Margaret Mitchell did for 1 Corinthians with her book *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Westminster John Knox, 1991). As Mitchell demonstrated the unity of 1 Corinthians by comparing it to known examples of deliberative rhetoric, Long compares 2 Corinthians to the many surviving speeches of the forensic genus. He thereby aims to demonstrate the integrity of the letter, based on its conventional rhetorical structure (p. 5). (In the meantime, Margaret Mitchell has argued for a complex partition theory for 2 Corinthians.)

A revision of the author's doctoral dissertation under Carol Stockhausen at Marquette University, Long's book begins with a thorough introduction to the genus of forensic rhetoric. His investigation is not limited to the rhetorical handbooks, but draws on the actual known Greco-Roman examples of speeches that were delivered in a forensic setting. Not written as a textbook, this comprehensive survey (chaps. 2–6) will not serve the beginner, but for those already familiar with rhetorical criticism it is a very helpful overview of forensic rhetoric.

In a recent monograph, which also argues for the unity of 2 Corinthians, David Hall has suggested that "the tearful letter" (2 Cor 2:4) was 1 Corinthians and that there was no intermediate visit between the writing of the two letters. (2 Cor 2:1 must refer to an

earlier visit.) Long holds the same position (p. 123), but he does not really engage the vast majority of scholars who have found this reconstruction to be impossible.

In 2 Cor 12:19 Paul says: "All along you have been thinking that we have been defending ourselves to you." Without argument, Long assumes, against most interpreters, that Paul approves of this impression (pp. 118, 191), and he maintains that 2 Corinthians is an apologetic letter. Paul defends himself against two basic charges: he was fickle with respect to his intended visits to Corinth, and he made use of worldly rhetoric (not practicing what he preached in 1 Corinthians). In addition, Long mentions the accusation of financial dishonesty, as Paul refused the patronage of the Corinthians, while some Corinthians thought he was using the collection to Jerusalem for his own gain. Having thus established the letter's exigency (chap. 7), Long continues to discuss its disposition (chap. 8) and invention (chap. 9). A chapter on the rhetoric of 2 Corinthians and Paul's theology rounds off the volume.

The appeal of Long's work is that he has one explanation that accounts for the entire letter. He detects a conventional rhetorical outline that accounts for all its individual parts. The main argument (*probatio*, 2:1–9:15) is even anticipated in the introduction to the letter (*divisio* and *partitio*, 1:17–24), where all the subsections of the *probatio* are sequentially introduced. Long draws attention to the problems other scholars have had in making sense of this introduction as a logically connected unit (pp. 161–62). If it is not such a unit, however, but rather a preview of the main parts of the letter, Long is able to solve these problems.

Not all scholars will be convinced that the arguments in 2:17–3:18, for example, are foreshadowed in 1:18–20. The terms "word" and "Christ" are too general to make the case, and the profound discussion of the glory of his ministry in 3:7–11, 18 is hardly anticipated by the mere use of the word "glory" in 1:20 (p. 158). More importantly, with his very specific definition of the letter's exigency, Long does not really explain Paul's rhetorical purposes in emphasizing the superiority of his ministry as compared to that of Moses, except that his "special relationship to the new covenant reflects well on him" (p. 167).

Long admits that the connection between 1:23 and 5:11–7:1 is the least obvious. He finds the connection in the theme of covenant faithfulness, which is introduced by the witness motif in 1:23. Looking for the resumption of this theme, Long focuses exclusively on 6:14–7:1 (which many other scholars identify as a fragment of a separate letter). The premise of this passage is the idea of covenant between God and Israel, especially as it is developed in Isaiah 40–55, where the concept of God as a witness is important.

The next major section of 2 Corinthians, chapters 8–9, with the exhortations to continue the collection for Jerusalem, is often thought not to be well integrated into the flow of the letter. Long maintains that the section has been anticipated in 1:24 and that the collection represents an opportunity for the Corinthians to be Paul's coworkers.

Perhaps the most troublesome section of 2 Corinthians for those who argue for its unity is chapters 10–13. Long finds these chapters to fit neatly into the pattern of forensic rhetoric and defines them as *refutatio* (10:1–11:15), self-adulation (11:16–12:10), and *peroratio* (12:11–13:10). On this reading, he is able to account for the sudden change of tone in 10:1, as Paul has now completed his main argument in his own defense and turns directly against his opponents.

In his search for Greco-Roman parallels to Paul's apology, however, Long seems to have underestimated the paradoxical and subversive nature of Paul's rhetoric. Most interpreters agree that Paul subverts the conventional admiration for power and exults in his weakness, introducing the power-through-weakness theme that is so characteristic of 2 Corinthians. However, Long's Paul has a more conventional answer to the charges regarding weakness: God delivers him (p. 155). Long also finds that Paul's list of "exploits" in 2 Cor 11:16–12:10 corresponds to the advice of the rhetoricians to list one's "noble actions" (p. 189). On p. 121, Long is more in tune with most recent scholars, however, when he approvingly quotes Christopher Forbes in his assessment of Paul's per-

secutions as a liability. As for 2 Cor 11:16–12:10, Long ignores the fact that scars as a result of correction were considered exceedingly ignominious, as opposed to the honor caused by scars inflicted in battle.

In his discussion on 2 Corinthians and *stasis* theory (chap. 9), Long argues that Paul defended himself based on the *stasis* of quality. Paul and the Corinthians did not disagree regarding the facts—he had not visited the Corinthians—but, under the circumstances, his action had been good, not bad.

Long writes well, but the readability of the book suffers from the decision to write virtually without footnotes. Instead, bibliographic information is included in the main text, obstructing the flow with lengthy parentheses. The value of this monograph is that it demonstrates how Paul was a part of the Hellenistic culture of his time. Unfortunately, Long has not been equally perceptive in unearthing the unique contributions of the apostle.

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Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul's Jewish Identity and Ephesians. By Tet-Lim N. Yee. SNTSMS 130. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, xxi + 302 pp., \$75.00.

This offering by Tet-Lim Yee—a revision of his Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the University of Durham and supervised by J. D. G. Dunn—is an examination of Ephesians 2 through the lens of recent discussions involving the “new perspective” on Paul. As students of the NT are well aware, the conversation between alternative readings of Paul’s discussions of the Mosaic Law and his opposition of faith vis-à-vis works has produced an overwhelming amount of literature in the last quarter-century. This scholarly output has focused mainly on Romans and Galatians, which is understandable given that Paul’s discussions of justification by faith apart from works of law are limited to these two letters. In addition, it is these epistles that seem to address most strategically the divisive issue of what to do with the distinction between Jews and Gentiles now that Christ has ascended and inaugurated the age of the Spirit. Yee, in the present volume, seeks to expand the range of the discussion to include other Pauline materials in the NT that might shed light on the debate between “new perspective” readings and “traditional” readings of Paul. He also wants to determine what light might be shed on Ephesians by applying insights from the “new perspective” on a Pauline passage that appears to have much to say about ethnic identity.

After a historical survey of various angles of approach to the relationship in Ephesians of Israel to the Church, Yee claims that one neglected area of research is an examination of “the specific theme of Jewish attitudes toward Gentiles and ethnic reconciliation against the backdrop of such a Jewish perspective” (p. 31). This is the hole that Yee seeks to fill with this work. His thesis is that “Jewish attitudes toward the Gentiles had become the main factors which had led to Gentiles being excluded from the purpose of God before the latter had any positive connection with Christ. The Gentiles were excluded from Israel’s God-given blessings on the basis of a particular *ethnos*” (p. 31). It was because of this inflated sense of Jewish self-confidence that Jews associated their election by God with their ethnicity, thus relegating Gentiles to the status of “the outsider” or “the other.” The author of Ephesians utilizes this estranged situation in order to present Christ Jesus as the solution to this alienation, “whose reconciling work is marked by his undisguised inclusivism” (p. 32).

Yee begins by elaborating the Jewish character of Ephesians, noting several features that indicate that it is written from a Jewish perspective, including the *berakah* with which the letter opens, the language about God, and the mystery terminology employed throughout the letter. This last feature points to the apocalyptic frame of Jewish thought, which also includes the enslavement of humanity by the powers of evil and the call to warfare by the people of God. One further feature that demonstrates Ephesians' Jewish character, according to Yee, is the use of "aeon of this world" (Eph 2:2) to characterize the cosmic enslavement of Gentiles apart from Christ. He understands this term to refer to a deity that held the Gentile world in its grip (pp. 46–55), rather than to the world-mindset that dominates the pagan world, "the norms and values of a spatio-temporal complex which is wholly hostile to God" (p. 48). That a personified deity is in view here is a minority opinion in Ephesians scholarship, but not by much, since there are a number of weighty commentators on the letter who have taken this position, including Bruce, Gnilka, Schlier, Lindemann, and Schnackenburg. Yee distinguishes his view from these and others, including M. Barth, by claiming that the author is not necessarily speaking of an ontological reality, an actual deity that stands in opposition to the one true God, but is simply expressing the Jewish viewpoint with regard to Gentiles—that they lay outside the realm of God (p. 49). "The main gist of the author's message is to reduce the Gentile religion to the category of the false. . . . The naming of a foreign deity reveals more about his religious convictions than about his personal interest in the deity" (p. 50).

While Yee does indeed present a good case for this interpretation, marshaling new evidence, not everyone will be convinced, which is only natural. Many will regard Yee as pressing the "new perspective" approach a bit too much here, utilizing ethnic categories where they do not belong. It appears that in 2:1–10 the emphasis is on the enslavement of all humanity and that ethnic categories are not yet in view, as they are in vv. 11–19, where they dominate the discussion.

His handling of Eph 2:8–10 is superb, noting that this is not merely a restatement of Paul's contrasting "faith" and "works" from Romans and Galatians but a strategic statement with a doxological thrust. The author's aim here is to uphold God's gracious initiative in salvation, asserting "that God is in the truest sense the source or starting point of all things" (p. 68). Yee rightly notes that scholars often over-read the supposedly Pauline neat distinctions between "faith" and "works" into this text, so that Paul is viewed as "attacking" a view that God's verdict of justification is rendered on the basis of human effort (p. 69). While some may regard Yee's own distinction as too finely cut, it certainly is the case that the force of Eph 2:8–10 within its own context has often been neglected in the drive to utilize texts for dogmatic polemics.

The full benefit of Yee's angle of approach to Ephesians 2 becomes clear in his handling of the second half of the chapter, where ethnic categories come to the fore. His discussion of the importance of circumcision for the self-understanding of the Jewish people is thorough and compelling (pp. 76–81). It is "a *sine qua non* for Israel's self-definition as the people of God," one of the essential identity markers that "protected [the Jewish people] against the assimilation of foreign influences and customs into the Jewish way of life" (p. 80).

