

BOOK REVIEWS

Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity: An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and Early Israel 1300–1100 B.C.E. By Ann E. Killebrew. SBL Archaeology and Biblical Studies 9. Atlanta: SBL, 2005, xx + 362 pp., \$39.95 paper.

Ann Killebrew presents a detailed analysis of thirteenth to twelfth-century BC pottery in Canaan in the context of debate over Israel's origins and the historicity of biblical narratives. As an experienced field archaeologist and professor at Pennsylvania State University, she examines the identification of group ethnic boundaries by means of a multi-disciplinary approach involving ceramic archaeological data and socio-economic and political processes.

Killebrew's introductory chapter explains the issues, tensions, and procedural approach (pp. 1–19). Subsequent chapters describe the internationalism of the eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century BC (pp. 21–49), Egypt in Canaan (pp. 51–92), the Canaanites (pp. 93–148), early Israel (pp. 149–96), and the Philistines (pp. 197–245). A brief conclusion summarizes Killebrew's reconstruction (pp. 247–51). Each chapter provides an overview of the written texts and material culture associated with each ethnic group. The bibliography is extensive and representative of key scholarly research (pp. 253–334). A full set of indexes closes the volume (pp. 335–62).

This volume focuses on Canaan and the socio-economic transition that took place at the end of the Bronze Age. Theories dealing with catalysts for the transition variously specify migration, conquest, revolt, pirates, overpopulation, earthquakes, drought, technological innovation (iron working and chariotry), socio-economic systems collapse (due to any number of the foregoing events), and the cyclical rise and fall of urban cultures. Killebrew observes that none of these factors or their associated models adequately represent the complex nature of the transformation (p. 37). Rather than viewing the outcome as a catastrophic collapse, she concludes that the transition consisted of a gradual "restructuring of economic control in core-periphery relations" (p. 42).

According to Killebrew's study, this gradual transition included Israel's ethnogenesis out of a mixed population made up of Canaanites, displaced peasants and pastoralists, *'apiru*, *Shasu*, and possibly fugitive Semitic slaves from Egypt (pp. 149, 184). Israel's genesis was "a heterogeneous, multifaceted, and complex process" (p. 184). The author grants only limited credence to the biblical texts, concluding that accounts in Joshua and Judges are contradictory and that Josh 11:16–23 is inaccurate (p. 153). On the other hand, she accepts the accuracy of tribal allocation boundaries in the biblical record (p. 159). In her opinion, archaeological evidence trumps the biblical narratives, since only Dan and Hazor provide any potential support for some events in those narratives (p. 169). Yet, she admits the archaeological evidence she accepts as more authoritative and accurate than the biblical text is actually "fragmentary, incomplete, and ambiguous" (p. 173). She ignores significant evidence that domesticated camels were already in use as early as the time of Abraham (p. 180; see John J. Davis, "The Camel in Biblical Narratives," in *A Tribute to Gleason Archer* [ed. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. and Ronald F. Youngblood [Moody, 1986] 141–52).

Killebrew concludes that the Philistines originated in the eastern Aegean, northern Levant, Cyprus, and coastal Anatolia. Coinciding with the decline of Egyptian imperialism, the Philistines colonized Palestine's coastal region with their Aegean-inspired

culture (pp. 15, 197, 233). Just as Killebrew questions the dependability of the biblical text regarding an Israelite conquest of Canaan, she is suspicious of biblical accounts concerning Abraham's association with Philistines (p. 205). On the archaeological side, she excludes anthropoid coffins from evidence relating to the Philistines, arguing that the coffins are Egyptian (pp. 65–67, 218).

Killebrew argues that the Egyptians entered Canaan as an imperialist power. Egyptian material remains reveal Egyptians were the primary users—the resident population did not adopt Egyptian cultural ways. Absence of destruction levels in the southern Levant associated with Egyptian military campaigns demonstrates that Egyptian influence was tied more to “economic, political, and ideological concerns” (p. 57) than to military action. Killebrew offers ceramic evidence to support her conclusion that Egyptian potters joined administrative and military personnel at key locations in Canaan where the Egyptian government maintained garrison cities and governors' residences (pp. 80–81). She concludes that the collapse of Egyptian imperial authority allowed the establishing of Philistine cities, encouraged the decline of Canaanite city-states, and “facilitated the eventual emergence of Israel” (p. 83).

