

BOOK REVIEWS

Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey. By Richard S. Hess. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007, 432 pp., \$34.99.

The study of Israelite religion(s)—exploring what real ancient Israelites actually did believe and do, rather than the ideals that the biblical writers set forth as normative for God’s people—has been burgeoning in recent scholarship. Yet with a few notable exceptions, evangelical contributions to this field have been limited. That void has been commendably filled by this new book from Richard Hess.

The title of the book is descriptive of its contents. Hess’s goal is to explore the diverse range of activities of the inhabitants of ancient Israel and the belief structures that they illuminate (hence “Israelite Religions”), using a combination of data from archaeology, ancient Near Eastern texts and the Bible. The distinction between what Israelite practice actually was and what the OT seeks to inculcate reminds us that the Bible has always been a counter-cultural document. Had it been otherwise, the prophets would have had a lot less to lament over in the people’s behavior (see e.g. Jer 44:16–18). One suspects future archaeologists of twenty-first century “Christian” America will likewise have to make a distinction between the normative worship described in the Bible and the actual practice of those who live in this contemporary melting pot of faiths.

In order to reach his goal, Hess creatively synthesizes a vast quantity of archaeological and textual material, both biblical and ancient Near Eastern, along with a full range of secondary literature (attested by the 44-page bibliography). He succeeds in a way that commands the respect of secular scholarship, as the commendations on the cover demonstrate, while at the same time showing how that data is consonant with a wide variety of conservative conclusions.

Hess begins by surveying previous and current approaches to the study of religion in general. Here he argues for the wise use of sociology and anthropology as descriptive rather than prescriptive disciplines, seeking to elucidate the complexity and uniqueness of particular cultures instead of assuming the power to predict how rituals function in one society based on their use in another. He then examines previous approaches to Israelite religion, arguing for the necessity of bringing together the study of texts and material data. This chapter includes a judicious evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Documentary Hypothesis, concluding that while the evidence from the language and a variety of editorial glosses suggests a date of composition for the Pentateuch somewhere in the first half of the first millennium BC, there is no evidence of an evolutionary development of religious ideas from one “document” to the next. Rather, each “type of Pentateuchal literature” may preserve “traditions of greater antiquity than commonly asserted” (p. 58). In many places in the rest of the book, Hess backs up this claim to the antiquity of Pentateuchal material with solid archaeological data and evidence from comparative literary studies. He also stresses the importance of literacy in Palestine and elsewhere in the ancient Near East, even prior to Israel’s first appearance in the land, as evidenced by numerous early inscriptions.

To provide background context to the study of Israelite religion, Hess ably surveys current thinking about pre-Israelite West Semitic religion from the Middle and Late

Bronze ages, especially as it is described in texts discovered at Mari, Ugarit, Egypt, and Emar. He concludes that the West Semitic city of Emar forms a particularly close parallel with Israelite society, a parallel he illustrates with reference to several ritual texts from that location. He argues the parallels between the texts from Emar and ritual texts of the Bible, especially Leviticus, cast doubt on “assumptions about the relatively late dating of these biblical texts,” showing that “many of the religious practices contained therein possess a demonstrable tradition that reaches back before the formation of Israel and into the Bronze Age” (p. 122). Hess also explores the relevant archaeological data from pre-Israelite Bronze Age sites in Palestine and Jordan to build a picture of the religious environment into which Israel emerged.

Having sketched out the comparative background, Hess proceeds to deal with the religious practices of Israel itself. His approach is developed along the two parallel tracks of text and material culture, demonstrating his ready facility with both. He illuminates the archaeological data with numerous photographs, many of them his own. In consecutive chapters, Hess explores the texts and material culture that are relevant to the narrative and legal strands of the Pentateuch; the priestly and cultic strands of the Pentateuch; the united monarchy; the divided monarchy; and exilic and post-exilic religion. Of these periods, the exilic and post-exilic eras receive comparatively brief discussion, being allocated a mere ten pages. However, given the virtuosity and scope of the other material, it would be unreasonable to complain at this neglect, which leaves room for others to follow in Hess’s footsteps and extend his work into this period. The extensive bibliography is a rich treasure trove of studies across the field.

At the end of his review of previous studies, Hess notes, “Perhaps the most generally agreed upon result of the many publications within recent decades has been the sense that the picture of religion in Israel is far more complex than had once been supposed” (p. 80). Hess certainly demonstrates the extent of that rich complexity in this book, which sometimes makes it demanding reading. Yet he also provides a sure-footed guide for those who seek to journey through this intriguing and challenging field of study. What is more, since “Israelite religion” intersects with almost every other field of OT study, virtually everyone interested in the OT will find something relevant in this book. In particular, I would commend it to readers of the *Journal* as a model of the very best of evangelical scholarship; Hess shows us how to engage with the academy thoughtfully and profoundly, without adopting either a purely defensive stance or sacrificing conservative conclusions on the altar of current academic shibboleths. Would that there were more books like this!

Iain M. Duguid
Grove City College, Grove City, PA

Reading the Bible with Giants: How 2000 Years of Biblical Interpretation Can Shed New Light on Old Texts. By David P. Parris. London: Paternoster, 2006, 228 pp., \$16.99 paper.

In his introduction, author David Parris clearly lays out the purposes and goals for his book *Reading the Bible with the Giants*. His primary goal is to move the interpreter from a two-way dialogue (reader and text) to a three-way dialogue (reader, text, and the history of biblical interpretation). The paradigm he uses to encourage this approach he calls the “Reception Theory.” I am not certain he ever actually defines this theory, but based on his discussion, I would understand it as engaging the tradition of biblical interpretation we have received into our own interpretation of the biblical text. This

method of interpretation is accomplished with a focus on three historical contexts (the three-way dialogue): (1) the “situation into which the text was originally written and how the original audience would have understood the text” (p. xvi); (2) the history of interpretation of the biblical text; and (3) how all of this history has influenced what we bring to the text in our own interpretation.

Parris’s main concern is that we not neglect the rich history of interpretation as “recorded in the various commentaries, sermons, creeds, and confessions of the church” (p. xvii). He is not attempting to present a “one-size-fits-all” methodology. In fact, he goes to great lengths to support and encourage the multitude of methodologies available, acknowledging the positive impact each has on the hermeneutical landscape. However, he does attempt to set forth convincingly his methodology as an integral part of the hermeneutical process.

To accomplish his purposes and goals, Parris’s first chapter addresses the importance of understanding the author’s or the intended audience’s network of ideas and beliefs with the goal of getting as close as possible to how the original readers would have understood and experienced the text. This traditional hermeneutical focus is an anchor for his method.

Chapter 2 demonstrates how the translation of words from the original languages, as well as the way words are interpreted historically, helps us understand why we translate words the way we do. To illustrate this, he uses the book of Jonah and the word translated “fish.” The illustration is interesting and informative; however, many might find its thoroughness intimidating. A simpler illustration may have been more enticing to the reader.

In chapters 4 and 5, Parris demonstrates how tradition shapes our interpretation in that we are in a “living dialogue.” He encourages reading the history of interpretation with openness and evaluation because these interpreters were set forth as leaders in their field even though they may have arrived at interpretations different from today. As we investigate this history and formation of the Christian tradition—how it developed, dead ends, and rich exploration—we need to learn from it and advance the interpretations as they confirm, enlarge, or correct how we read the Bible. To illustrate this, the author provides a 25-page explanation of the historical interpretation of the Great Commission. Once again, a simpler illustration would seem to be more effective and enticing to the average reader. His appendix to this section provides helpful advice on the practicalities of his approach.

Parris continues this practical approach in the fifth chapter by providing advice on the three levels of reading the biblical text (devotional, literary reading, and detailed study). He explains how the history of interpretation in the church is to be understood as a “hermeneutical spiral” and offers guidelines as to how to practically engage with this history in one’s hermeneutical methodology through his “Ten Reading Strategies.”

In the final chapter, Parris offers sound advice as to how to bring the ones we teach into a greater appreciation of the rich tradition of biblical interpretation by providing an effective teaching method.

In assessing this book, I had difficulty integrating the main text with (1) the informational boxes that emphasized main points; (2) the marginal readings that took the topic deeper; and (3) shaded summary boxes that provided additional instruction. It is a personal preference, but this trend in publishing is not helpful for me. That the book is seemingly targeting a more average reader may be difficult for some in that it is full of illustrations of the concepts he is trying to communicate. Consequently, in places it is more wordy than necessary for someone who simply desires to access the basic information.

Some may struggle with Parris’s movement away from a single “correct” interpretation of the text, which he poses as conceiving of meaning in static terms. He prefers

conceiving of meaning in dynamic terms, considering many interpretations for which we need to make informed judgments of their appropriateness. He believes all interpretations are partial and provisional until we have a full and appropriate understanding of Scripture.

Some strengths of the book include the abundance of illustrative material from the biblical texts to demonstrate the points the author is making, even though I believe their length may discourage the reader from engaging in similar personal study. The book is also very readable as Parris goes to great lengths to illustrate his concepts. The annotated bibliography is of tremendous help to those who want to explore the topic further. The history of interpretation is rich for modern students of the Bible who read it with discernment, humility, and eagerness to learn. Parris wisely emphasizes this important part of the hermeneutical process.

David Talley
Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA

Seized by Truth: Reading the Bible as Scripture. By Joel B. Green. Nashville: Abingdon, 2007, ix +185 pp., \$22.00 paper.

All recent works in hermeneutics attempt to explain the roles of author, text, and reader in determining meaning. Hermeneutics textbooks by evangelical thinkers such as Hirsch, Duvall/Hays, Fee/Stuart, Virkler/Ayayo, and Camery-Hoggatt favor author-centered approaches, employing the methods of the modern historical-critical paradigm, and seeking first to approximate an author's intended meaning as mediated by textual clues. Maintaining a careful separation between historical meaning and contemporary significance, they offer various proposals for bridging the historical gap and addressing the modern-day reader. Although Joel B. Green repeatedly upholds the value of modern exegetical disciplines, ultimately he finds a hermeneutical approach limited to these disciplines to be insufficient for hearing God's voice in Scripture. In *Seized by Truth*, Green affirms a more reader-oriented hermeneutic undertaken by the "Model Reader" (cf. Umberto Eco) whose theological location is within the historic and global church, the only reading community capable of reading the Bible as God-revealing Scripture.

Green believes Scripture's own aim is to shape and transform its readers in accordance with God's purposes. Readers who "stand under" this aim must first assume a theological identity within the ecclesial community that already places itself under the Scriptures in a posture of acceptance, devotion, attention, and trust. This posture affirms the immediacy of the Scriptures, refusing to distance today's Christian reader from the "original" audience(s). It requires that interaction with the text be guided by beliefs in the OT as normative Christian Scripture and in Scripture's ability to transform readers' commitments in greater conformity to the divine purpose.

A reading of the Bible as Scripture recognizes a unity of the theological disciplines—both historical and textual fields and those attending to the practice of Christian formation—and utilizes multiple resources. First, by nature of an ecclesial location, the biblical interpreter has already been nurtured by a community that actively reads and performs the message of Scripture. This location provides constraints and correction to parochial or egocentric interpretations and can define and discriminate between valid and invalid interpretations. Second, believing interpretive neutrality to be illusory, Green emphasizes a theologically fashioned reading that dialogues with the entire biblical canon and its metanarrative, the historical creeds and doctrines, and the interpreter's ecclesial and theological traditions. Third, Green favors a critical engagement that is

open to the possibility of correction from a range of interpretive communities (place, time, race, etc.). Finally, Green's proposal is pervaded by a dependence upon the Holy Spirit who generates and continues to form the believing community.

Green rejects the notion of any single "correct" method for reading the Bible as Scripture. Assessing common *behind* the text, *in* the text, and *in front* of the text approaches, he prioritizes the text, but not to the exclusion of the history behind the text or of the text's readers. Nonetheless, Green relegates all methods to the service of Scripture's own aim, and he assesses valid readings both in terms of their ability to account for textual, historical, literary, and lexical forms, and by their ability to be ruled by a text's canonical embeddedness within the boundaries of doctrine and to be actualized in transformed lives.

Green concludes by articulating the nature of biblical authority inherent in his hermeneutical proposal. He emphasizes the Bible's intrinsic authority that is recognized by those who are being formed and shaped by Scripture. Because the biblical narrative adequately interprets reality in light of God's self-disclosure and graciously invites readers to participate in the narrative, ultimately, the reader who recognizes Scripture's authority is one who is formed by it in accordance with God's self-disclosure.

Overall, *Seized by Truth* presents a strong argument that the people of God should not strive for neutrality in their interaction with the Bible if it is to be formative in their lives. Green's positive evaluation of a reader's self-conscious theological location within the Christian community, coupled with an affirmation of rigorous historical and textual work, has compelling elements, and it challenges those who either intentionally or unwittingly denigrate theology, practice, and application to a status secondary to history and text. Nonetheless, if I as an interpreter did not already share Green's theological presuppositions about the nature of Scripture, the arguments he presents would not be compelling. Like all hermeneutical approaches intentionally located in a reading community, it cannot convince the outsider of the priority of this reading community over any other.

Karelynn Gerber Ayayo

Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach, FL

Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation. By Graeme Goldsworthy. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006, 341 pp., \$29.00.

Goldsworthy is a praiseworthy author of a string of books and articles on biblical theology, and he identifies with conservative evangelicalism, Anglicanism, Calvinism, amillennialism, and presuppositional apologetics. He is now a retired lecturer at Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia, where he has taught hermeneutics since 1995.

The title reflects Goldsworthy's conviction that "hermeneutics focuses on the gospel as it has its outworking in the realm of our understanding of the Scriptures" (p. 16). The subtitle, however, may be partly misleading, because unlike many other hermeneutics texts, this one does not focus on general and genre-specific interpretational "principles." Rather, it constructively criticizes hermeneutics that obscure the gospel.

The body of the book has three major sections. In the first, "Evangelical Prolegomena to Hermeneutics" (pp. 21–85), Goldsworthy addresses evangelical foundations and presuppositions. One presupposition is that the Bible is God's infallible word because it says so (pp. 32–35). God created humans to have knowledge that is "true though finite," not "absolute and exhaustive" (p. 35; cf. pp. 53, 55). Augustine's epistemological stance,

"I believe in order to understand," rightly subordinates "human reason and understanding" to "divine truth and revelation" (pp. 41–42). "Non-Christian presuppositions" are "self-referentially incoherent" (p. 42; cf. 184). "The gospel is the interpretational norm for the whole Bible" as well as all reality (p. 63). Biblical theology, which "is essentially the examination of the individual parts to see how they fit into the big picture," is "uniquely appropriate for" understanding "what kind of hermeneutical model fits the world-view of Christian theism" (p. 68).

The section major section, entitled "Challenges to Evangelical Hermeneutics" (pp. 87–180), selectively highlights eight significant hermeneutical errors that "eclipse" the gospel. The metaphor recognizes "that eclipses are not always total and can even be partial enough to pass unnoticed by all but those trained to look for them" (p. 90). Although they have many positive features, the hermeneutics of the following eight frameworks eclipse the gospel: the early church's unwarranted allegory and typology; the medieval church's "unbiblical philosophical categories" (p. 108); Roman Catholicism's contradiction of justification by faith alone; liberalism's domestication of God; philosophical hermeneutics' proud self-subjectivity; historical criticism's naturalistic presuppositions; literary criticism's focus on the text and reader rather than the Author/author; and evangelicalism's "hermeneutical perfectionism" that views their positions on key issues as infallible. Many evangelical readers will likely find the chapter on evangelicalism (pp. 167–80) to be the most interesting, insightful, convicting, and controversial. It surveys eight evangelical aberrations that approach Scripture naïvely: (1) Quietism: evangelical Docetism; (2) literalism: evangelical Zionism; (3) legalism: evangelical Judaism; (4) decisionism: evangelical Bultmannism; (5) subjectivism: evangelical Schleiermacherism; (6) "Jesus-in-my-heart-ism": evangelical Catholicism; (7) evangelical pluralism; and (8) evangelical pragmatism.