Yee, surprisingly, does not see the author's depiction of circumcision in v. 11 ("the 'so-called' circumcision, done in the flesh by human hands") as negative, but as simply "reinforcing group identification" (p. 84). While he is right to note that negative stereotypes of Judaism by Christian interpreters have offended devout Jews, it does appear that the portrayal of circumcision here is quite negative. Ephesians depicts Israel as a marked-off earthly people by virtue of their earthly practices, hiding from view their God-ordained origins in an effort to emphasize the gravity of their mistake in identifying election with ethnic identity, a mistake that leads to Israel's complacency and failure.

With regard to the continuity/discontinuity between Israel and the Church, Yee situates his view against both a simple replacement of Israel with the Church and a direct line of continuity between the two. He claims, rather, that the Church as “one body” is “community-redefining imagery.” Ephesians transposes “the exclusive ‘body politic of Israel’ into an inclusive (and non-ethnic) community-body in which the ‘holy ones’/Israel and Gentiles who believe in the Messiah could be together as a harmonious whole (hence, ‘in *one* body’)” (p. 176). With regard to the authorship of the letter, Yee refers throughout his work to “the author” of the letter in order to avoid distracting from the main point of his thesis (p. 33).

While this review has focused on several points of disagreement with Yee’s exegesis, this is only because his thesis is so compelling and faithful to the text of Ephesians 2. His work constitutes a vitally important engagement with Ephesians, which future scholarship on the letter simply cannot ignore. His various statements and restatements of Jewish exclusivism creatively express the Jewish attitudes that were current in the first century and that needed to be overcome by the death and resurrection of Christ. For this reason future dialogue on the “new perspective” will benefit greatly from Yee. This work, especially his discussion of “the law of commandments in ordinances” (pp. 154–61), shows how insights from the “new perspective” can bring to light features of the text that are relatively inexplicable on a “traditional” reading.

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Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles. By Ray Van Neste. JSNTSup 280. London: T & T Clark International, 2004, xii + 354 pp., \$130.00.

Are the Pastoral Epistles a hodgepodge of disconnected literary “marbles” collected by an author/editor, somewhat mysteriously placed into one textual “bag” for no apparent reason? Or are they a set of documents that reflect a demonstrable individual structure and possess an inner coherence, both textually and conceptually? These are the options R. Van Neste takes up in what is the fruit of his doctoral studies under the tutelage of I. H. Marshall of Aberdeen University, Scotland.

Van Neste sets his study against the backdrop of a growing trend in Pastoral scholarship. The prevailing view until recently (the 1980s), among supporters and non-supporters of Pauline authorship alike, was that these letters represented clumsy combinations of differing literary forms. However, within the last twenty-five years scholarship increasingly has argued for the theological and literary coherence of these letters. Yet, not all have been convinced. In particular, the author points to James D. Miller’s work (*The Pastoral Letters and Composite Documents* [SNTSMS 93; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997]). Far from being swayed by the growing consensus, Miller tries to undermine such an assessment by working through these letters paragraph by paragraph (and sometimes phrase by phrase) in an attempt to show discontinuity and incoherence at nearly every level. Thus, in order to assess this emerging consensus and as a riposte to Miller’s work, Van Neste takes up the task of tracing “the movement of language through each letter asking how each sentence or paragraph connects to the next or how the whole letter holds together linguistically” (p. 5).

The first part of his work lays out the methodology guiding his study. Here he draws primarily on the modern insights of discourse analysis (cohesion fields, semantic chains, and transitional devices) as supplemented by the more historically grounded rhetorical criticism (specifically, matters of style—chiasmus, inclusio, etc.) and studies of ancient

epistolography (use of the vocative, disclosure formulas, and *παρκαλέω* statements). These provide a set of devices whereby he hopes to detect and establish the boundaries of the basic literary units (paragraphs) and larger sections (a portion of discourse comprised of two or more units) as well as the coherence within and between these units and sections. By coherence he refers to the “interdependency of various elements” (p. 8) in a discourse so that the interpretation of a given element is dependent upon that of another. This interdependent linkage sets up a relation of cohesion. At the same time he recognizes that cohesiveness and lack thereof represent poles on a continuum. Thus, his analysis of the individual letters is an attempt to determine where each might fall on that continuum. In short, Van Neste hopes to analyze the structure of each letter through a close attention to the actual structural markers in an attempt to surface and approximate the intention of the author. Thereby he hopes to bound interpretive license and to chasten currently assumed views of the conceptual trajectories in the Pastorals.

After laying out his methodology, Van Neste treats each of the letters in turn in their canonical order. Each book is analyzed in order to (1) determine the boundaries of the individual paragraphs; (2) examine the cohesion within each paragraph; and, finally, (3) examine the cohesion between paragraphs. Consequently, two chapters are given to each book with the first chapter dedicated to steps (1) and (2) and the second to (3). As one might imagine, these chapters are dense reads as Van Neste pays close attention to the particulars of a given unit or set of units. However, though they call for concentration on the reader’s part and would best be engaged only after a thorough familiarity with the letters themselves, they testify to his close attention to the text in trying to allow the text, as much as possible, to structure his reconstruction of the Paul’s flow of thought.

As he concludes, Van Neste’s central contention is that each of the letters demonstrate well-defined structures that cohere. Yet, it is important to note that it is structures, in the plural, since they all manifest distinctive characteristics even in the two letters that are most alike (i.e. 1 Timothy and Titus). For example, Van Neste notes that 2 Timothy demonstrates clear connections between units (paragraphs) nearly throughout the whole book. On the other hand, 1 Timothy and Titus contain clear-cut sections (groups of paragraphs) which relate to one another symmetrically. Van Neste notes, in what appears to be his preferred ordering of the book (he gives two “complementary” possibilities), that there is an alteration between sections dealing with Timothy and the opponents (1:3–20; 3:14–4:16; 6:3–21) and those dealing with specific church groups (2:1–3:13; 5:1–6:2). Thus, while 1 Timothy coheres, its coherence, in general, is developed in a manner strikingly distinct from 2 Timothy. Following his conclusion, Van Neste helpfully provides the raw data of his cohesion shift analysis in the book’s single appendix, a real treasure trove of data that will facilitate further work along the lines of Van Neste’s.

All in all, this is a solid contribution from a young scholar. As far as I can see, Van Neste has constructed sound methodological guidelines and consistently applied them such that a neglected facet of study in the Pastorals has been more fully illumined. Moreover, it has been illumined in such a way that previous assumptions of cohesion have been given more extensive analytical grounding and direction, while assumptions of incoherence have been rendered nearly untenable. Though one may not agree with all of his exegetical and structural decisions (for indeed, determining levels of cohesion is no exact science and involves the complex interplay of various textual dynamics), one need not be convinced of every decision to profit from a work that takes us another real step forward. Indeed, Van Neste’s work furthers our appreciation for the literary artistry and theological depth of a significant portion of the Pauline corpus, a portion so often neglected even within evangelical circles. More work certainly needs to be done. Not only is this not the final word on the structure of these letters, but, as Van Neste himself

encourages his readers, what is particularly needed now is some careful thought as to how these structural insights come to bear on our understanding of the theology of these letters. This is especially intriguing when one considers what theological insights the symmetrical relationships existing between sections in 1 Timothy and Titus might hold. This is a book that serious students of these letters will be glad to have in their libraries.

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The Salvation Historical Fallacy? Reassessing the History of New Testament Theology. By Robert W. Yarbrough. History of Biblical Interpretation Series 2. Leiden: Deo, 2004, xiv + 401 pp., \$39.95 paper.

Robert W. Yarbrough is Associate Professor of New Testament Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. The agenda for this volume is clear before one opens the book, since the title is crossed out on the cover. The purpose is to show that there is no salvation-historical fallacy. Yarbrough asserts that standard accounts of NT studies in the last half of the twentieth century focused on Rudolf Bultmann, his precursors and legacy. Therefore they have neglected or invalidated the work of those who follow a salvation-historical approach. The book does not offer a synchronic study of the history of NT scholarship that begins with a particular stance and evaluates each scholar in light of that stance. Rather, it follows a diachronic method, looking at the main scholars of a particular model of understanding ("critical orthodoxy") over against those who hold a different model (salvation history). The book does not attempt to prove a genetic relationship between any of the scholars, although such relationships probably exist. This gives the study a more historically objective appearance. The book is a helpful introduction to debates of German NT scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Much of this is inaccessible to those who do not, or do not have the inclination to, read German.

Critical orthodoxy assumes that historical reasoning must be separated from the religious dimension of life. This is the legacy of Kant. Salvation history assumes that God can and does intervene in history and that this history of God's intervention can be known by the same reasoning as any other history. In fact, the salvation-historical approach says that the sources of the history and theology of the NT are "unintelligible apart from the material influence of a transcendent God who involved himself in the historical process in much the same way that biblical writers claim" (p. 9).

The mid-nineteenth-century works of F. C. Baur and J. C. K. von Hofmann are set against each other in chapter 1. Baur followed a Cartesian and Kantian epistemology that forced him to assert a modern method of research ("pure history" devoid of divine intervention), which is inimical to the NT texts. Hofmann's work on NT theology has often been neglected, but was thoroughly researched for this book. Hofmann proposes that NT theology arises from the texts themselves rather than from a presupposed modern epistemology imposed upon the texts. It is based on "a history which happened, not merely was thought" (p. 40). Throughout the volume Yarbrough points out the attitude toward the OT adopted by various scholars. Inevitably, those of the critical orthodoxy camp downplay the influence of the OT on NT theology, while salvation-historical scholars see the OT as a vital background to the discipline.

The second pair of scholars is W. Wrede and A. Schlatter (chap. 2). These two scholars opposed each other at the turn of the twentieth century. Their debate was discussed by

Robert Morgan in *The Nature of New Testament Theology* (Allenson, 1973). This chapter is a welcome reminder of that important volume and sets the debate in the larger context of the viability of salvation-historical methods. Wrede followed Baur, and Schlatter was similar to Hofmann in approach and conclusions. In the conclusion to the chapter the question is raised again: Is the work of God perceptible in the history of the world? Or is God's work so immanent that one cannot perceive it by normal historical insight? Are there divine interventions? Or is Christianity merely a result of the development of religions?

The book discusses developments between the world wars (chap. 3) and in the biblical theology movement after World War II (chap. 4). These chapters highlight critical orthodoxy's debate with the salvation-historical approach in OT as well as NT scholarship, sketching the development of the salvation-historical approach to NT theology in the twentieth century. Yarbrough shows that this approach is not a mid-century aberration of O. Cullmann but has a number of precursors. These are apparent in the development of OT theology during this period (Eichrodt, Procksch, Jacob).