Impacted and defined successively by Egyptian imperialism, Philistine colonization, and Israelite emergence, Canaanite ethnic culture is more difficult to identify. Gaps in the evidence complicate an accurate picture concerning the Canaanites. Although they contributed the alphabet to civilization, the Canaanites left behind very few second-millennium BC texts or inscriptions (p. 93). In addition, excavators have not yet discovered any fortifications at Late Bronze Age Canaanite sites (p. 101).

Other recent works dealing with the topics of Killebrew's volume include Donald B. Redford's *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, 1992) and William G. Dever's two volumes *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* (Eerdmans, 2001) and *Who were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From?* (Eerdmans, 2003). Killebrew provides a newer evaluation, interacting with a broader spectrum of viewpoints than Redford and focusing more on the socio-economic issues than Redford, who emphasizes the political dimension. Dever's volumes are more polemic in nature, since he is primarily responding to the minimalists.

Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity distinguishes itself from the previous volumes by Killebrew's careful and systematic presentation of the ceramic evidence for the four different cultures present in Late Bronze to Iron Age Canaan. She pays attention to the minutest detail and provides the reader a careful synthesis of the evidence and its contribution to the identification of socio-economic boundaries. Also, she clearly defines the socio-economic and political issues in light of current scholarly theories. If the archaeological evidence is ambiguous or inconclusive, she tells her readers. Because of her methodology, this volume makes a significant contribution to the ongoing debate concerning Israel's origin.

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The Bible after Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age. By John J. Collins. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, 201 pp., \$18.00 paper.

Born in Ireland, John J. Collins is presently Holmes Professor of Old Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale University. He has written prolifically, authoring eighteen academic books; 215 academic articles; eight popular, church-oriented books; and thirty-three articles for popular, church-related readers. He has also lectured widely.

Delivered as the Gunning lectures at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, 2004, *The Bible after Babel* is a brief analysis of some major trends in the study of the Hebrew Bible or OT during the latter third of the 20th century. Collins summarized the major tenets of both historical criticism and postmodernism (chap. 1).

The last quarter of the twentieth century saw a progressive loss of "confidence in the historical value of the biblical narratives." Called by Collins a "crisis in historiography" (chap. 2), it is not so much a result of postmodern philosophical predispositions as of "limitations in available evidence" (p. 34). Postmodernists can be credited with little more than a refusal to subscribe to the master narrative of accepting "the broad biblical outline of Israel's history without question" (p. 50).

Israel, especially the exodus, is considered a liberation paradigm (chap. 3). Liberation theology's concern for the poor and oppressed simulates postmodernism's concern for the marginalized. Claiming divine authorization for the ethnic cleansing jars the master narrative of liberation theology (p. 63). Both postcolonialism and postmodernism agree in affirming minorities (the Canaanite perspective of the conquest) against the empire's overarching claims. A postmodern "ethic of difference" (p. 72) can redeem ethnocentrism.

Feminist and gender studies (chap. 4) focus upon identifying and overcoming inequities between men and women. Collins would correct feminist and gender criticism by freeing it from treating the Bible as prescriptive and regards it unlikely that they will receive much sympathy for their agenda until they do so. Postmodernists object to the Bible's advocacy of a God-ordained order for the sexes to which all humans must conform. Contemporary gender theorists consider gender to be a human construct exhibiting relationships of power.

Scholarly opinion predominantly agrees that biblical accounts of Israelite religion (chap. 5) contain major discrepancies, that polytheism was widespread, and that the Yahweh-exclusivist cult, though a strain, did not triumph in suppressing religious pluralism until post-exilic Israel (Morton Smith's revisionism). While Collins disagrees that the Khirbet el-Qôm and Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions suggest that Yahweh may have had a wife, he feels revisionist scholarship is driven more by historical criticism and archaeological discoveries. Postmodern overtones are present in the resistance to biblical Deuteronomistic master narratives, the focus on marginal persons, and rereading biblical texts against editorial intentions (deconstruction of canonical account).

Collins does not feel that changes in the view of history, Israel's religion, or the ethical import of the OT for political or feminist liberation are mainly the results of postmodernist critical theory. Those changes are occurring as historical criticism pursues its goals. They also result from a wider circle of those participating in biblical studies—a circle moving outside white males of American and European extraction and a "postmodern situation"—one characterized by pluralism, diversity, collapse of paradigms once dominant, and the absence of any emerging consensus.