The book's third major section, "Reconstructing Evangelical Hermeneutics" (pp. 181–313), evaluates how to reconstruct gospel-centered hermeneutics, which includes delineating the extent to which evangelicals can profitably use other hermeneutical frameworks without compromise (p. 193). Here are four highlights: (1) Goldsworthy tentatively adapts speech-act theory (pp. 215–16). (2) Preachers should utilize history but not "set up dichotomies between the Bible as history and as literature or theology"; question the Bible's "overall historical timeline and metanarrative"; isolate narrative details "from the big picture and the goal of the gospel"; or let historicity overshadow the theological message (pp. 228, 231–33). (3) Macro-typology includes not only "facts, persons and events," but "entire epochs or stages within salvation history." Thus "any person, fact, or event in the Old Testament is a type of Christ to the degree that its theological function foreshadows that of Christ" (p. 248; cf. pp. 252–57). The hermeneutics of Jesus and the apostles demonstrate that the OT is "all about Jesus," but "many Christians want to go immediately to consider how the text is about them" (pp. 251–52). Every text in the OT and NT is connected to Christ (p. 252), and "the primary application of all texts is in Christ, not in us or something else" (pp. 256–57). (4) Biblical theology is a key to gospel-centered hermeneutics, but it is "probably the most neglected in all the literature on hermeneutics" (p. 258; cf. pp. 15, 312–13). Biblical and systematic theology are interrelated disciplines that should influence each other within the hermeneutical spiral (pp. 267–72). Goldsworthy concludes with a practical eleven-step hermeneutical checklist (pp. 308–13).

The weaknesses in the volume are relatively minor. (1) It includes a handful of typographical errors (e.g. pp. 36 n. 18, 202, 205) and inconsistently changes "centred" to "centered" on the cover and title page while keeping Australian spellings everywhere else. (2) The subdivisions for some chapters are artificially parallel and could use further subdivision (e.g. chap. 2). (3) Goldsworthy relies heavily on secondary literature, especially in Part 2. (4) Sometimes he lists strings of quotations or ideas from other

authors with little interaction or analysis. (5) By cautiously questioning the value of studying Jewish exegetical methods (pp. 92, 245), he does not seem to give sufficient weight to the Bible's historical character. (6) The definitions of key terms are not always clear. For example, although he quotes a variety of definitions of "hermeneutics" (p. 25), he does not clearly present his own. Another example is contrasting his references to "Krister Stendahl's distinction between what the text meant (exegesis) and what it means (hermeneutics)" (p. 203), the divisions in the *Interpreter's Bible* for "exegesis (what it meant)" and "exposition (what it means)" (p. 205), and "Krister Stendahl's now famous distinction between 'what it meant' (biblical theology) and 'what it means' (systematics)" (p. 267). Goldsworthy appears to equate exegesis and biblical theology on the one hand and hermeneutics, exposition, and systematics on the other. My understanding is that hermeneutics refers to theoretical interpretational principles and that exegesis is the application of those principles. Goldsworthy recognizes this distinction (p. 205) but does not follow it.

The book's strengths far outweigh any weaknesses. It is Christocentric, conservatively evangelical, and fitting as an upper-level graduate textbook. The most common theme is unmistakable: hermeneutics is based on and must center on the person and work of Christ. Goldsworthy demonstrates the need for a robust biblical theological method that exalts Jesus, which is exactly what his book does.

Andrew David Naselli

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets. By Christopher R. Seitz. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007, 264 pp., \$16.99 paper.

In biblical studies, as in all disciplines, methodological practices run the risk of outlasting the theoretical premises that engendered them. Such is the case, according to Seitz, with modern research in the prophetic literature of the OT.

Prophecy and Hermeneutics uses modern introductions to the prophets as a lens into the interpretive assumptions that govern the field. Typically, prophetic figures, ministering at particular times in Israel's history, are provided with a socio-political context against which their individual messages can be interpreted. This creates a record of how Israel's religious and prophetic traditions developed over time while also formulating a framework by which to organize the now-composite written legacy. In so doing, however, another context is overlooked, namely, the organization of the material within the canon and the coherence created by that arrangement, a feature Seitz proposes we need to factor into current descriptions of the Prophets.

Part 1 surveys the last two centuries of biblical studies, examining how reconstructions of Israel's history eclipsed the biblical presentation of prophecy. Gerhard von Rad, perhaps the most influential and representative figure of tradition-historical methods, is the primary interlocutor.

Tradition history sees the relationship between Law and Prophets in developmental terms as the adaptation of prior traditions for a subsequent audience. It is the unfolding tradition behind the biblical material that carries the theologically meaningful cargo and that the historian seeks to recreate. This is illustrated in Isaiah (thought to be composed at two or three different periods in Israel's history) and the Book of the Twelve (comprised of twelve individual witnesses from the whole spectrum of Israel's history, but joined together as one book). Both compositions are divided up, assigned to appropriate points on a historical timeline, and treated in historical sequence. According to

Seitz, such reconstructions of Israel's history dominate and ultimately obscure the examination of the prophets, since they (1) provide a speculative organizing framework that is external to the canonical presentation; (2) stop short of adequately explaining the historical and theological significance of the final stage of the process of transmission; and (3) discount the coherent meaning of the affiliated witness reflected in the final form.

Part 2 provides exegetical illustrations of a "canonical-historical" way forward, taken primarily from the Book of the Twelve. Seitz makes perceptive observations about order and arrangement, the juxtaposition of early and late books, and repeated concepts and phrases that appear throughout the individual witnesses of the Book of the Twelve. Examining the books in subgroupings (e.g. Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi, Amos/Obadiah, etc.), he charts a course through the material that demonstrates a thematic progression and literary affiliation that is not merely temporal, but "figural" as well.

By pointing readers to recent examinations of the Book of the Twelve as a unified collection, *Prophecy and Hermeneutics* illustrates scholarship that is grappling with the logic behind the final form of the material. Seitz anticipates the most common critique of final form approaches when he contends that the strengths of tradition history (i.e. its attention to historical reference and the distinctives of each book) need not be forfeited by attention to the final form. In fact, because canonical approaches take the final stage in the traditioning process into account, they are, paradoxically, *more* historical. At the same time, this approach distinguishes itself from "literary" readings that depreciate the temporal indicators within the text, the historicity of the prophetic figures, and the development of traditions, by focusing attention exclusively on the final form.

This book provides an insightful analysis of the methodological and historical assumptions that propel current research in the Prophets. Its bold proposal promises a fresh and exciting change of direction. This does, however, leave the reader wishing for a clearer picture of how to proceed and more thorough illustrations of the exegetical benefits. Certain important methodological issues are left unaddressed, such as the relationship between the different canonical arrangements in the MT, LXX, and possibly Qumran traditions, and how Joshua–2 Kings factor into the collection of the Prophets. Finally, like the Book of the Twelve, which is the result of a long process of composition and whose structural logic is at times difficult to decipher, this book is the amalgamation of several interwoven streams of thought, creating a narrative flow that is at times opaque.

For those of us who have greatly benefited from this and other works produced by Seitz, it is hoped that, having cleared his throat, he will undertake his own comprehensive introduction to the Prophets in accordance with the promising proposal offered here.

Amber Warhurst
University of St. Andrews, St. Andrews, Scotland

Job. By Samuel E. Balentine. Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary. Nashville: Smyth and Helwys, 2006, xviii + 750 pp., \$65.00.

Samuel E. Balentine's commentary on *Job* interacts with the best of recent scholarship and demonstrates a mastery of the incredible influence of the book on the art and literature of the western world. As with all commentaries in the Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary series, the format targets a general reading audience. The text is

user-friendly for the student, with ample sidebars and in-text definitions of key terms, yet has features that will appeal to the specialist as well.

The introduction to the commentary is far more interested in literary and theological motifs than critical issues. Several times Balentine declines to date the final form of the book, and there is no interest in provenance. In a single footnote, interested readers are directed to several recent commentaries for these technical issues. Other topics that sometimes tend to sidetrack commentaries on Job are relegated to sidebars and footnotes, such as scholarly attempts to restore the symmetry of the Hebrew poetry in chapters 25–27. The introduction highlights four areas of concern. First, Balentine surveys Job “outside the Bible,” namely the various parallel documents in Sumerian, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian literature. This body of literature shows that the problem of righteous suffering was discussed in the ancient world and did not emerge for the first time in Israel. Secondly, Balentine describes potential literary sources within the book of Job itself. While the book used edited sources, it is certainly not a “hodgepodge that lacks structure and coherence” (p. 13). He considers in a short note the evidence that wisdom speech (chap. 28) is a later comment on Job’s speech. Likewise, critical issues surrounding Elihu’s speeches are covered in a short sidebar in the main commentary with ample references to other recent critical works. In both cases, Balentine sees these so-called additions as serving a vital function in the final form of the book, even if they come from a later hand (p. 512). The Elihu speeches likely come from the post-exilic period when the “inviolable promises of God seem distant.” Elihu therefore “sifts through the whole of the story before him in order to select specific issues that require attention” (p. 619). A third concern of the introduction is describing Job “outside the Bible.” In this section, Balentine introduces the reader to several ways of reading Job. Since the story of Job resonates with secular writers perhaps more than any other story in the Hebrew Bible, it is not surprising to find Job’s trials in a large number of literary reflections on the problem of evil and the suffering of the innocent. Jewish writers contribute something unique to this discussion as well, since for them Job represents a voice from within Judaism, which questioned the justice of God. On the other hand, historic Christian readings of the book of Job tend to focus on Job’s patience or a typology of Christ. Modern Christian approaches, however, have moved away from these methods.

As a conclusion to the introduction, Balentine surveys three “abiding theological concerns” of the book of Job. Since the relationship of Job to the creation story is a great concern throughout the commentary, Balentine compares three creation texts (Genesis 1; Genesis 2–3; Isaiah 40–55) as potential background for the theology of Job. A main theological concern of the book of Job is the relationship of God to creation: if there is evil in the world and God made the world, is God therefore responsible for evil? A second theological concern of the commentary is anthropological. What is the point of life when one must endure such suffering? Here Balentine juxtaposes Psalm 8 and Job 7: are humans “a little lower than God,” or are they destined to a life of misery? A third related theological issue is the character of God. The dialogue partners assume certain things about God that in the end seem not to be the case. With respect to these theological questions, Balentine makes it clear that there are no easy answers. In fact, there may not be any answers in Job, because the book is intentionally open-ended (p. 33).

Each chapter of the commentary is divided into two parts. First, Balentine provides a commentary on the text of Job followed by a section entitled “Connections.” While the exposition of the text interacts with the Hebrew Bible, there is relatively little discussion of exegetical problems. Frequently transliterated Hebrew words are inserted in parentheses without any explanation. Balentine interacts well with recent commentaries on Job as well as other secondary literature, although much of this rich material

is relegated to endnotes printed at the conclusion of each chapter. The “Connections” section of the chapter attempts to draw the exposition into dialogue with both historical and modern reflections on the problem of evil. It is in this section of the commentary that Balentine excels as a writer, interacting with a broad range of biblical, theological, and literary sources in a struggle to grasp not only the meaning of the text, but also the importance of the book of Job for a modern reader.

As is common to all volumes of this series, the editors have provided a series of sidebars that define key terms or highlight some aspect of the commentary. These sidebars highlight linguistic and cultural issues in the text under consideration or special interpretive problems found in the passage. For example, the arguments for the secondary nature of the speeches of Elihu in chapters 32–37 are dealt with in a brief sidebar, including references to several recent critical works on Job. In a traditional commentary, this sidebar might occupy several pages; Balentine deftly introduces the subject, but does not allow historical-critical issues to derail the point of this important section.

Since the story of Job has been used in art and literature, many of the book’s sidebars include literary excerpts or reprints of artistic reflections of Job. Many of these artistic references are interesting and informative, ranging from classic biblical interpreters such as Maimonides or the Church Fathers to classics of English literature such as Shakespeare. Even modern popular artists such as Joni Mitchell are occasionally used to make a connection to the text (see the discussion of Job 7:20).

As with other volumes in the Smyth and Helwys series, a CD-ROM accompanies the text of the commentary. This disc contains the entire book in PDF format as well as eighty-seven additional sidebars not included in the printed text. The commentary notes the presence of additional sidebars on the CD, but the PDF version does not provide a hypertext link to these files. CD-ROM-only content is limited to the same sort of material found in the printed sidebars in terms of both content and length. A limitation of the PDF format that may prove frustrating is that the page numbers of the file do not correspond to the printed text. The text of the commentary can be copied for use in a word processor. It is disappointing that the publishers did not include more content on the CD-ROM, especially given the interest in art in this commentary series. A collection of high-resolution color images of art printed in the text would have enhanced the value of the CD-ROM version considerably.

Phillip J. Long
Grace Bible College, Grand Rapids, MI

Opening the Sealed Book: Interpretations of the Book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity. By Joseph Blenkinsopp. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006, xx + 315 pp., \$25.00 paper.

In 2003, Joseph Blenkinsopp completed the third volume of his Anchor Bible commentary on Isaiah. The present work is a further product of his expansive knowledge of the book. This study moves beyond the biblical text to consider “the powerful impact that the interpretation of biblical texts can have on social realities” (p. xv), with a focus on Second Temple Judaism. In his view, the influence of Isaiah during this time was most profoundly felt not within mainstream Judaism but within sectarian groups. Communities such as Qumran and the early Christian movement “found in the interpretation of the book of Isaiah one of the most convincing sources of legitimacy and one of the most powerful resources for understanding and expressing their own identity and agenda” (p. 88). In addition to Blenkinsopp’s sociological and hermeneutical aims, he

endeavors to make a historical contribution regarding the development of Second Temple sectarianism.

In chapter 1, Blenkinsopp argues that the “sealed book” in Isa 29:11–12 (a later commentary on vv. 9–10) “refers to the sealed document of Isa 8:16, understood as the book of Isaiah read and interpreted from an eschatological-apocalyptic perspective” (p. 26). Conceived in this way, the book of Isaiah was thus well suited to serve the marginal communities for whom such a perspective is normative. In chapter 2, Blenkinsopp traces the biographical development of the prophet Isaiah both within the book of Isaiah and in extrabiblical texts, and explores how this portrait could have shaped (and perhaps been shaped by) how sectarian movements viewed their own prophetic figures. The account of Isaiah’s execution by Manasseh in *The Martyrdom of Isaiah* (early first century AD?) is particularly significant since it shares common themes with the canonical passion narratives of Christ, possibly influencing their portrayal (pp. 52–55). Chapter 3 then summarizes the history of sectarianism in Judaism from the fifth century BC until Qumran, providing a framework for the following chapters. Blenkinsopp suggests that Isaiah 56–66 may reflect the views of sectarian groups from this time—views that would fill the gap of knowledge concerning post-exilic sectarianism.