Karl Barth's theological method asserted the truth of the historic Christian faith, but it jettisoned "the historical grounding of theology so important to Schlatter" (p. 118, cf. pp. 184–88 on von Rad). Barth asserted that history is not a vehicle for divine revelation (p. 151). This view dominated German scholarship since the mid-century. It caused the mitigation of salvation-historical influences in mainstream scholarship, not because dialectical theology said that the history portrayed in the NT was false, but that it was unreliable. Nevertheless, salvation-historical approaches surfaced during these times (Piper, Dodd, Wendland, Stauffer, Goppelt, Hunter, Filson). This period also saw the revelation-in-history movement that ended in bankruptcy (as Childs pointed out). Chapter 4 offers a critique of Childs's historiography of this period and points out the weakness of Childs's canonical approach in which history is apparently left out.

After mid-century R. Bultmann and O. Cullmann stood in opposition to one another (chap. 5). In this chapter Cullmann is discussed first and subsequently Bultmann's critique is set forth. One needs to wait until chapter 6 to get a full-blown exposition and critique of Bultmann's *Theology*. Cullmann is the hero of the salvation-historical school at the end of the twentieth century. His *Christ and Time*, *The Christology of the New Testament* and *Salvation as History* are in full agreement with Hofmann and Schlatter. Cullmann ties salvation and history inextricably together. A salvific historical event belongs to the essence of the NT message (p. 226). For Cullmann, as for the NT, the Kantian division between historical knowledge and religious knowledge does not exist. Cullmann is not so naïve as to think events come to us uninterpreted. However, in opposition to Bultmann, he does not create an unbreachable wall between text and event. Hence, the NT refers to real historical events (as for Hofmann and Schlatter) and not merely to thoughts about history (as for von Rad and Bultmann).

Finally, two late twentieth-century responses to the Bultmann synthesis are offered (chap. 6), those of M. Albertz and L. Goppelt. Yarbrough shows that Albertz is indeed a part of the legacy of Hofmann-Schlatter, whereas Goppelt stands apart because, although he presents salvation according to the NT, he does not link faith with history.

Yarbrough takes the same approach to the study of modern NT theologies as Räsänen's *Beyond New Testament Theology* (Trinity Press International, 1990). Yet whereas Räsänen thinks the Baur-Wrede-Bultmann approach is the best example and model for the discipline, Yarbrough thinks the so-called salvation-historical model of Hofmann-Schlatter-Cullmann is best, or at least a viable alternative (agreeing in some measure with Peter Balla). Perhaps some interaction with Dan O. Via's *What Is New Testament Theology?* (Fortress, 2002) would have offered another approach which categorizes various NT theologies along different lines, namely, a historical versus hermeneutical approach. In Via's analysis, Bultmann is not in Wrede's camp in this debate.

Yarbrough's conclusion is that faith and history must go together in the construction of NT theology because the Christian faith (as well as Israel's faith) is founded on historical events. Critical orthodoxy cannot grasp the meaning of the NT. A few scholars have been tempted to follow a strictly literary approach to the meaning of the NT. This book should call them back to a historical mooring. The literary approach (spinning out of Barth and Frei) has much to offer, and the book under review does not capitalize on these contributions, but nonetheless it does remind us that without a historical base to NT study one cannot identify with the NT authors and thus cannot truly understand the theology of the NT.

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New Testament Theology: Communion and Community. By Philip F. Esler. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005, xii + 353 pp., \$25.00 paper.

In his *New Testament Theology* Philip F. Esler, professor of biblical criticism at the University of St. Andrews, purposes "to construct a historical interpretation of the New Testament aimed at enriching contemporary Christian life and identity within a framework of personal interrelationships, indeed personal intercommunion" (p. 191). He sets out to avoid the communicative violence (i.e. "ignoring the intention of the original author, the effects of the text on its original audience, and the neglect of many texts and exegetical data," p. 7) inherent in any methodology that follows Gabler's paradigm of extracting *normative* content.

To do so, Esler first situates his program among and against the likes of Gabler, Strauss, Wrede, Schlatter, Bultmann, Stendahl, Morgan, Räisänen, and Francis Watson. He focuses in this first chapter on Gabler and identifies the fundamental flaw in his approach as the *partner* he positioned alongside biblical theology. Whereas Gabler intended for the results of biblical theology to feed dogmatics, Esler prefers it to "enrich contemporary Christian experience and identity." In this preferred partnership Stendahl's advocacy of a theology "which retains history as a theologically-charged category" (p. 36) provides the way forward.

Chapter 2 elucidates the model for interpersonal communion and intercultural communication. Drawing heavily on Martin Buber's *Ich und Du*, Esler argues for the importance of reciprocal relationships, or interpersonal communion, with the ancestors of the Christian faith. However, the cultural distance requires readers to decode carefully the message encoded by these foreign communicators of the early church. This two-part model of intercultural communication and interpersonal communion is then grounded in a philosophical discussion of personhood (with direction taken from Rosenzweig, Zizioulas, and LaCugna) that is informed by a theological conviction about the Trinitarian existence and therefore spiritual *koinonia* of God, which we are to imitate in interpretation.

Chapter 3 defends the process school of communication and its commitment to the knowability of the past against Derrida and Gadamer. Esler's brief defense focuses on critical flaws in their theories (e.g. Derrida's assertion "there is nothing outside the text" and Gadamer's assumption that communication requires agreement). Against these theorists, he recognizes that intercultural communication is presently occurring all over the world and the cultural information necessary for understanding one's Christian ancestors is available (Esler himself has published two volumes of such research, *The Early Christian World* [2 vols.; Routledge, 2000] and *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds* [Routledge, 1994]).

In chapter 4, the NT documents are construed as *non-literary* (or “practical messages”) rather than literary documents. He considers literary documents to be those associated with an “imaginative world,” possessing “aesthetic qualities” that do not intend to cause a specific change in the “mundane existence” of the reader. In contrast, non-literary documents are “expository and didactic,” possessing a “performative” character (as defined by the speech act theory of J. L. Austin and John Searle) and maintaining “a particular thesis.” Esler makes the distinction to preserve a greater respect for the author’s intended meaning against the challenges of scholars such as Roland Barthes and Paul Ricoeur.

Chapter 5 contains an analysis of Schleiermacher’s hermeneutics that presents a newly valorized reading of his life’s work on the subject and that defends him against those who decry his psychologizing tendencies. Ultimately, Esler validates Schleiermacher’s hermeneutics, considering it to be “about understanding all discourse, spoken and written, as dialogical interaction between persons to foster communication and understanding” (p. 146).

In chapter 6, Esler surveys 1 Corinthians 10–14 in an effort to provide a biblical example from the first century that interpersonal communion dominated the life of the earliest Christians. He arranges his discussion around Rosenzweig’s three stages towards true community (listening and speaking, the common meal, and silence) and ultimately confirms his model for doing NT theology by bringing to life its original interactive setting at meals and meetings.

In chapter 7, Esler explains the effects of writing within the Christian community. He laments that words which were first written between persons in relationship and were designed to be read out loud in communal gatherings were transformed slowly into ancient texts used for reading in isolation. Esler wants to reverse this detrimental transformation. Using the neologism “scriptality,” he calls for a return to hearing the “scripts” of the NT in their original spoken and relational dynamic.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 address the problem of attaining true interpersonal communion with NT saints who are dead. Chapter 8 summarizes perspectives on the communion of saints from the first century down to the twenty-first century. Chapter 9 advocates the naturalistic possibilities for communing with our ancestors in faith, with the practices of anamnesis that grow out of a historical investigation of the NT comprising his best recommendation for successful communion. Chapter 10 then postulates a fuller form of communion through invocation of the saints who have died and are waiting with God.

In chapter 11, Esler gives his reason for focusing on the canonical documents and then systematically rejects Brevard Childs’s canonical hermeneutics because of its neglect of the original historical situation that gave rise to the texts. He instead promotes Mikhail Bakhtin’s “dialogicality” as a paradigm for viewing the canonical scripts.

As a fitting end to his manuscript, Esler provides an example of his approach to NT theology as practiced in relation to the book of Romans. Relying on work already published in his *Conflict and Identity in Romans* (Fortress, 2003) and *Galatians* (Routledge, 1994), he demonstrates how the paradigm for resolving ethnic conflict in Rome, which Paul presented within the historical dynamics of the first century, is better suited than that of Galatians for directing twenty-first-century approaches to the same kinds of ethnic conflict.

Overall, Esler’s rugged commitment to respecting the historically unique dynamics of the authors and audiences of the NT does steer his NT theology away from the pitfalls common to the method that extracts normative content and renders useless the remaining historical particulars. His method does put flesh and blood back into a discipline that has been depersonalized through the rise of textuality and intertextuality. His ecclesiological conviction that Christians today can still dialogue with their earliest ancestors

about life and their identity is a refreshing reminder for those of us who have erred in doing theology with literary texts alone.

By traditional definition, however, Esler's manuscript functions more as an exercise in "interpersonal hermeneutics" than in theology. The book does not contain the results of Esler's "listening to" the enscripturated voices but rather the foundations (philosophical, psychological, sociological, theological, etc.) for his hermeneutical approach. A more appropriate title for the book might be *Communion and Community in Hermeneutics: A Socio-Theological Dialogue with the New Testament Canon*. The current title may mislead some who are looking to compare his book to the traditional works classed as NT theologies (though they will benefit greatly from his critical evaluation of the discipline's development from Gabler to the present in chap. 1).

Since the book focuses more on the theoretical foundations to socio-theological dialogue with the NT instead of the results of such dialogue, the reader is left without a clear pattern for how this approach can "enrich contemporary Christian life and identity." The only example provided occurs in the final chapter of the book and relates to large-scale ethnic conflict. If the method really does reclaim the 27 documents of the NT for use in "normal, everyday Christian experience," then at least one, if not multiple, examples of such personal and everyday applications needs to be fleshed out. The lack of such personal results from Esler's dialogue with his ancestors does not undermine his hermeneutical program but only suspends its practicality until further publications on the subject.

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The Temple and the Church's Mission: A biblical theology of the dwelling place of God.
By G. K. Beale. New Studies in Biblical Theology 17. Leicester/Downers Grove: Apollos/
Intervarsity, 2004, 458 pp., \$29.00 paper.

With his characteristic exegetical and bibliographical thoroughness, G. K. Beale traces a theology of the temple through Scripture, buttressing his observations with evidence from ANE texts and temple structures, Jewish writers, and the Church Fathers. The author's command of the subject is evidenced by his 55 pages of indexes for bibliographical, scriptural, and non-biblical texts.