Since most of the old, collapsing paradigms were largely theological, it is not surprising, according to Collins, that their collapse should appear especially in the field of biblical theology (chap. 6). Both postmodernists and historical critics agree that the Bible reflects multiple theologies. "Biblical theology and biblical ethics . . . can never be determined *sola scriptura*" (p. 161). Rather, they are a dialogue between the Bible and knowledge gained from comparing or contrasting other sources. This fact alone makes biblical theology a critical enterprise.

For Collins, the Bible has relevance, not for its metaphysical affirmations, but largely for its ethics. He sees the postmodernist concern for the "other" as a more promising approach to biblical ethics, while acknowledging that much of the Bible illustrates indifference or outright hostility toward that "other."

The author sees postmodern criticism's main danger to be its contribution to a disintegration of the discussions in "a cacophony of voices." Postmodernism leaves in its

wake a demand for more skepticism and self-criticism from biblical theology and biblical ethics. Those willing to converse in good faith and to pursue a consensus, rather than assuming the same, will enable the two to remain viable enterprises (p. 161).

A more extensive treatment of Collin's topics in relationship to biblical theology may be found in *Reconstructing Old Testament Theology: After the Collapse of History: Overtures to Biblical Theology* by Leo G. Perdue (Augsburg Fortress, 2005). A detailed treatment of the historical-critical method and the Jewish community responsible for preserving and canonizing the Bible may be found in *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies* by Jon D. Levenson (Westminster John Knox, 1993).

This book is a brief but fair assessment of the disciplines treated in relationship to historical criticism and postmodernism. Extensive notes and a 30-page bibliography express the author's interaction with scholars.

The book's chief weaknesses are threefold. First, it is committed to the meta-narrative of historical criticism (i.e. the Bible is historically inaccurate). Second, it fails to critically address the metanarrative of postmodernism (i.e. reject all metanarratives except the metanarrative that all metanarratives are to be rejected). Third, it fails to offer any substantive alternative to either historical criticism or postmodernism. A critique of historical criticism may be found in *Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology? Reflections of a Bultmannian Turned Evangelical* by Eta Linnemann and *The End of the Historical-Critical Method* by Gerhard Maier.

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The Canonical Hebrew Bible: A Theology of the Old Testament. By Rolf Rendtorff. Translated by David E. Orton. Leiden: Deo, 2005, 813 pp., \$54.00.

For the last twenty years, Rolf Rendtorff has been working out his canonical approach to OT theology, with Gerhard von Rad and Brevard Childs as crucial stimuli (pp. 717–19). The culmination now appears in English.

The Canonical Hebrew Bible stands as a significant achievement—a rich description of the canonical texts, their interrelationship, their themes, their people, and their God. On every page the author's lifetime of study, his depth of insight, and his love of the text are apparent.

Rendtorff rejects both thinly-veiled Christian dogmatic approaches to OT theology as well as *Religionsgeschichte* approaches that isolate and describe the theology of every postulated stage of Israel's religion. Instead, the horizon of his theology is canonical—the theology of the text as it stands.

Rendtorff views the canonical texts as theological compositions in their own right and dates their composition just after the Babylonian exile, an experience that significantly shaped them. Gerstenberger and others have questioned whether this “canon-forming period” should be granted unique authority or special focus. Unlike Childs, Rendtorff offers no theological rationale; he simply notes this is the text Jews and Christians have used.

In part 1, a 400-page “retelling” (*Nacherzählung*), Rendtorff paces through the canon from Genesis to Chronicles, lingering at key chapters or passages and noting the key theological phrases that are being introduced or developed. He cites an impressive spectrum of interpreters, from Hans Walter Wolff to Moshe Greenberg to David Clines to Barry Webb. As he proceeds, the Torah is never left far behind, functioning as a

touchstone and hermeneutical key in each book of the Prophets and Writings. "Most of the books of the Hebrew Bible could not be fully understood without knowledge of the Pentateuch to which they frequently directly or indirectly refer" (p. 6).