In chapters 4–8, Blenkinsopp explores how the Qumran and Christian communities appropriated the book of Isaiah. Throughout, he underscores their affinity for texts pertaining to a righteous remnant and its leader. In chapter 4, he examines how the Qumran documents, and the *peshet* commentaries on Isaiah in particular, identify contemporary events and persons with Isaianic texts. For example, it appears that Isa 40:3 “provided biblical warranty for the self-segregation of the group in the Judean wilderness by the Dead Sea” (p. 125). In chapter 5, the author demonstrates that Isaiah shaped “the identity, religious orientation, and agenda of early Christianity” (p. 129), including its understanding of Jesus and its mission to the world. Unable to survey this impact adequately in the entire NT, he focuses on Isaianic quotes and allusions in Matthew, reading it as a sectarian text, given that Christianity developed historically as such. In chapter 6, Blenkinsopp identifies Isaiah as a source for many of the titles and self-descriptions that both Qumran and Christianity employed to set themselves apart from mainstream Judaism, including “the many”; “the way”; “the righteous”; “the elect”; “the servants of the Lord”; “the saints”; “the poor”; “the penitents”; “the mourners”; and “the devout.” Chapter 7 argues that the theme of the remnant in Isaiah both legitimated and encouraged the formation of sectarian groups during the Second Temple period. Isaiah identified the survivors of the exile as a new, end-time community—a community that both Qumran and Christianity claimed to embody based on texts such as Isa 10:20–23; 40:3–5; and 60:21–22. Finally, in chapter 8, Blenkinsopp describes the influence of the Isaianic portrait of the Servant of the Lord on sectarian communities and texts, including the book of Daniel and the Wisdom of Solomon. He concludes that this figure shaped both Qumran’s depiction of the Teacher of Righteousness and the early Christian understanding of Jesus. The disciples of each leader then appropriated for themselves Isaianic texts concerning the “servants.”

Because Blenkinsopp’s concerns are historical and descriptive, and since he affirms the legitimacy of a plurality of readings, some may be disappointed by the lack of evaluative comment regarding sectarian hermeneutics and which appropriations of Isaiah may have been proper or improper. Although he does not offer guidance concerning the present role of Isaiah in our Christian self-understanding, his work is nonetheless suggestive, since Isaiah continues to legitimate the church and inform its understanding of mission, Christ’s identity, and the nature of the church as an end-time community.

Blenkinsopp’s belief that the canonical form of Isaiah was composed over at least five centuries and that much of it entails reinterpretation of previous sections of the

book (see pp. 7–8) not only involves speculation, but also implies that there is little or no qualitative distinction between the interpretive process that took place within the book itself and the process of interpretation subsequent to the fixing of its final form. Such a construal of the history of interpretation attributes reinterpretation within Isaiah, Qumran exegesis, and NT interpretation of Isaiah to the work of human communities and therefore blurs the line between divinely inspired interpretation and purely human interpretation, seemingly negating the former. Blenkinsopp's views concerning the formation of the book are thus in tension with Christian faith commitments that privilege biblical over extrabiblical interpretations and may well be problematic for those who affirm the inspiration and authority of Scripture.

Nevertheless, Blenkinsopp succeeds admirably in demonstrating the formative and influential role that the book of Isaiah has played in the self-understanding of the Qumran and Christian communities. In addition, his study serves as a substantial contribution toward understanding early Christian hermeneutics, Christian hermeneutics *vis-à-vis* hermeneutical practices at Qumran, and the use of the OT in the NT.

Opening the Sealed Book is similar to other works on Isaiah by Brevard Childs (*The Struggle To Understand Isaiah As Christian Scripture*, 2004) and John Sawyer (*The Fifth Gospel*, 1996) that are also concerned with tracing the book's reception history subsequent to canonization. Whereas Childs surveys the history of the exegesis of Isaiah, as represented by prominent individuals over the centuries, Sawyer examines the wider impact of Isaiah on Christianity. However, since both Childs and Sawyer are concerned with the Christian use of Isaiah, Blenkinsopp's survey distinguishes itself and fills a crucial gap by treating the period prior to the birth of Christianity.

Jamie C. Viands
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Verbal Aspect, the Indicative Mood, and Narrative: Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament. By Constantine R. Campbell. Studies in Biblical Greek 13. New York: Peter Lang, 2007, xxii + 285 pp., \$34.95 paper.

This new volume in a very valuable monograph series presents a number of helpful insights about the meaning and usage of the NT Greek verb, but, in my opinion, a faulty analysis of how these arise. Campbell's book is the published version of his 2006 doctoral thesis presented at Macquarie University and supervised by Trevor Evans.

His purpose is to present a model of how verbal aspect functions in Koine Greek narrative, particularly in the NT. He focuses on aspect functions in the indicative mood only, observing broad patterns of usage in different discourse types that occur in narrative and developing a linguistic model that best explains these patterns. In the process, he makes some important distinctions: (1) between narrative proper and segments of speech imbedded in the larger story; and (2) between foreground and background description within narrative proper.

In setting the stage for his work, Campbell quickly reviews previous research done on Greek verbal aspect and accepts its resulting consensus: (1) aspect itself is a subjective "viewpoint" feature of external versus internal focus on the action or state described by the verb (expressed grammatically by the aorist and present and perhaps by other tense forms in Greek); and (2) *Aktionsart* is a more objective reflection of procedural characteristics such as duration, completion, repetition, and so forth (expressed by lexical and broader contextual features but not by aspect itself).

The main chapters of the book present the results of his examination of all indicative verbs in Luke, John, several selections of extrabiblical Koine, and two selections of Attic Greek. He focuses on a statistical macro-analysis of the different indicative tense forms (present, imperfect, aorist, future, perfect, and pluperfect) coupled with a very selective micro-analysis of specific examples in context. This leads to what he regards as the grammatical model that best explains the evidence of usage in these texts.

This limited plan of attack is reasonable since it raises a wide range of issues and works with a broad sample of narrative Greek from different styles or registers of ancient literature. Yet such a survey of statistical patterns, while valuable, can be misleading, because it is easy to be content with general descriptions that conceal various fine points that are analyzed poorly or left unaddressed. I think these weaknesses appear in several areas of Campbell's book. A more careful weighing of contextual usage and of alternate explanations of the macro-patterns would have helped his work.

For example, Campbell observes the patterns of aspect usage in narrative proper versus speech (both direct and indirect): aorists and imperfects occur overwhelmingly in the former (as foreground vs. background elements respectively), while presents and perfects predominate in the latter. These insights are not original to Campbell but reveal a valuable pattern to document and explore. However, in probing the occurrence of presents in segments of speech itself, he observes that a number of presents occur also in *introducing* speech (λέγω, ἀποκρίνομαι, etc.), for example, eleven times in Luke, 134 in John (he adds to this four occurrences of εὐρίσκω since they are "found in direct connection with λέγω as it introduces discourse" [p. 42]!). This leads him to conclude that the same dynamic that causes the present to be used in speech itself (slowing down the narrative to draw attention to the content of what is said) "*spills over* to the verb that introduces" the speech (p. 56, italics his). He mentions that the aorist is also "commonly" used to introduce speech, but he does not try to explain the variation. In fact, the aorist is used this way some 280 times in Luke and 230 times in John (Campbell does not cite these statistics). Surely, even if the aorist is used, the presence of speech slows down the narrative and draws attention to the spoken content. Why does this alternation of tenses appear in the introductory verbs? His explanation is not the best description of why the present occurs in so-called "speech orienters" or "speech margins" (i.e. clauses introducing speech). A much more likely analysis is found in the work of Stephen H. Levinsohn and others who have tackled this question within the larger discipline of NT discourse analysis (related to the use of the historical present in narrative, not to its connection to speech *per se*; see Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* [2d ed.; Dallas: SIL International, 2000], 215–70, which Campbell has not used).

Another shortcoming in Campbell's analysis is his conclusion that the traditional view of Greek indicative tenses as grammaticalizing temporal meaning (i.e. past, present, future) is largely wrong. He does accept this view of the future, but rejects temporal meaning for the other tense forms. Instead, he argues for a spatial theory of proximity (present and perfect) versus remoteness (imperfect and aorist), largely because he thinks the traditional view cannot explain the numerous instances that seem "exceptional," for example, "past" used to describe what are really present events, "present" used for past or future events, and so on (pp. 26–27, 50, 56–57, 98–99, 120–23).

On this point, Campbell repeats what I think is a superficial objection to the traditional view of the Greek indicative tenses. In this he follows the approach of S. E. Porter, R. J. Decker, and others, but fails to probe the issue further or take into account the specifics of the view he dismisses. He refers to the problem of "verbal actions and states that are not always consistent with the supposed temporal values of the present and imperfect tense-forms" (p. 50). Yet what are the "supposed temporal values" inherent

in the traditional view? The point is that actions or states are *portrayed* as occurring in a certain temporal frame. As Wallace says, tense in Greek “indicates the speaker’s *presentation* of the verbal action (or state) with reference to its aspect and, under certain circumstances, its time” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 496, italics mine). He goes on to add that the portrayal “*may* be other than or broader than the *real* time of the event” (p. 498). Campbell is very careful to insist on this sort of subjectivity in regard to *aspect* (pp. 11, 52; how “an author/speaker chooses to *depict* an event or state” with “no necessary connection to reality”) and even in regard to the feature of *remoteness* (pp. 15, 52; it is “employed according to the author’s communicative purposes,” not any kind of literal or physical distance). Yet it never occurs to him that a temporal element could operate in the same subjective way! However, this is standard fare in the semantic literature on tense meaning. Comrie, for example, discusses a range of “exceptional” uses of past tenses in English, German, and Norwegian under the umbrella of this more subjective approach to temporal meaning (Bernard Comrie, *Tense* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985] 19–21; Campbell does not utilize this important work). The fact that his sample texts include the parables in Luke and a first-century novel (Chariton) should make him sensitive to the point that temporal reference is a matter of the writer’s portrayal, not the “real” time of the events themselves.

Campbell rightly notes (pp. 15–16, 84–91) that the temporal and spatial views are very close to each other and can give equally plausible explanations for some of the usage (also noted by Comrie, pp. 15–16). However, he fails to address some of the problems with his theory. As Comrie observes, under a spatial view we could expect “remote” tenses to refer equally to future as well as past events or to a general non-present, but this does not occur. Also Campbell’s spatial view does not account for customary/habitual presents (not happening “right now” but more broadly in the present) or progressive/descriptive imperfects (specific past events portrayed as happening right before our eyes; see most intermediate Greek grammars for examples). He does not work with such uses because he pays attention only to the macro-patterns. In addition, he pushes the spatial theory too far, asserting a difference between proximity (Greek present) and heightened proximity (Greek perfect) as over against remoteness (Greek imperfect and aorist) and heightened remoteness (Greek pluperfect). These rather vague semantic values coupled with his point that they are subjective choices to suit the speaker’s purpose make them immune to falsification. As he notes (p. 56), this is “virtually impossible to prove (or to disprove).” Yet to establish that it has superior “explanatory power” compared to the traditional view (p. 56), he must at least deal honestly with the merits and demerits of both approaches.

Campbell presents a unique view of the Greek perfect and pluperfect (chaps. 6–7), contending that they encode imperfective aspect along with heightened proximity or heightened remoteness, respectively. This has certain strengths (e.g. it supports the “intensive” sense of some perfects; see his examples on pp. 202–4; and it rightly notes the common explanatory or supplemental function of pluperfects, pp. 215–20). Yet it also produces some odd readings of the perfect, for example, in Col 2:1 (“who do not see”); 2 Tim 4:7 (“I am fighting . . . I am finishing . . . I am keeping”); and John 9:37 (“you now see him”; pp. 193–95; translations his). More importantly, Campbell fails to address certain weaknesses of his own view, and he distorts other views in attempting to disprove them. Some problems for him are the stereotyped use of οἶδα in the perfect and pluperfect (hundreds of uses; are all of these to be taken as “heightened proximity” or “heightened remoteness?”) and the usage that Comrie calls “experiential perfect” (Bernard Comrie, *Aspect* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976] 58–59), which asserts that the action or condition has occurred at some point but does not focus on when or where (or with the negative asserts that it has never occurred). NT examples

would include: Luke 13:2; John 3:13; Acts 17:28; 2 Cor 11:25; Col 2:1; Heb 1:13; 4:4; and 7:13b. These do not appear to express “heightened proximity.”

Campbell’s distortion of the views of others relates to his insistence that they fail to account for transitive perfects (pp. 164–66, 190, 208). He regards this to be a major failure of both the traditional view of the Greek perfect and the stative aspectual view of K. L. McKay and S. E. Porter. Yet his specific discussion reveals not the failure of these other views but his own unreflective refusal to consider the grammatical meaning they suggest. For example, McKay argues in a number of places that the transitive perfect signals not the state of its *object* but the responsibility (either for credit or blame) of the *subject* for having done a certain action (cf. K. L. McKay, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek* [New York: Peter Lang, 1994] 31–32). While I do not agree entirely with his ideas, I find this to be a genuinely helpful suggestion for interpreting a number of NT texts (see Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1990] 293–96). However, Campbell’s evaluation of McKay (pp. 166–69) reflects a remarkable unwillingness to give a sympathetic hearing to the ideas of others even if one ultimately disagrees (see his wooden handling of several NT verses covered by McKay, especially Matt 9:22; John 1:18, 41, compared to McKay’s explanation of these, e.g., in *NovT* 23 [1981] 311–14). Similarly, his assertion that my treatment “is unable to cope with purely transitive perfects” (p. 190) is a cavalier dismissal, since he never discusses what I actually say about transitive perfects (cf. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect* 293–98).

Campbell rightly insists all along that our goal should be to find the linguistic analysis that best explains NT usage. As I have indicated here, I think his analysis falls short of this goal in a number of crucial areas.

Buist M. Fanning
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

Four Portraits, One Jesus: An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels. By Mark L. Strauss. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007, 560 pp., \$44.99.

Teaching in Jesus studies brings many occupational hazards, but writing in this field perhaps brings even more. The nature of the discipline is such that scholars who wish to make substantial contributions must be true Renaissance men and women. They must have control over a variety of sub-areas, including, but certainly not limited to, the history of interpretation, the history of the Second Temple period, the contribution of the individual Gospels, and historical method and investigation. Add to this requirement the recent intense interest in Jesus, which has led to numerous new books and articles on top of those that are historically important to the discipline, and it becomes difficult for a new contribution to stand out. Fortunately, many scholars persist and ultimately produce works that serve evangelicals in the church and academy well. Mark Strauss, in his recent book *Four Portraits, One Jesus*, has produced just such a text, which serves as a very useful doorway into Jesus studies. The subtitle *An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels* is very appropriate, as this book does what any good introduction should do: it orients readers to the topic under consideration, and it points to avenues for further study and more advanced investigation.

Strauss is certainly ambitious in what he has attempted to accomplish in this one volume. Divided into four separate parts, the book provides a soup-to-nuts introduction to Jesus studies, focusing on four different sub-areas that are part and parcel of the discipline. “Introduction to the Gospels” deals with the question of Gospel genre as

well as historical-critical and literary-critical methods of Gospel research. "The Setting of the Gospels" discusses the historical, religious, social, and cultural backdrop for the Gospels. "The Four Gospels" walks through each Gospel as a self-contained book, highlighting the theological portrait of Jesus in each. "The Historical Jesus" investigates that topic with the majority of the section dealing with traditional topics of this sub-discipline, such as Jesus' message and miracles, but emphasis is given as well to important matters of method. Within each of these four units, Strauss deals appropriately with both traditional and contemporary topics. For example, in the first section the traditional methods of source, form, and redaction criticism are dealt with, but attention is given as well to narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism, canon criticism, and other literary methods. In the second section, the political history of Palestine is discussed, but more esoteric concepts such as honor/shame and the family are also mentioned. The importance of each concept or topic is treated in an appropriate manner, such that the reader ends up having learned the most important methods and ideas, and their proper place in the study of Jesus.

The book has a number of strengths. The primary one involves the stance of the author to his topic. Often as members of the wider academy, evangelicals have felt it necessary to bracket their beliefs about Jesus and set them aside when discussing topics of this nature; the approach of John Meier in his important text *A Marginal Jew* perhaps appeals to us, since it gives us a rapport with an audience that does not necessarily agree with our convictions. Strauss very refreshingly and effectively does not follow this course. In his introduction he is very clear to state his goal ("to produce a text which is both methodologically critical and confessionally evangelical"; p. 19) and pre-suppositions ("[t]he text is evangelical in that it is written from the perspective of one who confesses Jesus as Lord, and who believes that these Gospels are not merely human documents but the inspired and authoritative Word of God"; *ibid.*). The outworking of this combination is handled quite well. For example, in chapter 12, "The Historical Reliability of the Gospels," Strauss is justified in concluding that the Gospels are both *history* and *theology* and in advocating a method of study that does justice to both facets of their composition.