Beale's most enduring point is that Christ himself (whose physical body is the temple and who is the cornerstone of the Church) and the NT Church begin the fulfillment of the OT prophecies concerning a future temple, a fulfillment that will continue throughout eternity as God dwells with his people. Beale sets this story of the anticipated and fulfilled temple within the larger framework of the presence of God theme begun at creation. For Beale the description of Eden and its environs, the creation and work of man, the blessing/commission of the patriarchs and Israel, the theophany at Sinai, and the structure of temples in the ANE and Israel all point to a theology of the expansion of the worship/praise of God throughout creation, a theology that employs temple terminology. Beale's argument is based on shared vocabulary and parallelisms between these accounts. For example, Eden, Sinai, and the tabernacle and temple all exhibit a tri-partite structure and manifest God's presence. The entrance to Eden and the entrance to Israel's worship sites are oriented eastward. Adam, Noah, and Abraham perform quasi-priestly functions. The tabernacle and temple are decorated with garden-like iconography.

The OT relates the failure of man to extend the witness of God worldwide, thus establishing the need for a structure not made by human hands—Christ and then the Church as the spiritual dwelling place of God, witnessing to all the world of God's glory. The Church anticipates the new heaven and earth in which the entire cosmos will be God's dwelling.

Beale's strongest arguments are based on his extensive and detailed observations of the use of OT quotations and allusions in the NT. This is Beale at his best. He traces every use of the NT temple theme, showing not only that Christ and the Church are so described, but that the descriptions grow out of the temple and related kingdom promises of the OT (cf. Beale's extensive treatment of Isaiah 66, Ezekiel 40–48, and Daniel 2). Those who anticipate a renewed physical presence of a Jewish temple must interact with these intertextual arguments. It will not be enough to say that the OT is obviously looking to a physical, Jerusalem-based temple. One must explain why the NT seems so often to state or suggest that these OT restoration and temple passages are being fulfilled in the person of Christ and in the Church.

As with any thematic treatment that is both comprehensive and sequential, some parts are more demonstrable than others. Beale will not convince at every point, particularly in the earlier chapters. For example, is Adam styled as a priest in a temple-like garden to the degree Beale suggests (pp. 66–70)? Did Noah receive the same commission as Adam when the call to subdue is not overtly repeated in a passage so intentionally parallel (p. 104)? Do the priest's garments serve as a representation of a tri-partite cosmic structure (pp. 39–40)? Is there really no furniture in heaven (p. 283)? But Beale is usually cautious when there is little direct lexical evidence to distinguish the less certain interpretations.

Exegetes will appreciate Beale's careful work as a paradigm for thematic study and as a prod to creative thinking. But his is a book for the theological student as well, aided by Beale's frequent summaries and clear, logical transitions. I have used this book in an OT themes course and it evokes (at times provokes) excellent discussions about the value of using ANE material in OT interpretation, the relationship between the testaments, the nature of parallelism and typology, the NT's use of OT quotations, and the hermeneutics of biblical study. Regarding this last point, Beale unfortunately scatters helpful observations (pp. 288–91, 295–98, 376–85); one might wish for an extended, systematic treatment. A subject index also might have made this and other topics easier to find. Beale probes the issue of whether a non-literal (i.e. non-structural) fulfillment of the OT temple promises can be regarded as an actual realization of the OT wording. This entire book is his answer in the affirmative.

Not content merely to describe the development of a theme, Beale shows how the Church's continued temple task is to spread the glory of God through worldwide missions and to enjoy the presence of God in our service to him. Such observations are sometimes lacking in our academic pursuits.

Most of us recall from our childhood days numbered dot puzzles on which we drew lines between dots until a picture emerged. Beale's book is like that. He methodically sets forth points until a comprehensive theology of God's expanding presence among his people emerges. A reader might dispute the placement or presence of a particular fact, but without question Beale's final picture connects a lot of dots. As a biblical-theological study it is a must read if not a must have.

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Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament. Volume 1: Prayer and Agriculture. By David Instone-Brewer. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004, xxv + 456 pp., \$60.00.

This work (TRENT) by David Instone-Brewer is the initial offering in a planned six-volume series that is organized loosely around the six topical orders of the Mishnah (although Instone-Brewer takes the liberty to rearrange some materials that do not fit topically). There is a lengthy introduction in this volume, which also serves as an introduction to the whole series.

The introduction alone makes this volume a worthwhile resource. It covers a variety of topics in the study of rabbinic literature concisely while still managing to cover all the relevant issues. One reason for this type of introduction is the self-avowed aim of the book—to collect the earliest rabbinic traditions from the Mishnah, Tosefta, and the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. These had their origin in the NT era—subsequently defined as being the first century before AD 70. Instone-Brewer selects this date because of the transformative event of the Temple destruction on Judaism and his belief that the majority of the NT was complete by this date (p. 1).

Instone-Brewer contends that there is an evident coherence among the literature of this period. In this respect, he tackles an area that has long been taboo. Initially, rabbinic literature was dealt with by Christian scholars almost exclusively as background material for the NT (see G. F. Moore, “Christian Writers on Judaism,” *HTR* 14 [1921] 197–254). Instone-Brewer notes that the caution of Jacob Neusner and others in this respect has led to a strong separation between the study of the NT and contemporary rabbinic literature (p. 29). Instone-Brewer’s work is, at least partially, a foray back into a comparative study between the two bodies of literature, presumably with the intent of putting them on a level playing field.

Rabbinic texts are notoriously difficult to date, and efforts in this area have been a relatively recent endeavor among scholars with Jacob Neusner leading the way (pp. 29–30). This being said, Instone-Brewer does an excellent job of presenting the possible methods used in dating the texts as well as the pitfalls of each method. Instone-Brewer uses a scale of 1 to 13 to indicate the decreasing reliability of dating a source’s origin prior to AD 70. The scale is thorough but has a level of complexity that would appeal primarily to those seeking to go into some depth of technical research. However, in the text of the book, there is sufficient explanation behind the dating of any given rabbinic text to make the material accessible to those with a less detailed interest.

The overall structure of this first volume is based on the topical nature of the first order of the Mishnah, *Zeraim* (Seeds), which deals with issues of agriculture and prayer. Instone-Brewer does not follow the Mishnaic structure exactly but rather favors topical arrangement when a tradition has been preserved in a tractate that bears more topical affinity with another tractate. In addition, there are points where a tractate may only be given a cursory mention if it is not deemed to contain material prior to AD 70. Such is the case with tractates *Kilayim*, *Hallah*, *Orlah*, and *Bikkurim*, which deal with mixtures, the dough offering, the forefruit of young trees, and the first fruits, respectively.

Following the introduction, Instone-Brewer covers each tractate with an overview that includes definitions and an outline. These overviews are well written and helpful, giving the reader access to both the big picture and to crucial terms. Each pericope has a summary of its contents, and each *mishnah* has the translation, commentary, explanation of dating, and—where appropriate—any relationship the material may have to the NT text. Hebrew terms within the text are given both in the Hebrew font and in transliteration. In his analysis of the material, the author provides a helpful format, listing the Hebrew text and his translation side by side. In the translation, Instone-Brewer puts in bold the words he deems to be pre-AD 70, making it clear what he views

as later additions to the pre-70 material. Overall, TRENT is a highly detailed work on diverse subjects contained in the early mishnaic material, and space allows for only a brief example here.

One of the more thoroughly covered tractates is *Berakhot*. The tractate includes discussions of the *Shema*, the Eighteen Benedictions, and the blessings related to meals. A primary question for Instone-Brewer is to determine what parts of prayers, such as the *Shema*, had become established tradition by AD 70. This section follows the typical format—the author, in a discussion of the long and short blessings of the *Shema*, translates the rabbinic materials (*mishnah*, *tosefta*, *talmuds*) with pre-70 candidates in bold. In his comments, Instone-Brewer discusses the nature of the rabbinic discussion and the process of their crystallization, including the idea that many of the actual prayers may not have been fixed prior to AD 70 and that this is especially true of the words used in such prayers. The following section gives the more technical justification of the author's choices for dating the material prior to or after AD 70. Finally, in a short paragraph, Instone-Brewer cites evidence that there is nothing in the NT to indicate that prayers were fixed in form.

Of particular interest in the section on *Berakhot* is the unit on the Eighteen Benedictions and Instone-Brewer's treatment of the terms heretics (*minim*) and Nazarenes (pp. 101–17). There is much discussion as to whom the former term refers, and Instone-Brewer gives a careful analysis of the different theories and suggests several alternatives. He views “Nazarenes” as a later addition to the text that refers specifically to Christians. In fact, the birth of Christianity may have played a significant role in the formation and codification of prayers within the Jewish community as it sought to distinguish itself from the Christian sect.

Overall, TRENT is a valuable reference work whose main audience is the scholarly community. Its structure makes it similar to a commentary but it cannot be treated strictly as such because the material is concerned with date and does not adhere strictly to one body of literature, such as the Mishnah. The focus is solidly on the rabbinic material, and those looking for the book to have a focus on the NT will be disappointed. While the book provides some marvelous insights into the NT and its relationship to the pre-AD 70 rabbinic literature, these notes are present in only one-third of the book. Nevertheless, Instone-Brewer's work represents a good technical work for scholars of rabbinic literature that takes into account the NT as part of the literary milieu of the era.

There are several errors of a technical nature (page numbers, abbreviations, copy errors, etc.) in the work and some unclear phrasing in spots. However, these can be easily fixed and do not detract from the overall quality of the work. It is a bold contribution to the area of rabbinic literature, treating the text from a source-critical approach. Such an endeavor is laden with pitfalls and subjectivity but is a leap forward from some older works, such as Ephraim Urbach's *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs* (Harvard University Press, 1975) or George Foot Moore's *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim* (Harvard University Press, 1927), both of which deal with the ideas of the early rabbinic literature topically and with little attention to chronology or development. What is more, TRENT represents a helpful addition to simple translations of a major rabbinic corpus such as Herbert Danby's *The Mishnah* (Oxford University Press, 1933) or Jacob Neusner's *The Tosefta* (Hendrickson, 2002), which provide little to no commentary on the text and its corresponding ideas. In sum, Instone-Brewer has provided us with a welcome aid for the scholarly inquiry into the early rabbinic literature. This carefully researched volume would make a good addition to any biblical or rabbinic scholar's library.

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Encyclopedia of Midrash: Biblical Interpretation in Formative Judaism. Edited by Jacob Neusner and Alan J. Avery Peck. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2005, xi + 1077 pp., \$299.00.