This retelling considers the various elements of each book in full literary/canonical context. The Abraham narratives, for example, are firmly rooted in the first eleven chapters of Genesis rather than treated as a separate tradition. The genealogies and tables of nations set the stage for the promise in Gen 12:3 that through Abraham's descendants "all the families of the earth will be blessed." The narrowing focus on Abraham as family (and soon after on Israel as nation) is thus set within the narrative of the Creator God and his dealings with all humanity and all creation. Likewise, Abraham's story is illumined by later portions of the canon: the prayer in Nehemiah 9 in which "the election of Abraham is regarded as the second fundamental act of God after creation" (p. 21).

Isaiah's vision in chapter 6 is "not a 'call' to become a prophet but a commission with a very particular message." Why? Because in the first five chapters "Isaiah has . . . already been working as a prophet and speaking in the name of God" (p. 172). This approach is not naively chronological; rather, the canonical clues for interpretation are afforded their full weight. The "hardening" of Israel implied here is illumined by reference to Exodus 4, and the ray of future hope suggested by the "holy seed" is read in the context of its brighter realization in Isaiah's final chapters.

Part 2 is arranged thematically, yet still according to Rendtorff's rigid canonical concern. He culls themes for discussion in the sequence of their introduction within the canon. So, for example, rather than beginning with election or redemption, he treats creation first (pp. 418ff.). After creation, he covers the themes of covenant and election, the fathers of Israel, the promised land, and more.

Within each theme, Rendtorff again follows the canonical sequence of presentation, further reinforcing the priority of the Torah. His theology of creation begins with the canonical Genesis creation narrative, in contrast with Brueggemann and others who begin with Second Isaiah. This also contrasts, notably, with Childs, who begins his treatment of Creation with separate discussions of the J Creation and the P Creation accounts before making observations regarding their marriage in the canonical text.

Rendtorff's theological description is decidedly restrained, working in the phrases and explicit claims of the text itself. His work is so text-restricted that it might be labeled a description of the texts rather than a description of the theology of the texts.

A partial explanation for this theological restraint is Rendtorff's longstanding commitment to breaking down barriers between Jews and Christians. A final chapter, "Jewish and Christian Theology of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament," appeals for greater Jewish-Christian scholarly collaboration—not only on matters philological or historical or archaeological, but also in theological interpretation.

A substantial consequence is the privileging of the backwards-directed dynamic of the Hebrew Bible. As early as 1981, Rendtorff distanced himself from the *Heilsgeschichte* approach of the biblical theology movement. In *The Concept of Biblical Theology* James Barr assesses this shift: "Rendtorff revoked his support for the salvation-history programme, claiming [it resulted in] a Christian taking over of the Old Testament from the Jews, and one that could not be found or supported in the latter. Far from the emphasis falling on the *end* of history, it should fall at the *beginning*, with creation" (p. 505).

In some respects, this perspective yields fruitful observations. God's faithfulness is grounded in his dealings with the fathers, and a family tree of human sinfulness is traced from the present generation back to the fathers—the pre-Abrahamic idolaters of Josh 24:2 and the fathers as idolaters in Egypt in Ezekiel 20:7 (pp. 452ff.).

The weakness of Rendtorff's emphasis is a lack of theological reflection on the forward-directed dynamic of the OT, especially against the backdrop of the 2500 years of intervening history. In the end, in Rendtorff's telling, it becomes difficult to find

significant ways in which the OT points beyond itself. Where it does, little help is given (for Christians or for Jews) toward a contemporary appropriation of these trajectories.

Might not a theology of the OT reach beyond the significance of the text for a proposed “canon-forming period” and also wrestle with the theological implications of the text for today? For Christian theology, full theological reflection would consider the texts as firmly rooted in Yahweh’s dealing with the fathers and Israel and also in relationship to Jesus Christ, the contemporary world, the church, and the coming age.

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The Torah: An Introduction for Christians and Jews. By David J. Zucker. New York: Paulist, 2005, xv + 230 pp., \$18.95 paper.

The Torah: An Introduction for Christians and Jews by Rabbi David Zucker is a niche book written for interfaith adult educational courses on the Pentateuch. Consequently, it is no surprise that the book presents a general study of the books of the Torah based on an ecumenical perspective heavily influenced by historical-critical standpoints and current politically-correct issues. Because of this, evangelicals will probably not want to use the work as a textbook in seminary or Bible college courses. (The use of the Hebrew *dalet* and *samek* along with stylized Latin characters on the cover to spell *Torah* will also appear rather peculiar to Hebrew students and teachers.)