Another strength of the text is the breadth of coverage. It has left practically no stone unturned in terms of topic or method that impacts an understanding of Jesus or the Gospels. Understandably, the main weakness of the text relates to this same issue. Because of the breadth of coverage, there are understandably some places where more depth would be appropriate. Some debated areas of scholarship simply have to be glossed over. For example, on page 104 the origin of the Pharisees and Essenes is mentioned but no related critical problems are discussed. (In contrast, the debate over the influence of the Pharisees is recognized and treated on p. 134.) On page 107, the identity of the Herodians is stated, but a footnote related to the critical discussion around this group would also be helpful. One cannot legitimately fault the author, however, as not every issue can be handled in the same depth. Strauss has mitigated this inherent shortcoming well, with key footnotes in various places pointing to important works for further reading and appropriate bibliographies at the end of each chapter.

The printing of the text is exceptional with many charts, photos, and call-outs that highlight important or helpful information or discussion. For example, the chart on page 371 shows eleven of the most important and influential historical Jesus scholars of recent times, giving a concise description of the portrait of Jesus that they paint and their key works. The student is well served by many such aids that present information in a readable, understandable format. Navigating the text is simple with two tables of contents: the first is a listing of the chapters, while the second is much more detailed, frequently down to the level of the paragraph. This is a nice touch, which will prove useful to novices who could easily lose sight of the forest because of all the trees. The end

matter includes a glossary and a single index covering subjects, important people, and authors; it is my personal opinion that separate indices would be more useful.

This text is positioned well as an introductory and synthetic text whose purpose is to help those who know little about the topic become conversant, wrestling with important issues along the way. It would be appropriate for a college-level course on Jesus and introductory or survey courses on the graduate level. Strauss is to be commended for doing so well with so much in a rather confined space.

Michael H. Burer
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

Did Jesus Teach Salvation by Works? The Role of Works in Salvation in the Synoptic Gospels. By Alan P. Stanley. The Evangelical Theological Society Monograph Series 4. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2006, xx + 415 pp., \$42.00 paper.

Alan Stanley, a pastor and an instructor at Mueller College of Ministries in Queensland, Australia, contributes the fourth volume in the ETS monograph series. It represents the consummation of his Ph.D. dissertation (2002, Dallas Theological Seminary). A modified and accessible version of Stanley's dissertation is *Salvation is More Complicated than You Think: A Study on the Teachings of Jesus* (Milton Keynes: Pater-noster, 2007).

Twelve chapters make up the book. In chapter 1 Stanley substantiates the validity of the question whether Jesus teaches salvation by works. He shows how the teacher of the law (Luke 10:25–28), the rich young ruler (Matt 19:21), and the jailer in Philippi all raise essentially the same question, but Jesus' response is not the same as Paul's answer (Acts 16:31). Paul calls for belief in Jesus Christ, but Jesus calls for deeds. Jesus repeatedly calls for actions, such as forgiving the sins of others, as conditions that need to be fulfilled in order to receive God's forgiveness, to receive eternal life, or to enter the kingdom.

Stanley identifies his thesis: "*the presence or absence of 'works' plays a significant role (in final judgment) in determining where one spends eternity.*" He knows his thesis is controversial, even threatening, for many. He understands the need to demonstrate how his thesis comports with the benchmark of evangelical orthodoxy that salvation is "*by grace alone through faith alone.*" How does Stanley's understanding of Jesus' teaching agree with Paul's doctrine concerning justification by grace through faith apart from "works of the law"? Thus, the remainder of chapter 1 ponders the need for his book, anticipates objections, and sketches a method for procedure.

Chapter 2 traces Christian theologians' explanations concerning how works relate to salvation in the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. This chapter anchors Stanley's thesis within the range of theological expressions garnered from the early church forward. It shows that a variety of views exist within the Christian faith concerning the relation between works and salvation. The chapter also indicates portions of Scripture that have held theological prominence in understanding this relationship. Finally, the chapter provides a historical and theological framework for assessing Stanley's own theological formulations of the relationship between works and salvation.

In chapter 3, Stanley positions his work within the scope of post-Reformation scholarship concerning the relationship between works and salvation within Judaism. His first objective is to understand the historical and theological backdrop within which Jesus taught. Second, Stanley offers a critique of E. P. Sanders's thesis that Judaism was rooted in grace, not works-righteousness. Finally, the chapter assesses the aftermath

of Sanders's thesis on scholarly discussions concerning the relationship between works and salvation in Paul's letters and the Gospels.

Stanley offers his own understanding of the relationship between works and salvation in chapters 4 and 5. Though he focuses upon the concepts of "works" and "salvation" in the Synoptic Gospels, he surveys the whole NT. Key to Stanley's argument is the "already" and "not yet" nature of salvation. Thus, these two chapters provide an opportunity for Stanley to blend harmoniously his own theological voice concerning "works" and "salvation" with an expanding chorus of evangelical voices that cogently make the same argument.

Throughout chapters 6–11, Stanley shows that Jesus' teaching concerning works in relation to salvation entails works not only as *evidence* of conversion but also as a *condition* for receiving salvation in the last day. The author provides nuance concerning his use of the term "condition," lest anyone charge him with including negative connotations, especially the notion of achieving merit with God. When Scripture depicts salvation as "already" possessed, works and endurance are properly conceived of as *evidence* of salvation. When Scripture depicts salvation as "not yet" attained, works and endurance are properly conceived of as a *condition* of salvation. Stanley develops this thesis by addressing pertinent issues in the Synoptic Gospels: "Requirements for Entering the Kingdom" (chap. 6); "Attaining Eternal Life" (chap. 7); "The Role of Discipleship in Salvation" (chap. 8); "The Role of Endurance in Salvation" (chap. 9); "The Role of Treating Others in Salvation" (chap. 10); and "The Role of Judgment in Salvation" (chap. 11).

In chapter 12, Stanley concludes by summarizing that the answer one gives to the book's title question depends on the perspective upon salvation present within any given passage, whether the orientation is upon salvation's beginning or upon salvation's consummation. He contends that in those places where Jesus is speaking of initial conversion, not where he speaks of final salvation, Jesus links works to salvation as *evidence* of salvation. On the other hand, where Jesus speaks of salvation's eschatological consummation, not the initial phase of salvation (i.e. conversion), works are a *condition* of salvation. When Jesus speaks of persevering unto eschatological salvation, an event yet to come, not an event that has already occurred, we can properly speak of endurance as a necessary condition in order to be saved in the end.

Stanley's thesis is bold. The book comes as debates over Paul's teaching on justification escalate, prompted largely by the so-called "New Perspective on Paul." Stanley distinguishes his work on Jesus' teaching concerning the relationship between works and salvation from E. P. Sanders's "covenantal nomism" view on the same in Second Temple Judaism and in Paul's letters. Stanley's distinctions, though clearly argued, may not be sufficient to keep him from being indicted as a "new perspectivist" by any who presume by association.

Stanley's book calls for patience and generosity. Despite his caution and clarifications, many will fault Stanley, even though he develops his thesis with care and attention. He is generally cautious to guard against misunderstanding. Yet, occasionally he makes statements that will arrest attention and arouse response. For example, acknowledging that humans are completely dependent upon God for salvation and to do any good work, Stanley observes, "Yet it is true that Paul never teaches salvation by faith alone if we understand salvation as a broad term" (p. 321). In such a statement, since Eph 2:8–9 is the passage under discussion, the breadth of the term "salvation" is not the only expression that needs proper explanation to avoid dismissive indictment from some. Stanley offers a helpful distinction between pre-conversion and post-conversion works to clarify his observation. Yet, what does "faith" entail? Greater development of the relationship between faith and good works, at this juncture, would be helpful to avoid misunderstanding. Does Stanley confuse categories when he claims, "In the last

analysis the decision as to who is saved will be made not on the basis of faith but works" (p. 321)? Would it not be more prudent to say that God's final verdict concerning salvation will be rendered "according to deeds" and not "according to faith"? It may be that I am overly scrupulous to distinguish salvation's *means* and *grounds*, but the distinction seems crucial to the Protestant and evangelical faith.

Crucial to apprehending Stanley's thesis and argument is his distinction between the "already" and "not yet" aspects of salvation as crucial for developing a cohesive and consistent understanding of Jesus' teaching on the place and role of works in salvation. Apart from embracing this distinction, one will not likely accept Stanley's explanation of the role of works in Jesus' teaching on salvation when he goes beyond acknowledging the common theological expression that works are the evidence of salvation already begun. He rightly contends that this is not the principal way that the Synoptic Gospels portray the relationship between works and salvation. Instead, Stanley correctly avers that Jesus speaks more frequently of "works as a *condition* for final salvation or entrance into the eschatological kingdom" (p. 334). By this he means that if "works (e.g. endurance, love, mercy, forgiveness) are not present then final salvation will not be granted" (p. 334). Yet, along the course of his argument, Stanley occasionally introduces confusion concerning his thesis, such as in his explanation of Col 1:22–23, by misidentifying the verb of the apodosis as "you have been reconciled" instead of "to present you."

The book retains a somewhat provincial quality that is understandable for a dissertation but less desirable in a book for wider use. The marginal views of those associated with the Grace Evangelical Society, historically related to Dallas Theological Seminary where Stanley wrote his dissertation, seem to receive undue attention, especially in chapters 1 and 12. Nevertheless, Stanley's book should become a standard resource for all who would accurately preach, teach, or write concerning salvation and works in the Synoptic Gospels. I anticipate reading *Salvation is More Complicated than You Think*.

A. B. Caneday
Northwestern College, Saint Paul, MN

Matthew. By Stanley Hauerwas. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006, 267 pp., \$29.99.

The Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible to which Stanley Hauerwas's *Matthew* belongs was born out of the conviction that "dogma clarifies rather than obscures" (p. 12), and the particular dogma the series editors had in mind was singularly the Nicene tradition, which they posit "provides the proper basis for the interpretation of the Bible as Christian Scripture" (p. 12). Now it should be stated that I have great sympathy with this kind of presuppositional biblical interpretation, and I am in agreement that at least one benefit of postmodernity has been the turn to "criticize the critics" (p. 10). Along these lines, I again find myself sympathetic to the claim that it is theologians of a certain ilk, namely those whose minds have been formed by the Nicene tradition, who are the most qualified and competent to interpret the Bible, since much of biblical scholarship today is theologically deficient. Nevertheless, after reading Hauerwas's contribution to the series, I think I am now equally of the view that theological scholarship, the kind that Hauerwas represents in this commentary, is a further example of Rusty Reno's comment that "theology has lost its competence in exegesis" (p. 13).

To his credit, Hauerwas admits the difficulty he faced when considering the task of writing a commentary on Matthew. He writes, "Theologians are trained to write

articles and books, not commentaries. . . . So, few could be as ill prepared as I was for this task" (p. 18). My sense is that his early concerns were well founded. If good theology is the result of the conversation between tradition ("dogma," in the words of Reno) and solid historical exegesis, then this theological commentary fails to deliver. Hauerwas, who is arguably one of the most influential theologians/ethicists of the early twenty-first century, shows just how challenging the task of commentary-writing is, especially for someone not trained in exegetical method.

In the introduction, Hauerwas states that he did not try to write "about Matthew"—perhaps evincing what he earlier referred to as the "historical work done on the book of Matthew over the past two centuries"—but rather "with Matthew." The latter he clarifies as his attempt to "retell the story that Matthew tells" (p. 18). He compares his interpretive approach with that of "commentators of the Middle Ages and Reformation" who wrote "moral allegories." Thus, for Hauerwas, Herod becomes "'Herods' who represent the politics of death . . . scribes and Pharisees become 'intellectuals for hire' and the journey of the wise men after their encounter with the Christ child is one we must take if we are to escape Herod's politics" (p. 18).

While this approach has historical precedent, the major problem with it is the real risk of offering an idiosyncratic reading of Matthew that at best does not reflect Matthew's own voice, however expressed in contemporary dress, and at worst may be nothing more than a vehicle to espouse one's own ideas without appropriate controls. I have no problem in general with presenting an allegorical reading of Matthew that attempts to re-present Matthew's historical situation in the dress of our own. Therein, however, is the challenge: in order to rightly represent in present dress the characters and theology of Matthew, one must *first* hear Matthew's story *in its own context*. What Hauerwas attempts is a noble thing and one that would have much power in its affect. However, to do it rightly would require double the work: the exegesis of both text and present-day culture.

How can we be sure who the "Herod" of today is if we do not adequately understand who Matthew's "Herod" was or Matthew's Magi or Matthew's innocent Bethlehemite children who were slaughtered? This is not only a historical question like "who was Herod as a historical figure," but also a historical question of "who was Herod for Matthew and his first-century Jewish audience, and to what end does Matthew make use of him"? If we wrongly identify them in Matthew's retelling of the events surrounding Jesus, we will certainly wrongly identify those figures today.

From my reading of Hauerwas's commentary, it is evident that he has not made use of solid exegetical methodology as the foundation of his "moral allegory," in spite of the fact that he says he read "historical works done on the book of Matthew in the past two centuries" (p. 18). Furthermore, appealing to the medieval and Reformation approaches to reading the Bible as a model without the additional chastening of historical exegesis is cause for concern, since it was just such readings that allowed anti-Jewish perspectives—which he himself critiques (p. 235)—to thrive until the middle of the twentieth century.

After reading a chapter of Hauerwas's commentary, one comes away feeling that Hauerwas's approach is rather like "a riff" on the Matthean text—to quote a friend. Hauerwas strums his way through Matthew, improvising with his own rhythmic melody, which is occasionally in harmony with his base text but at times not—and more times than just a few. This results in uneven interpretive discussions on topics within a chapter that appear to be chosen at random or perhaps in a way consistent with his own interests, but not necessarily with those of Matthew. It is hard not to think he uses the First Gospel to express his ethical agenda, which consists in primarily two dominant notes sounded in regular intervals: non-violence and issues of wealth and poverty.

For example, take Hauerwas's commentary on the Sermon on the Mount (chap. 5). Hauerwas suggests that the "righteousness" Jesus required in 5:20, which is to surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees, is the "subversion" of the violent power of Rome (p. 67). He contends that Jesus thought the scribes and Pharisees were too eager to placate the Romans in their non-subversive observance of Torah. Jesus instead called his disciples to live out the law to the extent that it non-violently subverted the empire. Or take Hauerwas's claim that "perfection" in Matthew 5:48 means non-violence (p. 72). In addition, consider Hauerwas's interpretation of Jesus' comment in Matt 26:11 that "the poor you will always have with you." According to him, the statement means: "the poor that we will always have with us *is Jesus*" (p. 215, italics mine). These examples of his interpretations leave the reader feeling that Hauerwas's commentary is largely a vehicle for his views, formed not out of *Matthew's* text and context but imported into them.

Having written a primarily critical review of Hauerwas's commentary, I do not want to leave the impression that there is nothing in it that is refreshing and challenging. To the contrary, I would recommend it especially for devotional reading. Hauerwas is not afraid to question long-held evangelical assumptions related to the family (see his pointed comments about the "idolatry of family"; pp. 109–10), politics, war, poverty and wealth, and sexuality. While many will disagree with both his interpretations of Matthew and his conclusions on these hot-button issues, they are substantial and deserve careful attention. I presume, however, that Hauerwas's views, guised as they are in a commentary on Matthew's Gospel, may well be found elsewhere in a more appropriate format. Still, his reading of the First Gospel at times reveals profound insights and moves one to follow harder after Jesus. In the end, if that is the best measure of the worth of a commentary (as Augustine thinks it is; see his *On Christian Teaching*), then Hauerwas has in fact succeeded in his task.