This encyclopedia provides “a systematic account of biblical interpretation in Judaism, from well before the second century B.C.E. through the end of the seventh century C.E.” Special attention is given to biblical interpretation coming out of various Jewish groups, with emphasis on Rabbinic Judaism, “which came to predominate and which defined the norm of Judaism from antiquity to the present day.” Furthermore, “systematic entries by specialists describe how biblical interpretations produced in other communities of Judaism related to Rabbinic Midrash” (p. ix). The emphasis on Rabbinic Judaism is reflected in the fact that there are few references to Christ, only one extended article on Gospel narratives (rather than separate articles on each of the Gospels), none on Paul or other NT epistolary literature, and very little on the OT pseudepigrapha (Pseudo-Philo and Jubilees each have articles dedicated to them) or the OT apocrypha.

The articles are presented in alphabetical order, but a helpful list of the articles in topical order is also provided. Of 56 articles, 22 are written by Jacob Neusner. The prominence of Neusner’s hand and perspective is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength because his expertise in the area is unquestionable and because it results in a consistency of viewpoint that might otherwise be lacking. It is a weakness because more than one viewpoint or approach would often be enriching and because his style (as we shall see) is not really adapted to that expected for encyclopedia entries. Folker Siegert contributes three valuable articles (which essentially constitute one lengthy three-part article) on Hellenistic Jewish Midrash. Three other contributors offer two articles each.

The contributors, for the most part, are well-known experts in the fields of the assigned articles. Besides Neusner’s entries on various Rabbinic works contributors include Lawrence H. Schiffman on biblical interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls; Louis Feldman on biblical interpretation in Josephus’s version of the Pentateuch; and Daniel Harrington on Pseudo-Philo’s *Biblical Antiquities*. David Instone-Brewer (of Tyndale House in Cambridge), the only known evangelical among the contributors, has contributed an excellent article on “Hermeneutics, Theology of.”

Sixteen different articles introduce various aspects of Rabbinic midrash. While each article certainly develops a slightly different theme, a simple reading of the titles suggests the kinds of overlap that can be expected: “Midrash, Definitions of,” “Theology of Rabbinic Midrash,” “Hermeneutics, Techniques of Rabbinic Exegesis,” “Hermeneutics, A Critical Account,” “Hermeneutics, Theology of,” “Theological Foundations of Rabbinic Exegesis,” and “Language and Midrash.” Some issues, such as the origin of the 13 rules attributed to Hillel and the doubtful nature of the relationship between the those rules and that Rabbi, receive multiple treatments as they are considered foundational to many of the issues addressed in the encyclopedia. The different perspectives and emphases of these articles enrich the reader’s understanding of the issues.

It is not unusual for different articles to address different issues with respect to individual Rabbinic works. For instance, one kind of article deals with Rabbinic readings of biblical books (e.g. “Leviticus in Leviticus Rabbah”), while another deals with the theology of individual Rabbinic works (e.g. “Leviticus Rabbah, Theology of”). Neusner has written all of the articles dealing with the theologies of the various Rabbinic midrashim and most of those dealing with the Rabbinic readings of biblical books. His articles tend to be overly full of quotations from the texts under discussion. For example, in his 14-page article on “Exodus in Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael” there are two extended citations, one of six full pages followed after one paragraph by another citation of nearly four full pages. While there might be much to be said for extended citations of the primary sources, the text-and-commentary style is unusual and, in my

opinion, not the most effective for encyclopedia articles. Readers familiar with many of Neusner's other writings will recognize this as his default writing style.

The one article focusing on the NT is Robert M. Price's article on "New Testament Narrative as Old Testament Midrash." It is an extremely tendentious piece that informs us that while previous scholars "saw gospel echoes of the ancient scriptures in secondary coloring here or redactional juxtaposition of traditional Jesus stories there . . . more recent scrutiny . . . has made it inescapably clear that virtually the entirety of the gospel narratives and much of the Acts are wholly the product of haggadic midrash upon previous scripture" (pp. 534–35). It is natural, we are told, "to picture early Christians beginning with a more or less vague savior myth and seeking to lend it color and detail by anchoring it in a particular historical period and clothing it in scriptural garb" (p. 535). A modern Christian reader "learns what Jesus did by reading the gospels; his ancient counterpart learned what Jesus did by reading Joshua and 1 Kings. It was not a question of memory but of creative exegesis" (p. 535). So "in the end the result is a new perspective according to which we must view the gospels and Acts as analogous with the Book of Mormon, an inspiring pastiche of stories derived creatively from previous scriptures by means of literary extrapolation" (p. 535). He goes on to walk through the Gospel of Mark and other NT narratives, suggesting how different parts were "derived from previous scripture." As is typical of the Jesus Seminar (with which the author is associated) this article portrays radical skepticism as though it reflects the consensus of contemporary biblical scholarship. It is a tremendous disappointment that the only article dealing with the NT reflects such an unbalanced position. Given the treatment provided in this one article, perhaps we should be grateful that so little space was given to the NT. Of course, many renowned scholars of various stripes have clearly demonstrated the poor scholarship behind such radical skepticism. Readers of this *Journal* are likely to be aware of substantive responses to these views that can be found in works such as Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (InterVarsity, 1987) and R. T. France and D. Wenham, eds., *Studies in Midrash and Historiography* (Gospel Perspectives 3; JSOT, 1983), as well as excellent commentaries and monographs on the Gospels and Acts that vindicate their historical reliability.

In terms of the presentation of the text it should be mentioned that Hebrew and Greek terms are transliterated and that there is no consistency with regard to the use of footnotes or bibliographies. Some articles make constant use of footnotes and provide brief bibliographies at the end. Many articles (especially those by Neusner) do neither. Some of the English used (by authors for whom it is not a mother tongue) is a bit awkward, and there are a few editorial slips (as in "The rabbis did developed systems of argumentation"; p. 268). The word "encyclopedia" is spelled one way on the front of the volumes and another ("encyclopaedia") on the title page and in the preface.

While this review has highlighted the only really disappointing aspects of this work (the text-and-commentary style of Neusner's articles and the article on NT narratives), it is in fact an extremely valuable resource. Its great strength is that of providing an excellent concise treatment of so many texts and aspects of biblical interpretation in Rabbinic and (to a somewhat lesser degree) pre-Rabbinic Jewish literature. It will be a great resource for students who are beginning to investigate the field of midrash for the first time or who are interested in exploring some facet of midrash that they have not studied before. It should be on the library reference shelf of every seminary, Bible college, and university with a religious studies program. Unfortunately, given the price of nearly three hundred dollars, most students and scholars will only be able to consult this encyclopedia in such a library.

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Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity, 2 vols. By Charles Kannengiesser, with special contributions by various scholars. Boston: Brill, 2004, xxxiv + xx + 1,495 pp., \$339.

Works such as this validate the expression, "We stand on the shoulders of giants." This two-volume set captures the patristic use of Scripture that helped the Church to define its doctrines, structure, practice, and very culture during its formative years. Set up in a handbook format, the work functions as a ready reference tool on the exegetical contributions of certain figures or schools of thought, in addition to the specific works associated with them. The size and technicality of the work demonstrate the complexity of a topic that continues to be a favorite among scholars of early Christianity.

Charles Kannengiesser is professor at Concordia University in Montreal and was successor of the late Cardinal Daniélou at Paris's Institut Catholique. Most recently authoring a work on the quest for Origen's spirituality, he has long been noted for his contribution to the field of patristics. Brill sponsors this fifteen-hundred page set on patristic exegesis as part of their new "The Bible in Ancient Christianity" series, the principal aim of which is to look at how Scripture texts functioned in all aspects of the early Church. One can hardly look at the early Church era without observing the high priority on scriptural exegesis; from doctrine to practice, "patristic exegesis is at the very core of the cultural legacy of the early church" (p. 13). Christians throughout the empire did not hesitate to appropriate their different interpretations into their own tradition, whether strongly rabbinical, pagan, Hellenistic, Arian, Persian, Syrian, or African. From neophyte to bishop, "Scripture never failed to satisfy the needs and to respond to the expectation of early Christians" (p. 13).

The work begins with an introduction defining readership, purpose, and method of the set. The justification for this large work lies in the revolution of the field of patristic exegesis that has only recently come into its own. Prior to the 1950s, early interpretation of Scripture "was relegated to the realm of erudite curiosities, irrelevant for any form of creativity in contemporary thought, and dispensable for serious theology" (p. 4). Kannengiesser reports several factors that helped to liberate the discipline: more critical thinking beyond "sectarian prejudice and confessional apologetics"; an increased appreciation of cultural, political, and social studies; a renewal of historically neglected periods; recovery from the Enlightenment's detachment of exegesis from church life; and an increase in innovative thinking—all of which have come together to develop the field of patristic exegesis. The enduring appreciation of the church's use of Scripture can be seen through increased interest in early Church studies among so many evangelical graduate students.

This work is unmatched by other patristic exegetical studies for several reasons that are laid out early. It surveys all of the exegetical writers and their works from the entire patristic era. It offers bibliographies of modern editions in addition to secondary materials that analyze them. It also considers the field of patristics itself as it seeks to study the history of interpretation. Kannengiesser specifies its goal: "Through analyzing relevant scholarly contributions, to attempt a coherent understanding of scholarly achievements within the whole field of patristic exegesis for almost a century" (p. 3); thus, it is a work *on* patristic exegesis and a work *about* patristic exegesis. Meanwhile, this study displays insight when it investigates several pivotal exegetical figures and trends in technical detail. These studies augment its analysis of the essential issues surrounding patristic methodology and antiquity's mindset in studying Scripture. No project on this topic has been done with such breadth and depth.

Chapter one offers a primer on collections of primary texts, new editions, and translations of patristic exegetical works. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, patrologies, bibliographical works, and relevant journals find record here, as well as important collections such as *Studia Patristica*. Space demands that only the fundamental, popular works

be listed here, but the survey is still immensely helpful and very up to date. Kannengiesser describes research trends that have shaped the field of patristic exegesis in the last fifty years. He evaluates the field on two levels: the sources and scholarly trends. On the level of sources, he reports that arduous labors of individuals and institutions have produced collections, translations, and books that have furthered the field, whose state is all the more encouraging in light of the decline of classical languages in secondary education. On the level of scholarship, Kannengiesser reports patristic trends in two eras. First was the post-World War II period with its renewal of biblical studies; this era saw influential works such as the 1942 papal encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* encourage scholars to broaden the field by considering non-traditional sources and cross-disciplinary studies. After the war, there was a general hunger for stability that patristic studies helped provide, especially its spirit of “returning to the sources” (p. 87). Second, since the 1950s, patristic studies have specialized in areas such as the importance of literary genre, the question of confessional prejudice, the meaning of Scripture’s senses, and the recent focus on social and political factors. Such discussion about patristics as a field is a priority for Kannengiesser, who creatively adds special sections to analyze both the subject matter and its scholars.