Nonetheless, as Marvin Wilson of Gordon College aptly states in the foreword, there is one important reason why this paperback ought to have a place on the bookshelves of those interested in biblical literature and its interpretation: “Jews and Christians tend to read the biblical text differently, through a different set of spectacles” (p. xiv). Zucker is sensitive to this fact and attempts through the structure of the book to partially remedy it. *The Torah* is his effort to let Christians see the Hebrew Bible, if ever so briefly, through Jewish spectacles.

The Torah contains six chapters—one introductory chapter and one chapter each for the five books of the Pentateuch. Zucker also incorporates very helpful material at the end: a bibliography, glossary, abbreviations, and name and subject indices. The section on “Questions for Study” is a particularly nice feature for teachers (pp. 222–26). The bibliography is helpful, but there are very few evangelical works listed.

After defining the Hebrew term *torah* at the beginning of the introductory chapter, Zucker outlines the structure of the book. For this volume Zucker employed the same pattern as in his previously published work on the prophets (*The Prophets: An Introduction for Christians and Jews*: Paulist, 1994). The introductory chapter continues with concise discussions on the meaning of *midrash*, the synagogue, the phrase “Old Testament,” and the nature of the Jewish canon and how it differs from the Christian Bible. The issue of women in biblical Israel is briefly examined as is the Graf-Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis. Zucker also provides short sections on the development of Jewish law and the place of the Bible in Jewish and Christian life. The segment on the development of Jewish law is an excellent introduction to post-biblical rabbinic literature.

The remaining chapters on Genesis through Deuteronomy begin with an introductory overview and a chapter-by-chapter description. These are followed by a discussion of representative references to the particular book found in the NT and selected examples taken from rabbinic literature. A text study on several pericopes from each book concludes the chapter. His discussions are based on the NRSV, and whenever possible,

Zucker uses gender-neutral language (pp. 2–3). Finally, substantial and helpful end-notes are attached. He cites a broad range of sources, most of which are general and accessible to the lay reader.

Because the book is aimed at interfaith readers, it is interesting to read Rabbi Zucker's description of the place of the Bible in Christian life and the meaning of the Bible for today. Zucker does recognize the special value the Bible holds for Christians. He notes that Christians regularly spend part of each day reading the Bible. Most Jews do not turn to the Bible for daily reading (p. 23). For Zucker, the Christian appropriates the Jewish Bible as Scripture because it contains promises for the future (p. 24). Themes and events are then "christologically reinterpreted" (p. 25). Christians understand that the Jewish Bible is fulfilled in the life of Jesus (p. 26). I especially appreciated Rabbi Zucker quoting Philip Yancey: "The more we comprehend the Old Testament, the more we comprehend Jesus" (*The Bible Jesus Read* [Zondervan, 1999]).

Christians who are not familiar with Judaism will find in this work helpful and illustrative interpretations on various texts in the Pentateuch. For example, the rabbis noted carefully the dual title given to God in Gen 2:4. In Genesis 1 the deity is simply called "God" (*‘ēlōhîm*), but in 2:4 the deity is called "LORD God" (*yhwh ‘ēlōhîm*). The combined name "LORD God" "reflects two of the deity's major attributes, mercy and justice" (p. 57). Other rabbinic interpretations are also intriguing; note, e.g., the textual links between the Ten Commandments and the Holiness Code (p. 129). Zucker's interpretations are also valuable; e.g. his discussion on the textual parallels between the creation account and the building of the tabernacle (pp. 106–7).

The value of Rabbi Zucker's introduction of the Torah lies in its attempt to give the reader a look at the OT through Jewish spectacles. For this reason, *The Torah* does provide an important contribution to the study of the Pentateuch.

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The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1. By J. Richard Middleton. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005, 304 pp., \$21.99 paper.

The phrase "image of God" has been investigated so thoroughly and has been the source of so many theological interpretations that many have concluded little more can be said about it. *The Liberating Image* should change that perception, as it reexamines the *imago Dei* in light of its many historical interpretations, its usage in the biblical creation accounts, and its relation to ancient Near Eastern concepts that ground the image of God in kings and priests. As a bonus, the book moves beyond exegetical, philosophical, and theological considerations by providing suggestions for applying this concept to ethical practice.