Joel Willitts
North Park University, Chicago, IL

Matthew 1–7. By Ulrich Luz. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007, xxxviii + 432 pp., \$75.00.

The translation of volume 1 of Ulrich Luz's commentary on Matthew, based on the revised fifth edition of the German, is "in many parts . . . a new book" (p. xvii) relative to the earlier English edition (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989). In terms of interaction with secondary literature, the revision for the introduction and chapters 1–2 was completed by the summer of 2000; chapters 3–7 by 1998. More generally Luz states, "In this new edition the basic concept of the commentary has not changed, but it has become clearer. At many points I have sharpened my previous position or have clarified it; in a few cases I have corrected it [e.g. p. 50]. I have given more attention to the results of literary criticism and of sociological and reader-oriented exegeses. However, in its exegetical parts the commentary is not bound to a single methodological approach; it offers instead an attempt to integrate various methodological approaches [cf. p. 15, in response to W. Carter's criticism of Luz's earlier publications to the effect that Luz has failed fully to take on board narrative criticism]." The "basic position of the commentary" is summarized in a sentence: "the story of Jesus that Matthew reinterprets and actualizes is an approach to his communities in a totally concrete historical situation" (p. xvii). Seeing what he means by this is a vital ingredient in understanding the whole of his work, but space restrictions require me simply to refer back to my

earlier review of his *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) in *JETS* 49 (2006) 420–22.

From that *historical* reconstruction, it is possible to make a very direct *hermeneutical* move “to the history of the text’s influence (*Wirkungsgeschichte*),” which he understands “as consisting of all of the reflections on and receptions and actualizations of the gospel in new historical situations” (p. xvii; see pp. 60–66 and Luz’s *Matthew in History* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994]). Matthew’s Gospel, as Exhibit A, *itself* registers just one in a continuous history of such receptions and actualizations of Jesus’ history. Further, in our own readings of Matthew we must recall (Luz points out) that we are never stationary and objective observers of an historical stream as it moves by but are “rather like people who have to examine the water of a stream while they are sitting in a boat that is carried along by that very stream” (p. 63). Moreover, “a living relationship to the ‘substance’ of the texts is essential for the modern understanding of all fundamental human texts” (p. 61 n. 313). Thus, tracing the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Matthew is not merely an addendum to exegesis but an essential aspect of it (p. 65). Where historical-critical interpretation has failed in part of its task, “the history of the text’s influence can help and can make clear to the interpreters (1) who they are in their confrontation with the texts, and (2) who they might become in their confrontation with them” (p. 63). Indeed, Luz states that he has “written this commentary primarily for priests, pastors and teachers of religion” (p. xv).

Even a commentary of this length that undertakes to incorporate a biblical text’s 2000-year history of influence will of necessity be selective (among other things, Luz remains within the orbit of “interpretations that influenced the Catholic and Protestant churches as confessions” and “sources concentrated on European history”). A goal, which partially warrants the effort, is to “lead the biblical texts into the present.” This is not done by Luz in the form of theses or directives; “instead I try to speak of the *direction* in which the texts point for today in order, on the one hand, to sketch the space and the direction in which the texts might direct us today, but, on the other hand, to leave the users of this commentary the space they need to seek with the texts their own avenue of understanding” (p. 65). Likewise, at various points in the course of the commentary, Luz emphasizes the way the author of Matthew himself moves his received tradition in a particular *direction* and the “openness of the texts” themselves, prohibiting restrictive and exclusive interpretations (e.g. pp. 190, 197, 248, 373).

There are, however, hermeneutical limits, so that we may speak of “successful and unsuccessful realizations of biblical texts” (p. 65). Elsewhere (*Studies* 265–89) he proposes as criteria for truth in interpretation a “correspondence criterion” (correspondence to the history of Jesus); a “pragmatic criterion” (does it bring about love?); and a “consensus criterion” (recognizing that interpretation is not a private task but the task for the church). The author of Matthew is himself not above being subjected to these criteria (e.g. Matthew’s anti-Judaism in *Matthew in History* 33–34; but see also *Studies* 257–61).

After a 66-page introduction, the commentary on Matthew 1–7 fills another 331 pages. There are six excursuses (Fulfillment Quotations; Righteousness; Son of God; Disciple; Preaching, Teaching, and Gospel in Matthew; False Prophets). The volume closes with indices for primary sources; Greek words (highly selective); subjects (brief and selective); and authors.

Treatments of units of text begin with bibliography and a translation of the passage. Following this is “analysis,” comprising varying selections from a menu of sub-sections (e.g. structure and form, redaction, fulfillment quotations, historicity, origin). Those with weak stomachs for rather fine analyses (dicing down individual words into layers of tradition, etc.) will appreciate Luz’s occasional refusal to speculate. More often, however, they will grow queasy (e.g. pp. 261–62, 375–76). Nevertheless, it is readily apparent

that and how all these aspects of analysis have their role in the historical-literary-hermeneutical thesis (singular) of the commentary; the level of integration is one of the most impressive aspects of Luz's work as a whole. Given the desire to include the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Matthew as well as sections on the meaning of Matthew for today (and given that his intended readership is primarily "priests, pastors and teachers of religion"), Luz is and had to be fairly concise in all these analytical sections. Some may wish for more discussion, but normally there is at least some indication of the reasoning behind his judgments.

The commentary proper ("interpretation") likewise employs a fluid outlining procedure. He sometimes intersperses the history of interpretation/influence with his exposition, sometimes reserves it for the end; at times he divides the exposition into its distinct interpretations at the levels of Jesus/Community/Q/Matthew (thus outlining these stages in the on-going *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the basic history of Jesus), sometimes just Jesus and Matthew or just Matthew; etc. For all that it flows well and is quite readable. Setting aside agreement and disagreement, Luz's views are thoroughly informed, sensible (given his working theories), and well defended (or transparently defensible, given that this is not a commentary for beginners).

My own decision to give a broader review of this volume leaves no space for interactions with Luz's specific arguments and conclusions; for a little more of that I refer again to my earlier review. Here I simply highlight a few observations and criticisms. It is understandable but unfortunate that this volume was not able to include chapters 9–11, given Luz's outline of Matthew. It is Luz's judgment that our Matthew was known to 1 Peter (e.g. pp. 59, 204). The running treatments of grace and law in Matthew and in relation to Paul are excellent. On occasion one is startled by the assertion that a text in Matthew is in substance simply not Matthean (e.g. p. 256 on 5:32b). In commenting on 7:6, he writes, "I am going to permit myself not to interpret the logion in its Matthean context. Matthew was a conservative author; out of faithfulness to his tradition he included the saying simply because it appeared in his copy of Q. . . . My advice is radical: one should not use it as a biblical word [given its history of influence]" (p. 356). Obviously this is fair play in the historical-critical game, but, for all that, seemingly an admission of failure of imagination and a kind of lack of charity due Matthew, rather than boldness. Lastly, it is not finally clear how Luz's own general hermeneutic underwrites his confidence in determining a kind of timeless understanding of the original meaning of strata of traditions. Yet this is what he seems to believe historical criticism does (e.g. pp. 61, 63, 190, 197, 373). It gives us a reference point by which all later readings can be measured, not in terms of truth (which is "always situational"; p. 269) but at least in terms of plotting the *Wirkungsgeschichte*. Again, the point of this observation is simply with reference to Luz's own hermeneutical approach. Why should the results of historical criticism not be viewed as, for the most part, a breathing of our own culture through its own methodological construct (itself a product of our time), simply another movement in the inexorable stream that is taking us all for a boat ride? Why or how is historical criticism able to get to shore and watch the stream from there? I am not saying there are no answers, but it is not clear from what Luz writes what *his* answers are. One wonders if there are ways of answering these questions that would require some reworking of Luz's whole approach.

The "history of interpretation" and "meaning for today" sections are worth the (high) price of the book. Good examples abound; almost at random I cite pp. 266–69, 291–94, 348, 395–99. One disturbing lesson that plays out repeatedly before our eyes is the domestication of the Sermon through time. The praise of these sections is not intended to diminish the significance of Luz's verse-by-verse commentary, which is consistently insightful, provocative, persuasive, morally bracing (e.g. p. 286), and sometimes humorous. As a pure historical-critical study, Luz's work ranks with that of

Davies and Allison (ICC). Yet it is in the fruit of his *Wirkungsgeschichte* investigations and in his own attempt to *understand* Matthew (“a responsible and binding new stating of what has concerned the author of the text”; p. 64, citing Barth) that his work stands apart. Certainly, Luz’s conclusions on the meaning of Matthew for today proceed along the lines of his own assumptions, with which many will disagree. Obviously, some conclusions do not require these particular arguments. Yet as I stressed in the earlier review of *Studies*, it is in fact a strength of Luz’s work that there is such a strong organic relation between his theological conclusions and his historical-literary theories, and that is a two-edged sword. Regardless, his reviews of the history of influence and his own struggles with what Matthew means in our context are clearly grounded in a deep pastoral concern for the modern (European, Protestant-Catholic) world and an equally deep desire for faithfulness to the Sermon as he understands it. In whatever ways Luz’s own theological (e.g. Jesus was wrong about the way in which the kingdom would come; pp. 239, 280, 360; note p. 393) and cosmological (e.g. p. 241) assumptions may vitiate his reading, his sympathetic listening to the history of influence has everywhere shaped his ultimate understanding.

Returning to Luz’s concern for the usefulness of his commentary to priests, pastors and teachers of religion, I can only say that I have used his work heavily myself in teaching Matthew and have recommended it strongly to my pastors.

Jon C. Laansma
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Body and Character in Luke and Acts: The Subversion of Physiognomy in Early Christianity. By Mikeal C. Parsons. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006, 152 pp., \$21.99.

Parson’s book examines examples of the pseudoscience physiognomy in Lukan literature. Parsons’ thesis is that Luke used physiognomic categories at times in his contributions to biblical literature for polemical purposes against them (p. 14), especially in association with the eschatological community.

Physiognomy (Gk: *physis*, “nature,” and *gnōmōn*, “judge, interpreter”) is a theory based upon the idea that by analyzing an individual’s outer appearance one may gain insights into the moral quality of that person’s character. The belief in the close relationship between outward appearance and inner character is historically ancient, predominantly appearing in early Greek poetry (5th century BC), where, in Athens, Zopyrus was believed to be an expert in the art. Pythagoras, believed by some to be the originator of physiognomics, once rejected a prospective student based on his appearance, which he deemed indicated a bad character in that person. Aristotle (4th century BC) was also favorably inclined toward the theory and frequently referred to it and to literature concerning the relationship of appearance to character, as evidenced by a passage in *Prior Analytics* (2.27). The validity of physiognomy was widely accepted throughout the Greco-Roman world, and the theory flourished during the Middle Ages, where it was taught in universities until outlawed by Henry the VIII of England (c. 1531).

In recent years, a resurgence of physiognomy has occurred. Physiognomy became a topic for empirical investigation and scientific attention during the Enlightenment. Little progress, however, was made. This is partly due to the ill repute that various practitioners of physiognomy and phrenology cast over this area. Johann Lataver (18th century AD), among others, was a vigorous advocate and defender of physiognomics.

Examples of physiognomy can be seen in the literary stylings of Balzac, Oscar Wilde, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and Edgar Allen Poe. In his introduction, Parsons suggests that physiognomics is an active and legitimate theory (chap. 1). This, however, is far from the truth. In fact, controversy typically surrounds issues related to physiognomy. Its claims are considered by many to be preposterous, because the theory associates physical and psychological characteristics without submitting credible evidence of it. The result of using physiognomics is that individuals find themselves facing biological determinism. The theory is also associated with socially sensitive areas of racial characteristics as evinced recently in Nazi-era Germany. Consequently, physiognomy is considered by most to be one of many pseudo-scientific and discredited theories and fads such as phrenology, rumplogy, personology, metoposcopy, and magic thinking.

Chapter 1 provides a historical overview of the development, failures, and successes of physiognomic theory and describes the various methods of physiognomy employed (anatomical, zoological, and ethnographical). Parsons concludes that a physiognomic consciousness was pervasive in the ancient Greco-Roman world (pp. 36–37), and he then turns to the question of the impact of this theory on early Christian writings in chapter 2. Chapter 2 describes the awareness of physiognomic criteria, citing early Hebrew historical literature (1 Samuel 16; 2 Samuel 14), law (Leviticus 21, 22), Qumran literature (4Q186, 534), Josephus (*Ant.* 17), and Jewish pseudopigraphic texts (*Apoc. Ezra* 4:29–32; *Apoc. Elijah* 3:15–18; *Apoc. Daniel* 9:16–24, etc.) as examples. Parsons also examines Pauline literature (1 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 10:2; 12:7; Gal 4:13–14), Christian pseudepigrapha (*The Acts of Paul* 3), and Christian patristics (*Physiologus* 10; *De officiis* 1) for further examples of the pervasiveness of this awareness and the validity of his thesis, before discussing Jewish and Christian critiques of physiognomy (pp. 61–65). While Parsons qualifies a conscious detection of physiognomy in Israel's Scriptures and entirely disassociates Paul from it, he nonetheless affirms that "there is sufficient evidence to conclude that some Jews and Christians reflect the physiognomic consciousness" (p. 65). Chapter 3 deals with incidental uses of the conventions of physiognomy in Luke. Parsons looks at animal and anatomical imagery as well as the relationship of physiognomy to the Abrahamic covenant. He then turns his attention to Luke's explicit use of physiognomic theory in order to subvert the concept in chapters 4 through 7, examining four separate Lukan narratives (the bent woman, Luke 13; Zacchaeus, Luke 19; the man born lame, Acts 3:1–4:31; the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts 8:26–40). These chapters form the centerpiece of Parsons's work in which he seeks to demonstrate Luke's physiognomic consciousness. In these chapters Parsons discusses Luke's polemical use of the canons of physiognomy to expose societal misogynism and intolerance toward dwarfism, physical disability, and incapacitation. Each of these narratives contain eschatological implications for the constitutional composition of the community of faith.

Parsons's work is representational in methodology. In other words, he interprets narratives that highlight persons with physical impairment as having a literary or polemical purpose rather than as being understood to be factual or historical. In this he joins the ranks of other recent authors who have taken similar approaches (T. Mitchell David and Sharon L. Snyder, eds., "Disability Studies and the Double Bind of Representation," in *The Body and Physical Difference: Discourses of Disability* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997]; *idem*, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001]; Jeremy Schipper, *Disabilities Studies and the Bible: Figuring Mephibosheth in the David Story* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2006]; *idem*, "Reconsidering the Imagery of Disability in 2 Samuel 5:8b," *CBQ* 67 [2005] 422–34; Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1996]; Henri-Jacques Stiker, *A History*

of *Disability* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999]; Lennard Davis, ed., *The Disability Studies Reader* [London: Routledge, 1997]; Rebecca Raphael, "Things Too Wonderful: A Disabled Reading of Job," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 38 [2004] 399–424; Nancy Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberation Theology of Disability* [New York: Abingdon, 1994]; Sarah J. Melcher, "Visualizing the Perfect Cult: The Priestly Rationale for Exclusion," in *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice* [ed. Nancy Eiesland and Don Saliers; New York: Abingdon, 1998] 55–71).

I found Parsons's assumption that the canons of physiognomy had impacted Jewish and Christian sources (chap. 2) and that Luke utilized the canons of physiognomy in his literature (chaps. 4–7) insufficiently supported. It seems that when it comes to Jewish and Christian sources, he is reading into the text and grasping at the implicit rather than allowing the text to be explicit. On the subject of physiognomy the Bible appears to be silent. Jesus (Matt 7:16, 20) and Paul (Rom 7:4–5; Gal 5:22) cited fruit, rather than physicality, as incorporating the gist of one's character. This book was a fascinating read. However, I think that the author draws his evidence from inference and intimation rather than explicit declarations. A focus on the latter would have made his case considerably stronger.