The set breaks Christian history into chronological and territorial categories for closer inspection, generally dividing the patristic era by century into Greek or Latin location from the apostolic Fathers up to the seventh-century West and the eighth-century East. Each century is introduced in its own unique context. For example, Kannengiesser reports that fourth-century Greek literature was defining for the church because new conditions for interpretation developed, such as a shift in authority from local pastors to bishops and a new imperial support of the church. This shift established a more global reception and interpretation by more non-specialists than before. A development also occurred that established Scripture for more formal doctrinal statements, making this fourth-century Greek exegesis crucial in the history of interpretation. Here, the particularly insightful treatment of Athanasius reinforces Kannengiesser’s expertise on this figure. Athanasius develops a “biblical mind-set”—unable to face anything “without identifying himself in his thought and in his action through a reflex of biblical hermeneutics” (p. 709). Specifically, this Alexandrian centered his exegesis on Christ’s descent to humanity: “Athanasius’ recourse to Scripture was always ‘incarnational’” (p. 704).

A separate chapter collects the exegetical literature of Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, and Ethiopian works, alongside the Latin and Greek categories. Judaism and Gnosticism receive a limited scope of consideration, due to their unique complexity and the very size of the individual literature fields. To exclude them would be negligent, but to consider them comprehensively would be impossible. The handbook also must limit its range of publications considered and cited, so it is concerned only with edited patristic sources without describing them all. Likewise, it must distance itself from discussing editions of biblical texts, despite their importance for patristic sources. The result is a more focused treatment of early Church authors, their exegetical practices, and the works themselves.

The bulk of this two-volume work is dedicated to individual exegetes of early Christianity. Each historical figure has a separate entry composed of some historical notes, a brief description of exegetical-based works, and a final section describing print editions: actual exegetical works, editions, translations, and specific studies. An alphabetical list of principal patristic authors functions like a topical index at the beginning of the work. This list contains all of the figures alongside some anonymous works that rightly should not be attributed to a known historical person. Each entry looks like a chapter in the table of contents, and sometimes the chapters advance the figure by focusing on a particular innovation; one such example is “The Achievement of Eusebius of Caesarea.” Unfortunately, there is no exhaustive index that provides mention of influential patristic

figures in other entries. Look up Augustine of Hippo in this “index” and one finds only one page number—that of his patristic exegesis entry. This structure does not significantly subtract from the work; to find how Ambrose influenced Augustine, one must simply work between those two entries. The difficulty would come in having to piece together an overall effect of a figure, although the influence of the major figures is well defined. A comprehensive index would be extremely helpful for diachronic research.

Some entries give attention to special problems or issues that surround exegetical practices or works, such as authorship, originality, and *catenas*. Often an entry will contain one or two examples of unique exegetical features that come to us from that patristic writer. Often an ideal quote from a secondary source summarizes an important feature of method, content, structure, texts, canon, or historical situation. Furthermore, several chapters profile early Church exegetes through special contributions by outside scholars, offering a fresh and in-depth perspective on a particular angle of patristic exegesis. For example, Norbert Brox treats Irenaeus’s use of Scripture as authoritative, while Anne Pasquier clarifies the theologically-driven motives of Valentinian exegesis, two essays sure to interest those participating in the contemporary scholarly battle on ecclesiastical and theological authority in the second century. In a technical but interesting chapter (“The Exegesis of Arius: Biblical Attitude and Systematic Formation”), Thomas Böhm explains the technique of Arian exegesis that enabled some to interpret the creaturehood of the Son. Here, isolation of verses against a background of tradition—including Origen, the Septuagint, and the Targums—permitted Arius to develop an exegesis establishing the creation of the Son and to claim that Arian doctrine is founded on Scripture. In “Augustine: The Hermeneutics of Conversion,” Pamela Bright identifies how this single figure “surpasses most of the ancient Christian interpretations of Scripture by the intensity of his personal appropriation of the Bible text, and by the originality and the profundity of his interpretations.” Whereas for many, rhetorical culture and Scripture merged often without reflection, for Augustine “these two streams . . . became a matter of fascinating inquiry” (p. 1149). Such insightful contributions help establish the work as an unparalleled comprehensive treatment of patristic exegesis.

In addition to entries on individual exegetes, the work explores important contexts, schools, trends, events, and methods that shaped the early Church. These additional sections augment the historical dimension to form a complete handbook of patristic exegesis. For example, David Balás and Jeffrey Bingham survey the use of individual books of Scripture to show how the Fathers received, interpreted, and taught each of them, as well as to orient the reader on patristic commentaries and homilies by biblical book. A chapter on the method and influence of rabbinic literature illustrates how Scripture and its interpretation are at the center of religious life of the church with its Jewish origin. This Jewish rootedness contrasts with a second milieu of patristic exegesis treated just as thoroughly here: the Greco-Roman rhetorical culture whose “rules” and spirit of rhetoric guided the classical poets and philosophers while also greatly influencing biblical hermeneutics.

Kannengiesser offers a clear explanation of literal and spiritual exegesis including issues of “letter” and “sense.” He insists that for ancient Christian interpreters, the biblical “letter” was the actual words of Scripture that were divine in origin and thus “admitted no neutral reading devoid of the appropriate kind of religious faith” (p. 168). He presents several aspects of the “letter” for the early Church, all of which reinforce how exegesis was a spiritual exercise. Meanwhile, motivated by an attempt to gain a Christ-centered reading of all biblical texts, Origen refined spiritual exegesis by his openness to non-Christian culture. Kannengiesser suggests that this methodology imposes two essential distinctions on the modern mind. First, the inventiveness of this hermeneutic was based on the Fathers’ belief that Scripture—especially the OT—stored ancient insights for *their* very own instruction. Second, their allegorical activities took place on

both the hermeneutical and the rhetorical levels—between theological functions and literary forms. Here, contemporary culture escorts ancient truths to the new community of God's people. We might be surprised to find "typology" under spiritual exegesis rather than literal exegesis, but the author explains that the divinely-intended connection between events secures it as historical over against allegorical; still (to use Tertullian's language), typology maintains a "mysterious" and "hidden" element. This section finds a complement in a special contribution "Allegory and History" in which Thomas Böhm illustrates the impossibility of simply defining senses of Scripture because "these notions cannot be separated from each other in a clear and satisfactory way" according to author and historical contexts (p. 213).

In addition to these Fathers, other interpreters—Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Ephraem of Syria, Maximus the Confessor, Theodoret, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Mani—receive in-depth treatment on the unique material surrounding their exegesis. These extra, special sections of distinctive approaches and historical contexts occur at every bend of both volumes, and they serve to elevate this set to the "indispensable" level.

Cost is a practical problem and will clearly be the limiting factor for broad sales and use of the *Handbook*. In terms of content, the only disappointment with this valuable work is the brevity of its analysis for many individual entries. Many figures receive only a paragraph or page of treatment that merely scratches the surface of their work, shifting the emphasis from the patristic figures and their individual contributions to the overall phenomenon of the early Christian exegesis itself. For minor figures, a few more comments of interest could motivate a reader to more serious study. Likewise, many specific works only receive a few notes of treatment, so a researcher should not expect a complete report of every single work or even a thorough analysis of any corpus. Although one could easily expect more from this almost fifteen hundred-page work, Kannengiesser's task is immense, and even a semi-extensive analysis of all figures and works is impossible.

One additional point of methodology is noteworthy. At times, the work reflects a non-traditional approach to history, seen as Kannengiesser remarks: "One must dare to interpret Scripture with a postmodern mind-set . . ." (pp. 7–8). He tries to work around the "traditional, humanistic, and Christian culture inherited from Europe" (p. 12), but he cannot escape the traditional categories such as "Sixth and Seventh Century Latin Christian Literature," proving that the labels remain because they are the most familiar and the best way of thinking about patristic study. On the other hand, the work does not restrict itself to the mainstream canonical reception process alone—emblematic of how this series of Brill welcomes insights of non-canonical, heterodox, and unorthodox texts. Kannengiesser's critical approach is clear when he speaks about the historical authenticity of the NT books as being "conditioned by their own context at the time of their composition . . . in order to give a proper account of the Jesus-event for the earliest Christian communities" (p. 398). His overall assessment of the NT enterprise is excellent: Christian understanding was clearly *kerygmatic* as it centered on the proclamation of the gospel, *charismatic* as it empowered the church, and *foundational* alongside the OT as sacred literature. These phenomena become the basis for the "reception" of Scripture in the churches through an historical process of acceptance, transmission, and quotation for the regulation of a shared faith among various church traditions. This historical progression underlies Kannengiesser's task, as the work seeks to capture this ongoing patristic reception process.

As a reference tool, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis* is unmatched. Its list of dictionaries, encyclopedias, patrologies, bibliographies, special series of patristic exegesis, and early Church journals offers a thousand places where one can explore more of patristic exegesis. In addition, the author translates foreign quotes into English. Libraries with graduate students ought to invest in it and seminaries ought to require students to con-

sider more about the history of interpretation. This work informs classical, biblical, and theological studies, as well as many aspects of philosophy and hermeneutics.

Most pleasantly of all, this work has surprising, spontaneous breadth. For example, Kannengiesser reports how Japan has prioritized patristic studies in their Christian academic programs in a way that “has had a spectacular blossoming, one that is full of promise for the culture and intellectual self-affirmation of the Christian minority in Japanese society” (p. 85). One interesting example suffices: Japanese thought maintains master-disciple values that parallel a similar dynamic in the transmission of material and spiritual values in the early Church.

A zenith of patristic exegesis studies has been reached in this set. Kannengiesser thinks in the Scripture-focused way necessary for examining the patristic era. This is all the more commendable given the contemporary influence of social trends, the result of which leads some patristic scholars to overlook the biblical and theological thought that influenced the ancient world as it became more Christian. Kannengiesser rightly assesses that many scholars “ignore the foundational role of the Bible in that historic process” (p. 69) and so neglect the complete understanding of factors that bore on the changes and stability in their lives. Scholars who seek to understand the ancient world are right to condition their understanding of patristic authors with the original political, social, and religious pressures, but they should also beware of reducing the early Church’s motives to these. This set also thinks historically, as it rightly assesses conditions for interpretation through the early Church. It thinks scholarly, as it cites an invaluable and impressive depth of scholarship. This interesting, accurate, and thoughtfully laid out work concretizes well-known and more obscure exegetes and their works, thus helping to position the shoulders of giants on which the Church continues to stand.

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House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity. By Roger W. Gehring. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004, vii + 408 pp., \$29.95.