Part 1, "The Meaning of the Image," gives a brief overview of three major interpretive approaches and provides a contextual reading of Gen 1:26–28. The substantialist interpretation, which has found regular support throughout much of church history, was founded on Platonic or other philosophical reasoning and sees the human soul in some sense "mirroring its divine archetype" (p. 19). The relational interpretation, as developed by Karl Barth and supported by many contemporary theologians, identifies the image as "the capacity of human beings in their cohumanity (as male and female) to be addressed by and to respond to God's word" (p. 22). The functional interpretation, which has gained almost universal acceptance among OT scholars, sees humans holding a royal office as representatives of God in the world. While this is an excellent overview

of the three approaches, many readers, particularly those for whom the functional model is new, would benefit from a deeper examination and critique if they are to be convinced their old models need to be reconsidered and perhaps replaced. A further study could investigate whether two or more of these possibilities could coexist.

The contextual reading of Gen 1:26–28 conclusively demonstrates that the purpose behind humans bearing God's image is to rule over the rest of creation as God's vice-regents. The following attempt to extend this royal imagery so that the created order is identified as the building where God dwells and the conclusion that human rule over creation can in some sense be understood as "forming culture or developing civilization" (p. 89) were less convincing, as the connections between the biblical passages and ancient Near Eastern myths that speak of deity dwelling in a cosmic temple and the creation account in Genesis 1 are more tenuous than made out to be here.

Part 2 relates the Bible's use of the image of God to ancient Near Eastern ideology. After rejecting the Epic of Gilgamesh and Egyptian wisdom literature as sources for the concept and showing that there may be some relationship to the ancient Near Eastern practice whereby kings set up images of themselves to represent their presence as rulers of an area despite their physical absence, Middleton demonstrates that both Egyptians and Mesopotamians understood the king as the image of God in functional terms. This investigation purports to show that Genesis 1–11 supported the functional idea of the image and at the same time provided an intentional critique of the ideology of the wider world in which ancient Israel found itself, a world that located the image of God in kings and to some extent in priests. In contrast to this worldview, Israel understood that all humans bore God's image and thus ruled under him. The implications are wide-ranging. The supremacy of Near Eastern kings was firmly rejected along with all hierarchical relationships, as human beings were recognized as having equal dignity. All humans can therefore relate to God without an intermediary, being simultaneously kings and priests. Since humans bear the image of God, the need for any other image of God is unnecessary, and therefore idolatry is rejected. The violent rule of Babylon over other cultures, which was supported by the Mesopotamian creation accounts, is similarly repudiated.

The third part of the book articulates "The Ethics of the Image" by showing that the preceding exegetical, theological, and sociological investigation rejects the frequently repeated notion that human rule, modeled on divine rule, tends toward violence against creation. On the contrary, the God in whose image humans are made displays his care for creation and shares his power with his creatures. Human rule should therefore imitate God by expressing that rule in a generous, loving manner, "to nurture, enhance, and empower others, noncoercively, for *their* benefit, not for the self-aggrandizement of the one exercising power" (p. 295).

Due to its clear articulation of the image of God in its biblical and socio-political context and for its guidance in how to live as God's image in the world, I would heartily recommend this book to my colleagues and students. I believe, however, that the author's argument could be strengthened by developing the biblical understanding of the role of the king. This, much more than an overview of Mesopotamian ideology, would have helped the ancient Israelites, as well as modern Christians, understand how to live out their kingly task as bearers of the image of God.

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Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms. By Daniel J. Estes. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005, 448 pp., \$34.99.

Daniel Estes is Distinguished Professor of Bible at Cedarville University, where he has taught since 1984. This *Handbook* is his second book on the biblical wisdom literature. (The first is *Hear, My Son: Teaching and Learning in Proverbs 1–9* (Eerdmans, 1997). A full-length commentary on the Song (IVP) is forthcoming and reveals the teaching experience and time Estes has spent with these biblical books.

The book's purpose is to "span the distance between eager students who have been introduced to the poetical books and the rich resources in the scholarly literature" (p. 10). It seeks to "examine the content, structure, and theological message of each of the [OT] poetic books with primary emphasis on theological and literary analysis and secondary emphasis on critical issues" (book jacket).