Michael D. Fiorello
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

What We Have Heard from the Beginning: The Past, Present, and Future of Johannine Studies. Edited by Tom Thatcher. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007, xix + 423 pp., \$34.95 paper.

This volume is a gathering of some of the biggest names in the contemporary study of the Gospel of John. After reflecting on the last two generations of Johannine scholarship, Tom Thatcher, the editor, wanted to create "a sort of time capsule, a virtual conversation between future students of the Johannine Literature and some of the living legends of a golden era of scholarship" (p. xvii). Thatcher selected 18 "senior" Johannine scholars, a sampling of global voices, and asked them to discuss briefly and in a conversational tone their journey with John. The senior scholar was given flexibility concerning the topic of presentation—"anything that one might share with an interested student over coffee after class" (p. xvii). Each senior scholar's essay is responded to by a "junior" scholar (though several of the junior scholars were themselves quite senior). Taken as a whole, the essays in the volume were intended to provoke a deep sounding of the undercurrents that have made the field of Johannine studies what it is today, as well as to celebrate the past and forecast the future. The importance of the book was recognized at the 2007 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature when the John, Jesus, and History Group and the Johannine Literature Section combined for three sessions (nearly a full day) concerning the book with nearly all 36 contributors present. Eighteen chapters with two contributors for each are too much to survey in detail. Instead, I will summarize *What We Have Heard from the Beginning* using the three-part breakdown from the SBL annual meeting.

First, several contributions deal directly with the problem of history in John (The Fourth Gospel as/in History). D. Moody Smith wants to argue that even though "the Johannine Jesus is preaching the gospel of the post-resurrectional church" (p. 313), he is clearly historical, even offering a "preferable" history at several points in contrast to Mark (p. 320). Craig Keener, his respondent, agrees but thinks the issue is not "if" John

has historical elements, but “how” he uses that historical tradition (p. 323). J. Louis Martyn reminds the readers of the importance of reading John in its own setting—a theme of much of his research. Martyn clearly wants to let the Jewish-Christian tensions in John’s community be felt, but never to such an extreme that the rest of the canon, especially Romans 9–11, is not also a participant for modern readers. In a sense, Martyn wants the contemporary church to read the text “imaginatively” alongside the Johannine community (p. 190). Adele Reinhartz, the respondent, agrees with Martyn but wonders if his reading of the Jewish-Christian tension, specifically his “imaginative” reconstruction of the circumstances of the Johannine community, has been fair to the narrative. Urban von Wahlde reminds the reader of the importance of diachronic analysis in John not merely synchronic. He even suggests that recent contributions in modern archaeology can enlighten our understanding of the historicity in John (pp. 351–53). Felix Just, the respondent, exhorts Johannine studies to continue both diachronic and synchronic methodologies. Peder Borgen shows how the forensic/witness theme in John is central to understanding the Gospel as history. Part of Borgen’s “forensic” approach is a seeming defense of his previous work rather than a “coffee after class” discussion. Michael Labahn, the respondent, appreciates much of Borgen’s work but challenges some of his deductions. John F. O’Grady focuses on the poetic elements in John and draws convincing parallels between John’s prologue and chapter 17 with the rest of the narrative. Dorothy Lee, the respondent, tries to push even further the “symbolic theology” visible in a synchronic analysis of John (p. 231). Finally, John Ashton provides some “second thoughts on the Fourth Gospel” by defending his use of diachronic analysis. Ashton goes even further and criticizes the a-historical emphasis in some post-modern readings of the Gospel. He reiterates the importance of the reconstruction of the situation behind John, criticizing the contemporary push to move beyond the Johannine community and arguing that the Gospel can and must be read in the time of its creation, “not [in relation] to the time of Jesus” (p. 17). Wendy E. S. North, the respondent, agrees with Ashton and supportively argues that historical criticism in John should certainly continue. North explains that the postmodern solution, one that wants to dispense with history altogether, seems “to exchange one set of problems for another” (p. 21).

The second type of essay in this volume deals with the literary challenges related to John (*The Sources and Structure of John’s Narrative*). Thomas Brodie tells of his journey to/through John as revolution and funeral and points out the need for patient literary critics who will revisit the oral transmission of the Gospel, historians who will wait for literary work to finish, and theologians who clarify the dialogical tensions in the Johannine narrative (p. 79). Catrin Williams, the respondent, argues for continued analysis of the intertextual quality of John. John Painter surveys his own journey through John by means of the findings of his research and writings. Painter uses the motif of “quest,” one used in his own writings, to describe his personal interaction with John’s Gospel. Paul Anderson, the respondent, furthers the motif of “quest” as part of the “divine initiative” proclaimed by the Johannine narrative. Robert Fortna reviews his own research for the signs source and gives reasons why he still supports such a theory. Tom Thatcher, the respondent, respectfully challenges the possibility of Fortna’s signs source and suggests that “a more sophisticated approach to first-century media culture” (p. 162) would be helpful for dealing with the sources behind John. Gilbert Van Belle surveys the method of the Leuven school for reading John, which includes not only the continuation of the tradition of historical-critical research but also the reading of the Bible as Scripture. Peter Judge, the respondent, supports Van Belle’s theory and discusses some of the history of the “Leuven Hypothesis.” Finally, Francis Moloney shares his own journey into narrative-critical analysis of John but reminds us that narrative is not enough. “An honest interpretation of the Gospel of John must reflect

a literary and religious world ‘from the past’ that can be found ‘within the text’” (p. 201). Mary Coloe, the respondent, argues with Moloney that we must not forget to consider the hermeneutics of “the world behind the text” (p. 212).

The third type of essay in this volume deals with interpretation and theology (Johannine Hermeneutics and Theologies). R. Alan Culpepper traces his trek through Johannine studies by examining his past research. In retrospect, Culpepper holds in tension the Johannine community and the contemporary reading community of John. Stan Harstine, the respondent, appreciates Culpepper’s trek but wants to reflect upon the question, “To what end, methodology?” Sandra Schneiders claims to have changed her mind. Schneiders argues that “while the words and deeds of the pre-Easter Jesus were the place, the locus, of the revelation encounter with God for Jesus’ contemporaries, the Gospel text, the things that are written, is the place of encounter, the locus of revelation, for subsequent disciples. What the history was for the first disciples, the text is for us” (p. 270). Colleen Conway, the respondent, agrees in principle, but wants to add that our understanding of the text needs “to be critically aware of the cultural rhetoric that is adopted to communicate the revelation” in the text (p. 279). D. A. Carson surveys some of the approaches to the Fourth Gospel and argues that his own, a confessional approach, though not without limitations, as are all approaches, may bring an advantage to the study of John. Andreas Köstenberger, the respondent, goes further than Carson and speaks of the various, narrow approaches to John as a “regress” in Johannine scholarship. Fernando Segovia criticizes the assumptions of modern western ideology that Johannine studies has operated out of and recommends a move to a geopolitical, postcolonial outlook in Johannine scholarship. Francisco Lozada, the respondent, agrees with Segovia and argues further for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of John. Johannes Beutler reviews Johannine scholarship for a new synthesis, which for Beutler means broadening the horizons beyond a western perspective. Carsten Claussen, the respondent, agrees and hopes that one can broaden without losing the historical context of John. Marinus de Jonge applauds synchronic analysis in Johannine studies but remains convinced that “only literary analysis combined with historical criticism will lead to a full picture of the state of affairs” (p. 144). Peter Kirchsclaeger, the respondent, agrees with de Jonge that John must be studied both as history and narrative but ultimately combined dialectically. Finally, Robert Kysar reflects upon his turn from historical criticism to literary criticism to postmodernism and argues for a direction in the future that is a global, pluralistic multitude of views, each of which is supported by an identifiable group, because meaning is not objective but social. David Rensberger, the respondent, though admitting that the past cannot be objectively known, disagrees with Kysar and argues that the past must remain our primary dialogue partner.

What We Have Heard from the Beginning is a diverse collection of essays by some of the most influential Johannine scholars of the last generation. The volume is a wonderful survey, in a conversational manner, of the last 35 years of Johannine scholarship. Even more, the volume reflects not merely the activity surrounding the study of John but all the major methods and approaches for the study of the NT. Yet, it is not an easy-to-handle book on John. Its conversational style has left it with little structure. Even more, the reflective nature of the contributions frustrates the claim made by the volume’s subtitle. For while it easily tells of the past and present approaches to John, it makes the future of Johannine studies look more like an enigma—a mosaic of methods and approaches competing with, even contradicting, one another.

Edward W. Klink III
Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA

Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters and Theology. By David B. Capes, Rodney Reeves, and E. Randolph Richards. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007, 350 pp., \$27.00.

Rediscovering Paul is an introductory textbook designed for upper-division undergraduate or beginning seminary courses on Paul (p. 14). In the authors' own words, "We wanted a single textbook that covered, in a manageable size, several key aspects of Paul: his background, an introduction to his letters, a survey of his ministry surrounding his letters and an integrated survey of his theology. A little mention of how Paul came to be so important to us in the West would be nice as well" (p. 15). In other words, it is intended to be a one-stop textbook that touches meaningfully, even if necessarily briefly, upon most of the issues that might be covered in an introductory class on Paul.

The introduction begins by recounting an experience in which one of the authors was trying to relate the teachings of Paul to an ethical difficulty encountered by his friends on the island of Borneo. As a result of this event, the author provocatively suggests that Paul's words in Eph 6:1 may mean that children must obey their parents even after they become adults (pp. 13–14; returning to it on the last page of the book, p. 308) and that in many other cases we have misunderstood Paul's teachings because we have read his letters through Western interpretive lenses. This opening story sets the stage for a pattern that emerges throughout the book, where a set of provocative questions or contemporary "misunderstandings" of Paul are introduced alongside of a particular topic to be discussed. Many times, these points of contact with our contemporary lives are helpful and will certainly be appreciated by a generation of students who are impatient with discussions of the Bible that they do not consider relevant. Though many of these challenges to our interpretations of Paul are quite helpful in bridging the relevance gap, I occasionally found them to be either overstated or excessively provocative, and in one case tasteless (p. 51).

One interesting feature of the book is that the authors include almost one hundred extra paragraphs of insights or applications sprinkled throughout the book. The paragraphs headed by the words *What's More . . .* "present additional information that supplements [the] discussion, gives further background or explores related issues" (p. 20). The sections headed by *So What?* aim to answer the question, "What difference does this all make to a reader in the twenty-first century?" I read many of these extra paragraphs with great interest. It should be noted, however, that, since these snippets of information or application appear suddenly and are only set apart from the text by a black line above and below the section, they tend to interrupt the flow of the main text. After experimenting with a number of reading strategies, about halfway through my reading, I decided to ignore these additional paragraphs until I arrived at the end of a section, at which time I turned the pages back to read them. This seemed to be the best way to read the book and might be a good recommendation for students using it. (Occasionally, too many of these additional paragraphs are clustered together, such as on pp. 111–21, where seven of these extra paragraphs are found in the span of only twelve pages.)

The first chapter of the book includes in a condensed form the kind of material one would expect to find in a NT backgrounds text: social values of Mediterranean peoples (like honor and shame) and standard information about Greco-Roman and Jewish history and culture. Chapter 2 provides valuable information on letter-writing conventions as a background for understanding Paul's letters. It is a distillation of material found in Richards's *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004) and is one of the best parts of the book. Chapter 3 is a discussion of Paul's Damascus Road encounter with Christ, followed by an assessment of Pauline chronology. Not

surprisingly, the section on chronology (pp. 94–101) is one of the less-riveting sections of the book!

Chapters 4–9 are the heart of the book. The authors walk students through Paul's thirteen letters, all of which they accept as genuinely Pauline. Not only do the authors highlight significant themes in these letters, they also discuss important interpretive issues that commonly arise when Paul's letters are studied.

Chapter 10 is an excellent, although rather short, chapter on Paul's theology, which focuses on the issue of whether there is a center to Paul's theology. Following Richard Bauckham, the authors take the position that Christological monotheism is the center of Paul's theology. Chapter 11 is a discussion of how the Pauline letter collection came together and how it came to be part of the Christian canon. Although twenty-two fairly detailed pages were allotted to this topic (six more pages than the chapter on Paul's theology!), I am afraid that students who read about the NT canon for the first time in this chapter might end up confused and possibly even skeptical. Furthermore, there were a few assertions in the chapter with which I simply disagree (such as the idea that Paul's letters were neglected during the early years after his death or that the Muratorian Canon was a fourth-century document). The last chapter of the book, chapter 12, highlights a few themes in Paul's letters that are important but often undervalued in the contemporary church.

In their quest to produce a one-stop introduction to Paul and his letters, some discussions end up lacking in clarity. This strikes me as less a function of the necessary brevity of an introductory textbook and as more a function of the authors' desire that this text be used by professors in a variety of theological settings. Thus, at a number of points, topics of great interest to students are raised and various interpretive options discussed without the authors taking a clear position on the issue. For example, the authors refer to Paul's Damascus Road encounter with Christ as his "conversion/call" (p. 85), his "conversion and call" (p. 89), or simply as his "conversion" (p. 88, cf. p. 94, cf. "preconversion" p. 85), but at other times speak dismissively about the idea that Paul was converted, suggesting that his encounter with the resurrected Christ was only a calling, not a conversion (pp. 84, 87). The authors raise such issues as annihilation vs. eternal conscious punishment (p. 138), soul-sleep vs. intermediate presence (p. 163), and egalitarianism vs. complementarianism (pp. 250–51), but are unclear in each case as to which position they themselves prefer. They do eventually state a position on the nature of the Colossian heresy (p. 220), but the reader will not find it until three pages after reading about various contemporary approaches to this question (pp. 216–17). I never did figure out exactly where the authors stand on the issue of Paul and the Law/New Perspective, even though they explicitly discuss aspects of it throughout, citing representative scholars on both sides of the discussion (e.g. Sanders, Dunn, Wright, Hays, along with Kim, Gathercole, Westerholm; see pp. 91–94, 107–18, 173–78, 187–88, 195 n. 29).

At the end of the day, I am unsure whether to recommend this as a textbook or not. My guess is that some professors considering adopting this as a textbook will be bothered by some of the same issues mentioned in this review, particularly the ambiguities and overly provocative statements that appear occasionally in the text. I think others will really like and want to use this book. Those who adopt it as a textbook will appreciate the broad coverage of Paul's environment and writings, the engaging analysis of many important issues in Paul, and the commitment of the authors to allow Paul to speak an authoritative word to our generation.

Kenneth Berding
Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA

Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study. By Gordon D. Fee. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007, xxxi + 707 pp., \$39.99.

Having already put us in his debt with his massive *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), Fee adds *Pauline Christology*, a seminal important work that promises to become a standard text. After a 25-page introduction, which lays out the method, history, and need for the study, Fee's work divides into two parts. Part 1 is "Analysis" (chaps. 2–10, comprising 452 pp.), presenting a study of each letter in chronological order (that is, the Thessalonian correspondence, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians and Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, and the Pastorals). Each of these chapters contains two appendixes. The first gives the Greek text of every verse treated in the chapter; the second provides very helpful lexical statistics on θεός, Ἐριστός, Ἰησοῦς, κύριος (and combinations), and υἱός. Part 2 is Fee's "Synthesis" (chaps. 11–16, comprising 114 pp.). Here he treats "Christ, the Divine Savior"; "Christ: Preexistent and Incarnate Savior"; "Jesus as Second Adam"; "Jesus: Jewish Messiah and Son of God"; "Jesus: Jewish Messiah and Exalted Lord"; and "Christ and the Spirit: Paul as a Proto-Trinitarian." As expected, part 2 assumes the exegetical work of part 1 and looks at its topics against the broader sweep and Paul and the NT. Finally, two appendixes appear (44 pp.): "Christ as Personified Wisdom"; and "Paul's Use of κύριος for Christ in Citations and Echoes of the Septuagint." These appendixes alone are nearly worth the price of the book.