Since the birth of the Church, believers have gathered together in private homes for fellowship, worship, evangelism, and teaching. Though there have been other NT scholars to take up the pen and write about the significance of house churches in the apostolic church, most of their writings have focused on the architecture of the homes and on the social and theological implications of house churches. While taking into account such previous scholarship, Gehring offers a fresh perspective on the topic in that he addresses the missiological significance of house churches.

House Church and Mission is the English translation of Gehring’s original publication of *Hausgemeinde und Mission* (Bibelwissenschaftliche Monographien [BWM], Band 9; Giessen: Brunnen, 2000), which was the edited version of his Th.D. dissertation *Hausgemeinde und Mission: Von Jesus bis Paulus*. The author is an adjunct professor at George Fox Evangelical Seminary in Portland, OR, and has served on staff with Campus Crusade for Christ since 1972 at Arizona State University, the Free University in Berlin, and Justus Liebig University in Giessen, Germany. Despite the fact that this book is based upon Gehring’s doctoral dissertation, it is a readable though lengthy work.

House Church and Mission is divided into six chapters, several appendixes, an extensive bibliography, and three indexes. Chapter one is composed of a literature review of the history of scholarship regarding the subject of house churches in the NT. Gehring’s thesis is that his work “intends to examine to what degree the social life, the organizational and leadership structures, and the ecclesiological self-understanding of early

Christians were patterned after the household model” (p. 22). He clearly notes that his methodology includes both exegetical-theological and socio-historical approaches, but he adds an important qualification: though the sociological approach is an important supplement to social- and literary-historical methodology, “it dare not be given absolute status” (p. 24). Because widely differing concepts of what constitutes a house church are current in the literature, Gehring concludes his introductory chapter with definitions and differentiations: “A *house church* is a group of Christians that meets in a private home. A *local church* consists of all the Christians that gather at a geographically definable location (e.g. town or city). The terms ‘local church’ and ‘house church’ refer to the same group only if there is just one single house church gathering at that specific location. We will use the term ‘whole local church’ or ‘whole church at one location’ to refer to the whole church in one locality. This term already implies a plurality of individual house churches for that location. The term ‘universal church’ will, as usual, be reserved for the worldwide body of Christians” (p. 27).

Chapter two examines the use of houses in the ministries of Jesus and the disciples before Easter. In conjunction with Jesus’ synagogue ministry, Gehring shows how the house of Peter in Capernaum was a place of assembly, instruction, healing, and operational base for outreach throughout the “evangelical triangle” (*das evangelische Dreieck*), the areas in and around Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. In this chapter Gehring points out that Jesus was an itinerant preacher who also led a sedentary ministry at least temporarily in Capernaum. As Gehring explains, the “house becomes in this case a base of operation for the itinerant ministry, from which Jesus went out on evangelistic trips and to which he again returned” (p. 41). His conclusion is that “Jesus may have undertaken a Galilean village-to-village (or house-to-house) mission, in which houses, households, and sedentary followers of Jesus played a role similar to that which they played in Capernaum” (p. 43). This example modeled by the Lord is continued with the ministry of the sending of the Twelve and later the seventy. Gehring notes that “the mission instructions indicate that the pre-Easter house mission, as Jesus and his disciples practiced it, was likely the embryonic form of house-to-house missional outreach and church development practiced after Easter” (p. 58).

Chapter three examines the post-Easter use of houses in the newly launched Christian movement. Gehring believes that, in conjunction with the Jerusalem Church meeting in the temple courts, the earliest Christians also gathered together in houses throughout the city of Jerusalem for worship, fellowship, the Lord’s Supper, and prayer. He also notes the role of houses in the Antioch Church as well as for the outreach of Peter. Gehring underscores the importance of this: “Because of the small size of house churches, it was possible to maintain a family-like atmosphere and practice brotherly love in a very personal and concrete way. . . . Even though the evidence is not as conclusive for the primitive church in Jerusalem as it is for the Pauline communities, here as well we can assume that the ancient *oikos* served as a source of evangelistic contacts, with its built-in network of relationships reaching far beyond the immediate family to servants, friends, clientele, and business associates” (p. 117).

The fourth chapter addresses the use of houses in Pauline missional outreach. Following his usual literary and historical analysis of the topic, Gehring addresses the cities with “demonstrable house churches”: Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Cenchrea, Ephesus, Rome, Colossae, and Laodicea. He examines several important issues: a plurality of house churches within one church in a particular geographical area, worship in house churches, missionary work carried out through house churches, and the leadership structures and organizational formation of house churches. The small size of the house churches attributed to the fact that they “remained family-like, personal, friendly, and attractive to outsiders. Because the groups were small, it was easy to keep track of relationships and hold one another accountable” (p. 227). Because the use of the

house was a significant part of Paul's strategy, Gehring sees Paul's approach to reaching entire households with the gospel—he began by first reaching the householder—as a key to the apostle's overall missionary strategy.

Chapter five is devoted to understanding the influence of *oikos* structures. Gehring primarily draws upon the household codes in Colossians and Ephesians and various passages in the Pastoral Epistles and 2 and 3 John for evidence of the significance of the kith and kin networks found within first century homes. Gehring emphasizes the close relationship between the family and the NT house church and its implication for Christians: "In their families and in their house churches, they are expected to be an illustration of order and an example of quiet civil loyalty and faithfulness inwardly and outwardly." Referencing the Pastorals, Gehring continues that this behavior makes Christians "effective in their missional outreach (cf. 1 Tim 2:4; 3:15; Titus 3:8)" (p. 266). This chapter concludes with the reminder that the house churches functioned also as a respite to aid itinerants by providing food, clothing, and lodging to assist missionaries in preparation for their future travels (cf. 3 John 6).

The final chapter of this work discusses the ecclesiological and missional function and significance of house churches. After discussing the architectural, socio-economic, and ecclesiological significance of the house churches, Gehring concludes his work by briefly addressing the notion of the house church model for contemporary churches. Though he properly concludes that it would be wrong to attempt to recreate the world of the first century wherever local churches exist, he does believe that we can learn much from the house churches of the NT.

There are numerous strengths of this work. First, the author is to be commended for producing a work on house churches that is primarily exegetical rather than pragmatically driven as are so many contemporary treatments of the topic. Gehring is a NT scholar who clearly subscribes to the historical reliability of many passages of Scripture that other scholars dismiss. As a missiologist, I have studied many house churches that—like many traditionally-structured churches—have substituted a healthy biblical ecclesiology for contemporary trends and personal desires. Though other authors have produced ecclesiologies and theologies regarding house churches (e.g. Steve Atkerson, ed., *Toward a House Church Theology*; Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Settings*), Gehring's work appears to be the first exhaustive exegetical and academic treatment of the topic. He clearly documents his work with numerous footnotes and a sixty-page bibliography.

Second, and closely related to the aforementioned strength, Gehring attempts to be thoroughly biblical in his understanding of house churches in the NT. Granted, he does support many of his arguments from archeological, historical, literary, and sociological evidence, but Scripture is his starting place and primary point of reference.

Third, rather than beginning with Acts and the Pauline Epistles, Gehring shows the connection between the role of the house in the ministry of Jesus and how it later influenced the post-Easter churches. Many other treatments are quick to overlook the pattern established in the Gospel records and immediately jump to the evidence of house churches that were planted outside of Jerusalem. Gehring's approach is to be highly commended.

The one major limitation of this work is that Gehring seems to draw certain conclusions about the existence and function of house churches from passages of Scripture from which the conclusions are speculative at best. Though his logic is usually tight, I would feel more comfortable with silence than with speculation. Plenty of clear evidence is forthcoming from the biblical texts to support the place and role of house churches in the spread of the gospel.

For example, Gehring believes that due to the *oikos* formula, "it was typical of the Pauline missional approach in any given city to initially target individuals from higher

social levels. In this way Paul was able to win homeowners, along with their entire households, for the gospel and to set up a base of operations in their house for local and regional mission" (p. 178). Though we do have biblical evidence of men and women of means with churches meeting in their homes (e.g. Lydia, Philemon), to draw this conclusion from the texts seems presumptuous.

Also, I disagree with the author's semantics that the apostle Paul practiced "cell planting" (*Schwerpunktmission*), leading to the claim that "Paul believed that his main objective was to establish small cells, that is, bases of operations in these cities, and to develop missional outreach from these support bases" (pp. 179, 180). Gehring's contemporary terminology leaves the reader with the impression that these "cells" were not churches but rather the church in *embryonic* form. Either the apostle planted churches or he did not. Though Paul would sometimes return to visit, send others to visit, or write letters to groups of Christians that he established, he never considered these local bodies of believers as something less than the church in their particular area. Though elders would later be appointed and sanctification would continue until glorification, Paul planted fully indigenous churches that lacked nothing in Christ.

Overall, this is an excellent work showing the natural wedding between ecclesiology and missions. Gehring has done a superb job with such a neglected topic in both NT and missiological studies. Due to the scholarly treatment of the subject, this work is best used as a textbook in graduate and doctoral studies.

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Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey. By A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004, v + 349 pp., \$29.99.

This work is the first in a projected series of eight texts addressing world missions from an evangelical perspective. Moreau is professor of missions and intercultural studies at Wheaton College Graduate School and general editor of the *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Corwin is associate editor of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. McGee is professor of church history and Pentecostal studies at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri.

Designed as an introductory textbook on the topic of contemporary missions, *Introducing World Missions* offers readers a broad overview of the subject. Though primarily written for prospective missionaries, it also addresses those who serve in established pastoral roles. As the authors note, "our prayer is that you will have the foundation necessary to make wise decisions about mission service, or if you are not so called, to help you counsel and guide others whom God brings across your path who are seeking his will in reaching the nations" (p. 23).

The work is divided into five major sections. Part one addresses biblical and theological foundations for mission. Here the authors establish the groundwork for the rest of the book. They staunchly argue that any theology of mission must have an evangelistic mandate at its center. Within this section, the authors offer a distinction between the commonly used terms "*missio Dei*," "missions," and "mission." Part two takes the reader on a quick tour of missionary work throughout the last two thousand years. The latter three sections of the book are very practical in their orientation. Part three examines missions from the angle of the missionary candidate, addressing topics such as the missionary calling and practical realities of getting from one's home to the field. Part

four discusses the plethora of challenges faced by the missionary, including personal and family issues, strategic and ministry issues, interpersonal relationships across cultures, and relating to churches and other shareholders. Finally, part five examines contemporary challenges to missions such as cross-cultural communication, contemporary mission trends and paradigm shifts, and encountering and engaging the religions of the world. The work concludes with an extensive bibliography and subject and Scripture indexes.