The book's five chapters follow English Bible canonical order. The chapters vary widely in length, since Estes provides short commentaries on Job (118 pp.), Ecclesiastes (114 pp.), and the Song (46 pp., using Glickman's basic outline). The discussions of the Psalter (59 pp.) and Proverbs (49 pp.) are much shorter (page counts do not include bibliographies). A two-page preface and a brief combined subject and author index are also included.

Each chapter begins by discussing five to eight standard introductory questions relating to issues such as authorship, date, setting, purpose, theme, structure, and unity. (Estes does not use all of these categories for every book.) Introducing each book with its own set of topics allows Estes to tailor his introduction to the scholarly issues identified with the individual book and shows students the relative place of the various debates in the academic discussion of that book.

On the other hand, a few striking gaps exist (e.g. the chapter on Proverbs lacks any mention of ANE wisdom and Amenemope). Estes incorporates many quotations into these discussions in order to give students "immediate access to the words of the scholars themselves" (p. 10), which very nearly makes these surveys digests of recent scholarship, including his own. The quotations—all of which are from works listed in the bibliographies—are well chosen and appropriate.

After these introductory discussions, each chapter surveys the book's content. Estes provides a paragraph-level commentary on Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song, shorter than, but comparable in level, to those in *The Bible Speaks Today* or the Tyndale OT Commentaries series. The chapter on the Psalter introduces nine "genres" (broadly defined) by commenting on one example of each (e.g. "Descriptive Praise," Psalm 145; "Nature Psalms," Psalm 29) in essays that are similar in level and tone to a combination of Ryken's discussions of individual psalms (*Words of Delight*) and Kidner (*Psalms* [TOTC]).

The content of Proverbs is discussed under twelve themes (e.g. "Cheerfulness," "Contentment," "Decisions," "Righteousness") in brief essays that—as Estes says (p. 224)—resemble topical studies in other works (e.g. Kidner 1964, Farmer 1991). (The study of "cheerfulness" is a brilliant exposition of a too-often neglected subject.) Since Estes sketches his procedure for developing these "themes" (pp. 223–24), students can see the fruit of his method; another paragraph describing the actual process would make this section even more helpful.

Each chapter ends with a lengthy bibliography that is divided into two sections entitled "Commentaries" and "Essays, Articles, and Monographs". All of the works listed are in English, and most reflect the past thirty-five years of study (especially since 1992); Estes lists few publications from before 1970. He has "listed standard [commentaries] that have passed the test of time as well as . . . commentaries since 1992" (p. 10). The "standard" commentaries he lists include Delitzsch (for all except Job);

Dhorme (Job); Ginsburg (Song and Ecclesiastes); Addison and Kirkpatrick (both on Psalms). Pope (1973) on Job and Gordis (1971) on the Song are the oldest “new” commentaries on those two books; for the other three books the “cutoff” is approximately 1952 (Leupold [Psalms, Ecclesiastes] and Cohen [Proverbs]); most have appeared since 1978. Since commentaries vary widely in the range and quality of their references to other secondary literature, marking works with the most useful bibliographies would help students who are encountering the literature for the first time, but this information can easily be provided by the teacher.

The extensive list of essays, articles, and monographs (alphabetically by author) offers more than an introduction—they will guide even upper-level masters students well into the contemporary literature on each book (nearly 200 works listed for Job and Psalms, 135–150 for Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and about 85 for the Song). His cut-off date, however, creates some significant gaps, such as the trio of articles on Proverbs by Blocher, Kitchen, and Ruffle (*Tyndale Bulletin* 28 [1977]; Kitchen 1998, which is listed, points directly to the earlier article). Teachers will want to encourage students to view these bibliographies as a starting point rather than to regard them as complete or sufficient. At the same time, they are far from cursory.

Estes's *Handbook* represents an enormous amount of time and labor well spent, for which teachers and students will be grateful. The scholarly conversation around many issues is summarized and described, current research well represented, and the biblical materials themselves discussed, so that this work should prove accessible to and useful for beginning students, and especially those already somewhat familiar with the biblical text.

Beyond this brief description it is difficult to review a work intended to serve as a course textbook, since teachers choose texts for a variety of reasons. Perhaps a few global statements will help. The commentaries on Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song will help students find their way through the content of these books, especially those who are already familiar with the biblical text. Estes suggests the contours of the cutting edge of biblical scholarship especially well for Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the Song and will orient students to much of the scholarly discussion (ca. 1980–2003) on all five books.