Helpful complements to Fee's work that have since appeared include Simon J. Gathercole's *The Pre-Existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); and *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* (ed. Stanley Porter; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). Both of these books are less than half the size of Fee, although Gathercole, whose work is much narrower, interacts with more continental literature.

Some strengths of *Pauline Christology* include the following. First, as we have come to expect from Fee, *Pauline Christology* is readable, thorough, attentive to detail, theologically nuanced, up to date, and never far away from concern for the church and for the individual follower of Christ.

Second, realizing that it is unlikely a reader would read the work straight through, Fee has tried, and in my view succeeded, to make it "user friendly from chapter to chapter," adding "more repetition than one would ordinarily wish to have" (p. xxxi). For some, "repetition" might mean "redundancy," but I believe that it is actually a great help for the student or preacher. Each chapter can be read as its own independent study and has extensive cross-references to the work and conclusions of other chapters.

Third, Fee is fresh, not predictable; he takes his own path. Thus, against the broad scholarly consensus, and particularly against James D. G. Dunn (e.g. *Christology in the Making* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980] and *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998]), he cogently argues that "Paul neither knew nor articulated anything that might resemble a Wisdom Christology" (p. 619). For the Synoptic Gospels, a similar conclusion has recently been argued convincingly by Simon Gathercole in *The Pre-Existent Son*.

Under significant contributions we can include the following: First, whether or not one agrees, Fee has argued strongly that, while κύριος is a label that Paul consistently reserves for Christ, θεός is only applied to God the Father. This significantly influences our reading of, for example, 2 Cor 3:17 ("Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" ESV), concerning which Fee has changed from the view previously argued in *God's Empowering Presence*.

Second, following on from this, Fee provides extensive argumentation that in Rom 9:5 and Titus 2:13 the Lord Jesus is not called “God” (θεός). This conclusion is not part of an overall argument for a “low” Pauline Christology; quite the contrary. For Fee, Paul’s Christology is very high. Rather, after extensive exegesis of dozens of texts, Fee concludes that this lexical disjunction always holds for Paul (e.g. p. 42).

Third, probably most importantly, Fee is surely correct when he points out repeatedly that on the subject of Christology, though key texts are very important (e.g. 1 Cor 8:6, Col 1:15–20, Phil 2:5–11), what is most critical to see is that Paul, rather than *arguing* for a high Christology, simply *assumes* it. Thus, for example, treating 2 Thess 3:16, Fee writes, “Paul is addressing prayer, a prerogative that Jews reserved for God alone, to the present reigning Lord Jesus Christ. And he does so apparently unself-consciously, which suggests that this has long been a part of his life of devotion” (p. 77; cf. pp. 33, 98).

Hesitantly, let me refer to what I view as weaknesses in Fee’s work. First, there is a tendency in *Pauline Christology* to include unnecessarily extensive comments on the complementarian-egalitarian debate. For instance, in his treatment of 1 Cor 15:23–28, Fee asserts that, “In some evangelical circles the discussion of the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father came into existence altogether as an attempt to bring women under subjection to men” (p. 113 n. 80). Certainly this is an important topic for Fee and for many others. One wonders, however, if this comment fairly represents the history of the discussion and if it brings an unnecessarily negative judgment on the motives of others. Likewise, when commenting on how much scholarly writing has been done in the past on 1 Tim 3:16, we find the following completely extraneous footnote: “It has now been overtaken by the barrage of articles and books dealing with 1 Tim 2:11–15, brought on by the rift among evangelical Christians over the issue of God’s gifting women for ministry” (p. 431 n. 46). This is curious wording. Perhaps I have misread it, but as far as I can tell, neither side of the debate wonders whether God has gifted women for ministry. Second, it does not seem best to say that Paul “created a considerable oxymoron, σῶμα πνευματικόν” (p. 116). Actually, the term “spiritual body” was known Stoic language (see Michelle V. Lee’s *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006]).

Assuming extensive use of *Pauline Christology* for years to come, one could suggest some minor changes for the second edition: First, with regard to Fee’s audience and Greek translation, is *Pauline Christology* a technical book for NT specialists or is it intended for some other audience? The reader is not certain. Fee says (p. xxxi) that translating the Greek was a suggestion he took from some non-NT specialists who read *God’s Empowering Presence*. Yet Greek is sometimes translated and sometimes not (e.g. σῶμα ψυχικόν and σῶμα πνευματικόν on p. 99; ποτήριον κυρίου on p. 132; εἶτε ἀγαθόν εἶτε θαῦλον on p. 191; six lines of Greek on p. 318). Likewise, in footnotes it is sometimes translated (p. 58 n. 83) but sometimes not (p. 58 n. 82—διδόντος). Translated Greek is a bother for the specialist, and I would assume that untranslated Greek is a frustration for the non-specialist. Furthermore, a non-specialist would be left behind by the technical comments Fee makes on the infinitive (p. 309), comments that assume the reader knows that the subject of the Greek infinitive appears in the accusative. A final indicator that *Pauline Christology* has an uncertain audience is one instance of untranslated German (*Vorlage*, p. 314). Second, it is unnecessarily redundant for the first footnote of each chapter in part 1 to say that commentaries are cited by the author’s surname only. This comment can be put once in the preface. Third, one must scan the entire table of contents in order to learn that references to, for instance, appendix 2 have to do with the appendix found at the end of the chapter, not the end of the book. At the end of the book, the appendixes are titled A and B. The preface mentions two appendixes for each chapter, but not those at the end of the book. There is no easy solution to this potential

confusion. Perhaps *Pauline Christology* should have three parts, with Appendixes A and B comprising its two chapters

Pauline Christology is a very welcome addition to Pauline studies, filling a gap in the scholarly literature. It is essential reading for NT scholars, and of course, especially for those who know and love Paul.

G. W. Peterman
Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL

Adopted into God's Family: Exploring a Pauline Metaphor. By Trevor J. Burke. NSBT 22. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006, 233 pp., \$22.00 paper.

This book is an in-depth investigation into the Pauline metaphor for adoption (*huiiothesia*). Trevor J. Burke, Professor of Bible at the Moody Bible Institute, asks whether this metaphor has been fully understood. What is "largely unexplored, is a *full-orbed* approach to this metaphor." As such, one of the aims of this study is "to attempt to widen the discussion and open up fresh areas of debate" (p. 30, italics his).

In the first three chapters, Burke introduces the study, surveys the scholarship involving the metaphor and the resulting possible theological misunderstandings, develops a working understanding of metaphors in general, and identifies the most likely background for understanding Paul's use of the metaphor. In chapter 1, after looking at the confusion surrounding the meaning of adoption, Burke concludes that this metaphor is largely misunderstood and that prior studies have been too narrowly focused. As a result, adoption "has long been in the shadows of other theological terms" (p. 194). Thus the purpose of his study is to show the distinctive contribution of this term within Pauline theology.

In chapter 2, after a general discussion of the characteristics and functions of metaphors, Burke explores the soteriological significance of adoption. Not only is adoption a sociological metaphor (a *family* term in the ancient world), it serves as an organizing metaphor for salvation. This is because adoption is both "Christocentrically and Christologically grounded in the *person* and *work* of Jesus Christ" (p. 41, italics his). Thus it shares with other Pauline soteriological metaphors both the obligation to appropriate ethical responses and the eschatological tension between the "now" and the "not yet," which is so pervasive in Pauline theology.

Chapter 3 explores the origin and background of adoption. Burke situates the background of adoption in the Roman socio-legal context of the first century rather than in the OT or Greek legal backgrounds. While Israel can be called "God's son," the term for adoption never occurs in the LXX, nor are there any biblical laws in the OT governing the practice of adoption. Also, although Greek law shared many similarities with Roman law, Burke rules this out as a viable background. Within the Greek legal system, adoption was more related to protection of the estate and did not share the characteristics of absoluteness found in the Roman system and Pauline theology. Additionally, there was no coherent body of Greek law dealing with adoption.

In contrast, for Burke there are several compelling reasons to consider the Roman legal system as the appropriate origin and background. Paul uses the *huiiothesia* metaphor only in epistles where the recipients are directly under Roman law (Gal 4:5; Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; Eph 1:5). Additionally, by the time of Paul, the Roman practice of adoption was more widespread throughout the empire. "The family was the fundamental bedrock of ancient Roman society and regarded as the primary context of social,

religious, political and economic security and fulfillment” (pp. 63–64). As such, adoption was the primary legal practice that safeguarded this institution.

Burke appropriately explains the two types of adoption practiced within Roman law: *adrogatio*—the adoption of a male not under the legal authority of another—and *adoptio*—the adoption of a male under the legal authority of another. *Adrogatio* was more serious since the one being adopted was often a *paterfamilias* (head of household); this could result in the loss of an entire family as those under the authority of the *paterfamilias* were adopted as well. In contrast, in *adoptio* one under the authority of a head of a household was transferred to another person of authority, thus maintaining the integrity of both families. In this practice, adoption constituted a break with the old family, thus changing the hereditary succession and assuring that the adoptee enjoyed all the rights and responsibilities of the new family. For Burke, this becomes the origin and background of the Pauline metaphor.

Over the remainder of the book, Burke explores the theological ramifications of the concept of adoption, first with the Trinity (chaps. 4–6), then as it relates to honor in the family (chap. 7) and Paul’s eschatological scheme (chap. 8). According to chapter 4, through the language of adoption and election, the believer is made aware that both Jew and Gentile enter into an entirely new relationship with the Father, one in which the believer can now cry, “Abba.” In keeping with the adoption proceedings, this reflects both a new relationship for the believer and a deep love by the Father. It also reflects a reciprocal relationship in that the Father bestows gifts and the believer now serves the other members of the family, which creates a new model for the community of the redeemed. This adoption into the family reveals God’s pleasure as the new *paterfamilias*.

In chapter 5 Burke argues that Jesus is the intermediary in the adoptive process, for which there is no parallel in Roman law. Contra James Scott, Burke finds that Rom 1:3–4 does not present an adoptionist Christology; this is a concept reserved exclusively for the Christian. Rather, arguing from both Romans and Galatians, Burke insists that it is the revelation of Jesus as God’s Son that provides for the adoption of the believer. Additionally, Ephesians reveals that this adoption process results in union with God’s Son.

In chapter 6, Burke demonstrates that the role of the Spirit is both integral and essential in the adoptive process. The language used by Paul stresses the personal nature of the Spirit, thus revealing a personal relationship. This is noteworthy since the Spirit is presented as the believer’s intercessor. Arguing from Romans and Galatians, Burke demonstrates the significance of this in that the believer now lives under the “new epoch of the *pneuma*” (p. 129). The Spirit is an eschatological gift as part of the New Covenant. Therefore, “just as the Spirit was an eschatological blessing, so also is sonship” (p. 136). The implication of this is that the Spirit and sonship are mutually dependent features in the salvific process, rather than two stages; with one comes the other. Thus, the Spirit is essential; being led by the Spirit is a “distinguishing mark of *all* God’s adopted sons” (p. 145, italics his). This relationship with the Spirit, then, becomes the basis for the believer’s desire and ability to live in holiness and to put to death the deeds of the body.

In chapters 7 and 8, Burke briefly discusses the ethical implications arising from the study. After reviewing the twin aspects of honor and shame in first-century culture, Burke demonstrates that the believer’s responsibility is now to bring honor upon the *paterfamilias* and the new family, thus reflecting a new and vital aspect of ecclesiology. This new relationship also introduces a profound hope in that the “subhuman order”—creation—having been locked into the “bondage of decay,” now eagerly awaits the final adoption of the redeemed.

Without question, Burke has provided a valuable contribution to a fuller understanding of this vital Pauline metaphor. He has also raised the contribution of the adop-

tion metaphor such that it now necessarily must be included in the larger metaphorical framework of soteriology. One aspect that could provide additional light on this metaphor is a deeper understanding of the background factors within the OT and the life of Christ. Burke provided sufficient analysis to demonstrate his point, but further work would ground this key metaphor both in the redemptive movement of God and the historical Jesus. Nevertheless, the contribution of this work is unquestioned and should be considered by scholars and students alike who are interested in this area of study.

James M. Howard

Colorado Christian University, Lakewood, CO

Greed as Idolatry: The Origin and Meaning of a Pauline Metaphor. By Brian S. Rosner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007, xiv + 214 pp., \$22.00 paper.

Despite the many ethical shortcomings of the contemporary church, perhaps no vice is as easily tolerated today as material greed. Yet according to Paul, *greed is idolatry* (Col 3:5; Eph 5:5). Yet what in the Pauline sense constitutes greed, what precisely is idolatry, and how are the two associated? In this new monograph Brian Rosner, Senior Lecturer in New Testament and Ethics at Moore Theological College, Australia, and author of numerous books on NT ethics, methodically examines the neglected expression “greed is idolatry,” carefully surveying its biblical-theological heritage and analyzing its constituent parts before arguing for a weighty metaphorical interpretation.

Rosner creatively likens his interpretive journey to mountain climbing and even subtitles the chapters after the sequential stages of the sport. After a brief introduction in chapter 1 (“A Formidable Peak”), Rosner, who credits Colossians and Ephesians to Paul, informs the reader of the expression’s intellectual history by presenting in chapter 2 (“Lessons from Other Climbers”) several unexpected scholarly and non-scholarly perspectives on the idolatrous nature of greed. Due to the inadequate treatment of this phrase in modern scholarship, Rosner’s survey of interpretations includes readings developed by Church fathers, medieval theologians and pastors, Reformers and Puritans, even Karl Marx and Ebenezer Scrooge! Still, Rosner’s literature review helpfully prepares for the study ahead. Among the nine interpretations surveyed, four of the metaphorical readings prevail as most likely: “greed is service and obedience to wealth”; “greed is inordinate love of and devotion to wealth”; “greed is trusting in wealth”; and “complex interpretations which adopt two or three of the foregoing interpretations.” The remainder of the book seeks to decipher which of these interpretations captures the original meaning.

In chapter 3 (“Maps and Supplies”), Rosner commences his investigation by articulating his method and demonstrating that the association between “greed” and “idolatry” was not original to Paul, but had its origin in early Judaism (pp. 50–55). He bases this assertion on (1) the expression’s location in practical/traditional sections of Colossians and Ephesians; and (2) its proverbial compactness (p. 10). Thus, from chapters 4–6 (“A Comparison with Other Peaks”) Rosner plots a trajectory of Jewish greed-texts from the OT through early Jewish moral teaching and into the NT in order to trace the tradition behind the Pauline phrase. He then reviews his discoveries in a summary section in chapter 7 (“Debriefing the Trekkers”). Texts of particular importance in the survey are the First Commandment, Job 31:24–28, *Testament of Judah* 19:1, and Matt 6:19–34. Rosner resists making a strict case for literary dependence, but instead demonstrates the frequent association between wealth and apostasy in the Jewish-Christian tradition.

In chapters 8 and 9 (“The Surrounding Terrain”), Rosner examines closely the terminology of the metaphor. In chapter 8, Rosner attempts to pinpoint the meaning of “greed, greedy person” (*pleonexia, pleonektēs*), convincingly demonstrating that, for Paul, according to 1 Cor 5:10, *pleonektēs* describes a person who covets material things rather than sexual immorality (pp. 108–9). Rosner further clarifies that greed is not the *expression* of avarice in immoral behavior (i.e. thievery) but the *longing* for wealth itself. Thus Rosner identifies greedy persons as “those who have a strong desire to acquire and keep for themselves more and more money and material things” (p. 128).

In chapter 9, Rosner analyzes idolatry, first by examining the severity of the offense in Judaism, and second by presenting two models of idolatry from the OT as plausible lenses through which to interpret the Pauline concept. According to Rosner, idolatry is the ultimate expression of unfaithfulness toward God. The two OT models of idolatry presented by Rosner are the *marital* and *political* models. Both correspond to a particular representation of God, whose exclusive “rights” have been compromised: the marital model portrays God as a husband whose wife’s *love* is divided, while the political model casts God as a king whose subjects refuse to *trust* him. As a result, Rosner defines idolatry as “*an attack on God’s exclusive right to our love and trust*” (p. 148, italics his). (Rosner later proposes that *obedience* is also God’s exclusive “right” often forfeited to idols.)