To supplement the text, the authors also provide four unique and excellent aides. First, every text comes with a CD-ROM of the extensive *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Second, a teacher's manual is available from Baker for instructors who adopt the book as a required text. Third, most of the chapters of *Introducing World Missions* include a case study designed to assist readers in applying the theory to actual problems faced on the field. These case studies usually pose a missiological dilemma, leaving the reader to think through how they would respond if faced with a similar reality. Fourth, throughout this text, numerous excellent sidebars offer deeper thought on specific issues.

There are numerous strengths to this work. The first and foremost is the fact that the authors believe that a healthy missiology must be founded upon a proper understanding of mission in *both* the OT and NT. Mission in both testaments is seen as a divine drama which is best understood in a series of acts: (1) creation and the Fall; (2) God's calling and setting apart a people for himself; (3) God's work in rescuing his people; (4) God's work in sending his people into exile; (5) God's work to save a people through the Messiah; (6) God's gathering a people as his Church; and (7) God's renewing all of creation through the consummation.

Second, and closely related to the aforementioned strength, is the excellent approach to mission theology. The authors believe that "mission theology . . . should be at the heart of the church's theology" (p. 76). Continuing on, the foundation for a theology of mission should be the Bible; indeed, the Bible "alone provides the general principles on which a theology of mission must be built and the specific instructions given to the church by God that inform our view of mission today" (p. 76). The authors, following John Piper's lead, see God's glory and our reflection of his glory as the guiding theme providing orientation to mission theology. This theme is comprised of three elements: "1) calling those who do not know Christ through the activities of evangelism and church planting; 2) growing in the capacity to live God-glorifying lives through the processes of discipleship and church growth; and 3) reflecting God's glory to a needy world through living lives of salt and light" (p. 79).

Third, the latter three sections of the work provide a very practical and helpful resource to individuals considering serving as missionaries. Much of the section is devoted to preparing missionary candidates for what to anticipate in the journey to the field, including the questions they should be asking and what training and resources are available for their preparation.

Fourth, in the chapter examining the expansion of the faith in the last century, the authors are quick to point out that much non-Western missionary work occurred. At the beginning of this chapter, they note, "The customary course in tracing the history of Christian mission is to progress from the 1910 Edinburgh conference to the institutions that came in its wake. However, this approach perpetuates a Western interpretation of events. It also draws attention away from the rise of indigenous Christian leaders and movements, a maturation that always had been the goal of mission" (p. 137). *Introducing Christian Missions* aims to correct this parochial historiography.

Fifth, though this is a textbook, readers must understand that this is not a soporific work. The sidebars, tables, diagrams, and various quotes from both historical and contemporary missionaries, missiologists, and theologians make for an engaging read. The case studies only stimulate engagement. These sections offer ethical and theological

conundrums that are commonly experienced in the trenches. For example, how should missionaries treat converts who upon baptism will be rejected, ostracized, persecuted, or even killed by their families? Or, how should missionaries respond when offered an alcoholic beverage in a social gathering, when to decline the offer would cause the host to lose face and be insulted? The book's readability is also enhanced by the fact that the work is peppered with stories from the authors' missionary experiences.

The only limitation of this work is minor in substance. The history of the expansion of the Church is treated in only three chapters. Though the authors do a good job for an introductory text, readers should not come expecting great detail regarding the spread of the gospel across the centuries. *Introducing Christian Missions* gives readers the highlights and major characters, including a few lesser-known individuals that should be mentioned in a brief account.

Moreau, Corwin, and McGee have produced an outstanding resource to introduce Christians to the topic of world missions. This text will be used in classrooms for years to come. One can only hope that the remaining seven texts to be written for this series are as excellent as this work.

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The Doors of the Sea: Where Was God in the Tsunami? By David Bentley Hart. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, iii + 109 pp., \$14.00.

David Bentley Hart, one of the fresh, creative theologians in academia today, provides a timely and timeless work with his book *The Doors of the Sea*. Hart, an Eastern Orthodox theologian with a Ph.D. in theology from the University of Virginia, broke onto the theological scene with his book *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Eerdmans, 2003). That book, praised as one of the most remarkable books published by an American theologian in the last ten years, vaulted Hart into the theological limelight causing the *Wall Street Journal* to solicit Hart to write occasional op-ed pieces. *The Doors of the Sea* expands on his *Wall Street Journal* piece, "Tremors of Doubt," published in 2004, which addressed the question: How can the existence of a good and loving God be reconciled with the existence of evil, suffering, and death? In *The Doors of the Sea*, Hart addresses the particular, timely event of the horrific tsunami in Asia while also addressing the general, timeless question of theodicy.

Hart divides his diminutive book into two sections: "Universal Harmony" and "Divine Victory." The first section is an attempt to dismiss both secular (e.g. J. L. Mackie) and Christian attempts that explain the Asian tsunami, as well as the corresponding death and suffering, as coming from God. By consulting the writings of such diverse figures as Voltaire, Gregory of Nyssa, Theodoret of Cyrus, St. Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Isaac the Syrian, Maximus the Confessor, and the *Bhagavada Gita*, Hart argues against seeing evil as either divine plan or punishment. Rather, he posits an Augustinian free-will theodicy that sees evil as a contingency of the God-given freedom of humanity. While Hart concurs that God can providentially turn evil toward divine good ends, evil and suffering have no true meaning or purpose at all. Hart castigates the plethora of public responses to the suffering and death of the tsunami, noting that "nothing was said regarding the triumphalism of the gospel or the Johannine and Pauline imagery of spiritual and cosmic warfare; no obvious notice was taken of the strange absence of any metaphysical optimism in the New Testament, or of the refusal of any final reconciliation with death—indeed the mockery of its power" (p. 35). Through dialogue with

Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Hart concludes: "As soon as one sheds the burden of the desire for total explanation—as soon as one has come to see the history of suffering as a contingency and an absurdity, in which grace is ever at work but upon which it does not depend, and has come also to see the promised end of all things not as the dialectical residue of a great cosmic and moral process, but as something far more glorious than the pitiable resources of fallen time could ever yield—one is confronted with only this bare choice: either one embraces the mystery of created freedom and accepts that the union of free spiritual creatures with the God of love is a thing so wonderful that the power of creation to enslave itself to death must be permitted by God; or one judges [like Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor] that not even rational freedom is worth the risk of a cosmic fall and the terrible injustice of the consequences that follow from it" (p. 69). Hart praises the freedom that God grants his creatures, for "unless the world is truly set apart from God and possesses a dependent but real liberty of its own analogous to the freedom of God, everything is merely a fragment of divine volition" (p. 91).

After critiquing those who understand death and suffering both generally and particularly, in his second section "Divine Victory," Hart puts forward the classical "Christus Victor" proposal for how God treats evil, death, and suffering. First, he biblically argues that evil never originates from God. Johannine tradition teaches us that "God is love" (1 John 4:16). Thus, Hart concludes, "everything that comes from God must be good and true and beautiful" (p. 55). Second, Christian thought rests on viewing the world dualistically, what Hart calls "the cosmological idiom of the NT" (pp. 60–61). He states, "It is clearly the case that there is a kind of 'provisional' cosmic dualism within the New Testament: not an ultimate dualism, of course, between two equal principles [like Manichaeism]; but certainly a conflict between a sphere of created autonomy that strives against God on the one hand and the saving love of God in time on the other" (pp. 62–63). Third, Hart draws attention to the Johannine and Pauline language of authorities, powers, and principalities as further demonstrating this cosmological dualism. The NT portrays "our condition as fallen creatures . . . as a subjugation to the subsidiary and often mutinous authority of angelic and demonic 'powers,' which are not able to defeat God's transcendent and providential governance of all things, but which certainly are able to act against him within the limits of cosmic time" (p. 65). The biblical notion of "powers" forces us to acknowledge "that the solicitude shown by some Christians for total and direct divine sovereignty in all the eventualities of the fallen world is not shared by the authors of the New Testament canon" (p. 66). Fourth, Hart argues that death and suffering must be viewed through the lens of the cross: "The cross is a triumph of divine . . . limitless and immutable love sweeping us up into itself, taking all suffering and death upon itself without being changed, modified, or defined by it, and so destroying [evil's] power and making us, by participation in Christ, 'more than conquerors' (Rom. 8:37). . . . Easter is an act of 'rebellion' against . . . all cruelty and heartless chance" (p. 81).

As noted above, *By the Doors of the Sea* continues two of the classical theological positions: Augustinian free-will theodicy and the *Christus Victor* theory of atonement. By arguing for a free-will understanding of the existence of evil, Hart continues the tradition which includes such writers as Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Karl Barth, Wolfhart Pannenberg, and Alvin Plantinga (for a helpful book on understanding the free-will defense of evil, see M. L. Peterson, *The Problem of Evil: Selected Readings* [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992]). By invoking the *Christus Victor* theory of atonement, Hart continues the creative imagining of Jesus' atoning work as overcoming the powers that enslaved humankind. This conception, given prominence in the early Church and replaced in the Middle Ages (though revived briefly) and Reformation period by substitutionary atonement, has gained a following in the twentieth

and twenty-first centuries due to Gustaf Aulen's *Christus Victor* (trans. A. G. Hebert [New York: Macmillan, 1969]). For twentieth-century applications of *Christus Victor*, see S. Cave, *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (Nashville: Cokesbury, 1937); R. Leivestad, *Christ the Conqueror: Ideas of Conflict and Victory in the New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1954); J. S. Whale, *Victor and Victim* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); T. Finger, *Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach*, 2 vols. (Nashville: Nelson, 1985); D. G. Reid, "The *Christus Victor* Motif in Paul's Theology" (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1982); A. McGrath, *Understanding Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), esp. 151–60; R. E. Weber, *The Church in the World: Opposition, Tension, or Transformation?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986); and Gregory Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997), esp. 238–68.

Though echoing traditional theological positions, Hart's tome is a wonderful addition to the study of theodicy. It will prove of value to pastors, seminarians, and professors who are asked and ask themselves about the ostensibly contradictory existence of evil and an omnipotent, benevolent God. Hart presents a masterful handling of vast amounts of literature from the works of Voltaire and Dostoyevsky to Maximus the Confessor and Thomas Aquinas. Though he treats a complex theological issue, Hart's concern for the lay reader is always evident through his concise and straightforward writing. Also, Hart's bibliographical note at the end makes it a user-friendly work. Though the weaknesses are few, Hart does appear a bit pretentious and pedantic in his attempts to provide the original languages (I counted three—French, Greek, and Latin) of the writings he consults. This was unnecessary for a work of this type, as well as causing, perhaps unintentionally, the appearance of a brilliant theologian showing off. Overall, Hart presents a lucid explication blending both Byzantine themes and concise language. Though brief, this book creates—and rightly so—great anticipation for the future work of a dazzling theological mind.

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