In chapter 10 (“Reaching the Summit”), Rosner ties all of the loose ends together by explaining how the accusation of idolatry would have “felt” to the person implicated, how “greed is idolatry” operated in light of its conceptual heritage, and what the metaphor implied for Paul’s original audiences. In comparing his definitions for “greed” and “idolatry,” Rosner underscores their single major parallel: “both were considered to be distinguishing marks of those who do not know God, namely the gentiles” (p. 154). Thus, being charged with idolatry was a terribly offensive accusation. Indeed, in his attempt to “feel the metaphor” Rosner explains, “We can appreciate the function of the words ‘greed is idolatry’ only when we recognize that idolatry was a Jewish and Christian way of identifying and referring to the heathen and that Paul used it in parenthesis in descriptions of behavior inappropriate for Christians, who have left behind their pagan past” (p. 155). Then, in view of the models of idolatry illustrated from the OT in chapter 9, Rosner observes that greedy persons resemble idolaters because they appropriate for wealth each of the three “rights” (love, trust, obedience) that idolaters likewise reserve for idols. Consequently, for Rosner, “greed is idolatry” implies that “*to have a strong desire to acquire and keep for yourself more and more money and material things is an attack on God’s exclusive rights to human love and devotion, trust and confidence, and service and obedience*” (p. 173, italics his). In chapter 11 (“Final Debrief and a Look Ahead”), Rosner concludes by exhorting Christians to combat greed by recognizing the futility of amassing wealth and insisting that Christians, alternatively, store up heavenly treasures.

The strengths of Rosner’s study are immediately obvious. The volume is creative, well informed, and extremely thorough, treating three words in 180 pages. Moreover, throughout the course of the book Rosner demonstrates his competence as a biblical theologian, appropriately handling parallels from OT, early Jewish, and NT literature with great skill. Finally, the book is both timely and morally penetrating, possessing ethical insights widely ignored in today’s church.

Rosner’s most deserving criticism concerns his final interpretation of “greed is idolatry,” which appears to fall prey to a form of “illegitimate totality transfer.” (This comes as a surprise considering Rosner’s criticism of those commentators who read *pleonektēs* as sexual immorality for committing the same fallacy). Although Rosner demonstrates that this all-inclusive meaning surfaces in analogous non-Pauline NT texts, such as

Matt 6:19–34 and Luke 16:1–15, he fails to prove that Paul himself considered idolatry to mean submission of one's love, trust, *and* obedience to a foreign object. This is a particularly important step considering that several Jewish and Christian greed-texts in Rosner's survey imply only one or two components of that definition. A more cautious interpretation might have been more appropriate. Nevertheless, *Greed as Idolatry* is an engaging read that skillfully scales this complex peak. It is recommended for all biblical scholars, pastors, and interested students, as it is sure to become the standard treatment of this significant phrase.

John K. Goodrich
Durham University, Durham, England

James. By Daniel M. Doriani. Reformed Expository Commentary. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2007, xv + 220 pp., \$19.99.

Daniel M. Doriani's commentary on James is one of six presently available in the new Reformed Expository Commentary series. (The others are *Galatians* and *1 Timothy*, both by Philip Graham Ryken; *Esther & Ruth* by Iain M. Duguid; and *Zechariah* and *Hebrews*, both by Richard D. Phillips.) The aim of the series is to provide a homiletical commentary, rooted in sound scholarship with a Christocentric scriptural exposition in agreement with the Westminster Confession of Faith. Doriani, formerly Dean of the Faculty and Professor of New Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary, currently serves as Senior Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church, Clayton, Missouri. Doriani also serves as the NT editor for this new commentary series.

Reminiscent of the expositional commentaries of John MacArthur or R. Kent Hughes, Doriani provides explanation of the biblical text with helpful sermonic illustrations from his own ministry and personal life. His illustrations also provide insight into the humble man and servant of Christ behind this helpful book. As would be expected from a commentary series of this sort, Doriani barely mentions critical issues of authorship and dating. It is clear that he expects to be read by evangelical, educated, and reformed pastors or laypersons.

This book will be preferred by those who want commentators to focus on the main point of the passage and do not mind if various scriptural phrases are set aside with little comment. Also, do not look to this commentary for any detailed interaction with current scholarship. At least half the book's pages lack a single footnote. Yet, within the parameters of the series, the author has done a fine job. I could see myself recommending this commentary to a layperson teaching a Sunday School class. Also, for a preacher preparing a message on James, this commentary could be read along with others that are more technical and detailed in nature. Yet, a minister versed in Greek will certainly not be satisfied with this commentary alone. For seminary students wanting to see how a skilled preacher/scholar delivers the fruit of his study in the pulpit, again, this commentary will be helpful. Finally, for a young professor wondering what appropriate pastoral asides could be mentioned in a Greek exegesis class, this text could be beneficial.

Of course, with so many fine commentaries on James available (Moo, Hartin, Johnson), what distinctive contribution does this one make? As explained in the preface to the text, the explicitly Christocentric and Reformed theological emphases of the commentary are probably its most noteworthy distinctives. For example, Doriani consistently asks how the biblical passage points the reader to the atoning death of Christ

and how the grace and sovereignty of God are taught in Scripture. Certainly, no Bible-believing Christian can object to speaking of Christ or grace or God's sovereignty, but when a commentary series sails out of port flying the "Reformed" flag, one may rightly question whether topics of the Westminster Confession are overdone at the expense of more natural foci in the biblical text. For example, is Jas 4:6 ("But [God] gives us more grace" NIV) truly the rhetorical climax of the book, as Doriani claims (p. 145)? If so, why do many other respected scholars not see this argumentative apex?

As one who tries to be a biblical theologian, I did feel at times that Doriani was squeezing the text of James into systematic categories a little too easily. For example, Jas 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him" (NIV). The most natural reading of the text, I believe, would lead one to say that the one who does not persevere will not receive the crown of life. (And, yes, more broadly in James, the one who does not persevere is the false confessor who never had the implanted saving word [Jas 1:18–27].) Doriani, in a rush to Christocentric and Reformed exposition, fails to let the text speak in its raw boldness. He writes that "if we fail to persevere in trials and do not deserve to receive the crown of life, the gospel remains. Indeed, when we fail to persevere and we honestly take our failure to the Lord Jesus, confessing our sin, he will 'give us birth through the word of truth'—that is, the gospel. By that word, he will redeem us 'that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created' (1:18)" (pp. 28–29). In 1:12, is James really laying out a plan for the Christian's daily life of repentance and faith, or are his eyes more directed to the eschatological judgment seat, as the overwhelming number of commentators read the text? We should not be afraid to use the language of Scripture, even when it may be shocking and does not comfortably fit within our confessional stance.

In a commentary of this type, one does not expect detailed linguistic analysis, but one does hope to find the little that there is reliable. Usually, Doriani is trustworthy and a clear communicator. For example, without ever using the phrase "exegetical genitive," which would be out of place in this series, Doriani does a masterful job explaining what the phrase "crown of life" means (pp. 32–33). (Though he does seem to understand it as a *golden* crown rather than a laurel wreath, as the original audience likely would have.) On the other hand, I found his explanation of ἀπλῶς ("generously"? "simply"? "without hesitation"? truncated to the point of being misleading. Is not James explicitly contrasting the waffling human doubter with the unwavering God who gives with singleness of intent (Jas 1:5–8)? In another situation, Doriani says that μακάριος meant "happy" in ordinary Greek speech but should be understood as "joy from God" in James (p. 31). Would one not be more correct to say that in biblical usage μακάριος expresses the state of being approved by God, apart from emphasis on emotion? (Thus "blessed" is still probably the best translation.)

Those coming to this commentary with non-Reformed theological commitments will occasionally find their viewpoint dismissed with little or no discussion. For example, some dispensationalists might balk at this unqualified statement: "Peter and Paul established that the church is the true heir of God's promises to the tribes of Israel" (p. 12). Likewise, a new covenant theologian will think it unfounded to amass old covenant language under the broad rubric of the one "covenant of grace" (p. 33). Still, the commentary is only what it professes to be—both in the series title and in the explanatory preface. For flying boldly his flag of confessional Reformed exposition, we should thank Doriani for his transparency of mission and skill in execution.

Robert L. Plummer
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

An Apocalypse for the Church and for the World: The Narrative Function of Universal Language in the Book of Revelation. By Ronald Herms. BZNW 143. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006, xv + 261 pp., \$118.80.

Ronald Herms has provided an in-depth analysis pertaining to the fate of the nations in Revelation. As a result of its comprehensiveness, Herms's work may well serve the scholarly community as the authoritative source for this subject. Herms's systematic investigation endeavors to address the fact that Revelation depicts the nations as involved in the universal worship of God (5:13; 11:13; 14:6–20; 15:2–4; 21:3; 21:24–26; 22:2) and at the same time describes the comprehensive judgment of God upon the unrepentant peoples and nations (1:7; 3:10; 6:15–17; 11:14–18; 16:12–21; 19:17–21; 20:11–15). Herms queries, "Can such negative images simply be attributed to the literary or rhetorical interests of the author without carrying the weight of 'real' implications?" (p. 2).

Herms proposes that previous efforts to resolve the tension pertaining to these apparently conflicting depictions have failed to engage the Jewish apocalyptic traditions pertaining to the fate of nations. Thus, he first compares the universal language in several of the early Jewish apocalyptic works. Second, he suggests that an analysis of the structure of the Apocalypse will help to place the "universal language within an overall framework of the document's 'narrative trajectory'" (p. 4). Third, and perhaps most importantly for Herms, he contends that one must note the tension that pervades the Apocalypse between the demand on Christians to be faithful and the portrayal of visions pertaining to the nations.

In chapter 1, Herms sets out to evaluate systematically the major trends in the history of interpretation (though by this he means only the last two centuries of interpretation) relating to the fate of the nations in the Apocalypse. He begins with an examination of the source critics, including the work of Bousett, R. H. Charles, Massyngherde Ford, Muller, and Aune. For the source critics, the theological tensions inherent in the salvation/judgment of the nations provide evidence of multiple sources. Next, Herms surveys the major "mainstream" commentators, including the work of Kiddle, Mounce, Caird, and Sweet. He notes that both Kiddle and Mounce represent the opinion that Revelation envisions the judgment of the nations of the world, while Caird and Sweet advocate the salvation of the nations. He concludes this introductory overview with an analysis of literary-narrative approaches, including the work of Barr, Boring, Thompson, and Bauckham. Of these, Herms rightfully devotes the most attention to the work of Richard Bauckham (*The Climax of Prophecy* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993]). For, prior to Herms, Bauckham's investigation into the fate of the nations (see *Climax*, chap. 9 "The Conversion of the Nations") presents the most comprehensive analysis and provocative thesis pertaining to the fate of the nations. According to Bauckham, the universal language of Revelation indicates that the prophetic witness of the righteous is effectual and results in the conversion of the nations. Herms concludes this introductory chapter by noting that methodological issues have produced varying results concerning the fate of the nations in the Apocalypse. He, therefore, suggests that a proper determination of the fate of the nations must incorporate four features: (1) John's use of the interpretive strategies of apocalyptic thought; (2) an assessment of John's "hermeneutical grid" through which he has interpreted and appropriated the OT; (3) the manner in which John's literary-narrative method affects our understanding of the fate of the nations; and (4) the presence of literary tensions. One must wrestle with the literary tensions regarding John's use of "universally inclusive language while at the same time maintaining strict expectations for the Christian communities to whom he writes. . . . 'How can the Gospel be strict, yet universal?'" (p. 44).

In chapter 2, Herms conducts an evaluation of several Jewish apocalyptic works (Tobit, the *Similitudes of Enoch*, 4 Ezra, and the *Animal Apocalypse*). His objective in surveying this literature is to determine the extent to which Revelation exemplifies the interpretive tendencies and exegetical strategies of this literature. Herms's investigation reveals that the universalistic language of the apocalypses tends to present Gentile participation in the future age in the context of the vindication of the people of God and not the salvation of the nations. Herms also contends that each of these works displays a narrative framework that maintains a narrative movement regarding the final destiny of the nations.

In chapter 3, Herms begins his investigation of the Apocalypse by examining some foundational issues that serve as the platform for his analysis of the fate of the nations in Revelation. This chapter begins with a more detailed evaluation of Richard Bauckham's thesis. Herms then addresses the genre of Revelation. Next, he sets forth an analysis of the structure of Revelation. Herms argues that the primary factor determining the structure of Revelation is the fourfold repetition of the phrase ἐν πνεύματι (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). Herms suggests that this reveals the structure of Revelation as containing "four collections of visions" (p. 153; cf. pp. 149–54). Finally, Herms explores the presence of a narrative development in Revelation by means of a cursory examination of the four series of visions and some of their subordinate sections. Herms concludes that Revelation indeed displays a "coherent narrative development" (p. 7). This development begins with the first collection and the delineation of the present status of the churches and proceeds to exhort them on the basis of their present and future existence in the final collection.

In chapter 4, Herms turns his attention to the fate of the nations in the Apocalypse itself. Throughout this chapter he examines the various terms depicting the nations and overviews their uses in the Apocalypse in order to ascertain how John employs the designations that relate to the fate of the nations. Herms surveys the uses of "the nations" (τὰ ἔθνη), "the inhabitants of the earth" (οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς), "people" (λαός), "man" (ἄνθρωπος), "the rest" (οἱ λοιποί), and "the kings of the earth" (οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς). From this investigation, Herms first concludes that Revelation has numerous affinities with the Jewish apocalypses in terms of its literary narrative conventions. He also suggests that Revelation qualifies the universal language of the apocalypses in accord with its own narrative structure.

In criticism of Herms's work, one may suggest that his research needs to be buttressed with further investigation into the apocalypses of the Second Temple period (a point with which he readily agrees; p. 260). Second, John's use of the apocalypses should be compared on a wider scope than just the issue of the fate of the nations in order for Herms's conclusion to gain force. Certainly, Herms has demonstrated reasonably well that a preliminary investigation of the apocalypses suggests that John maintains a thematic correspondence with them pertaining to the fate of the nations. Yet is this sufficient? Herms's contentions may in fact be weakened or even strengthened by a more large-scale comparison between the apocalypses and Revelation. Though Herms has sufficiently defended his position, a definitive conclusion awaits further investigation.

Herms's most interesting interchange appears in his critique of the position of Richard Bauckham. He provides a preliminary critique of Bauckham's work in the "Introduction" and continues his assessment of it in chapter 3. Because of the importance of Bauckham's work and the fact that Herms's thesis conflicts with it, Herms could have provided a more protracted evaluation of Bauckham's work. Overall, Herms has correctly observed the tenuous and speculative nature of Bauckham's thesis.

The reader, however, is constantly left wondering if a synthesis between the positions of Bauckham and Herms is not feasible. This is perhaps the most glaring weakness of Herms's work. One must question if Herms's evaluation of the tension presented by the

universal salvation language and that of the divine judgment of the nations is sufficiently resolved by Herms's thesis that John's primary concern was on the vindication of the righteous. Does John not also wish to suggest to believers that their persevering as faithful witnesses is effectual to some extent?

Finally, much of Herms's work is dependent upon his literary-narrative and tradition-historical perspectives. An evaluation of these methodologies exceeds the limits of this review. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that one's assessment of Herms's work will be determined by one's evaluation of these underlying assumptions and the force of Herms's defense of them.

Overall, Herms has provided Revelation scholars with a great resource and a definitive conclusion pertaining to the fate of the nations, a conclusion with which all future research must contend.

Rob Dalrymple
Cornerstone Fellowship, Livermore, CA