This generally conservative but non-polemical work represents various points of view clearly and fairly and suggests more cautious alternatives to some of the reigning paradigms (e.g. Estes upholds the literary unity of Ecclesiastes [pp. 278–79] and seems to support its Solomonic origin, although he also refers to Solomon a “literary figure” [p. 272]).

Estes' *Handbook* should prove useful to advanced students who want to explore the literature for potential thesis topics and to pastors who wish to preach these biblical books.

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Song of Songs. By J. Cheryl Exum. Old Testament Library. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005, 263pp., \$ 39.95.

The commentary on Song of Songs by Cheryl Exum clearly justifies all the ancient warnings that only people who were both mature in years and married should read this text. While Exum is a good writer and her commentary reads well, her concentration on things “delicately erotic” and “sexually overt” may well steam up the glasses of some. Like any text that commits itself too entirely to a tangent, the author's preoccupa-

tion with sexuality may limit her audience significantly. Exum's commentary can be fascinating and believable only in isolation from the rest of the biblical witnesses.

The commentary provides a bibliography, then introductory material (almost a third of the text) followed by commentary. Among the positive qualities of the book are the author's survey of other scholarly works on the Song, some helpful tables of comparisons with analysis, and assumptions that invite both healthy conversation and vigorous refutation. Her "select" bibliography (12½ pages) is brief in some ways, yet nicely significant and diverse in others. Her commentary section seems brief, yet includes such important commentaries as those by Tremper Longman III and Marvin Pope as well as the older and more conservative voice of Franz Delitzsch (Origen is either assumed or noticeably absent). Exum's list of monographs and articles is extensive but misses several articles that offer significant and opposing perspectives (e.g. George Schwab, *The Song of Songs' Cautionary Message Concerning Human Love* [Peter Lang, 2002]).

Examples of helpful comparisons include a look at structural analyses of several scholars and many samples of Near Eastern love poetry with which average readers may not be familiar or have the determination to locate on their own. Assumptions that invite conversation include: no possible means of identifying the author of Song; dating; dependence on Near Eastern love poetry; preoccupation with human sexuality; and an almost complete absence of any reference to creation, design, Christology, or ecclesiology for understanding the Song.

Assumptions about comparative literature invite discussion about the nature of that relationship. Is the Song dependent on other Near Eastern love poetry or not, and if it is, what difference does it make for understanding the Song's intent? Exum assumes the Song's dependence (p. 48), but where is the evidence? She rejects out of hand any discussion of authorship that would challenge her assumptions about literary dependence (p. 47). Is it not possible that similar language on such a fundamental aspect of human life may exist independently and be employed for very different purposes?

Exum's commentary is of limited value primarily for two reasons. First, it exhibits less original thought than one might expect. Continually surveying and referring to previous scholarly work only urges the reader to put down this volume in favor of those works cited. Second, by assuming the absence of any other biblical literature or biblical history, Exum confines herself to a perspective of human sexuality driven by sexuality alone. One can well imagine how sexual appetite becomes the "be all end all" of human existence when divorced from all other revelation. However, the history of creation and redemption offer a fullness of perspective and context of reading that provide the deepest and most comprehensive understanding of the Song. Creation allows a reader to understand the blessing and bane in the relationship between the lover and the beloved. Creation and redemptive history also allow the reader to view the more significant and underlying spiritual reality through the familiar world of physical and emotional relationships.

Why not consider the Song with its companions, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes? If we know Solomon via the history of Israel and his own chronicling of wisdom, then what is implausible about recognizing that Ecclesiastes presents itself as his apology for his reckless love of wealth and Song as an apology for the love of many and foreign women? On the one hand, Exum calls arguments for authorship "speculation" and complains that this yields "diminishing returns, often at the expense of appreciating the text we possess" (p. 47).

On the other hand, she ignores the most obvious relation to and dependence of the text on the rest of the biblical canon. What is the origin and source of such intense passion and beautiful imagery surrounding love? More importantly, why is there such frustration at every turn? Solomon's life and the biblical witness provide the most comprehensive of answers, apparently unheard over the heavy breathing and steamed-up

glasses of modern scholarship. God's love for and redemption of his creation are exemplified in the intense attraction between male and female while the need for such love and redemption is exemplified in the frustration and disaster experienced in love contrary to God's design.

Does not appreciating the text include recognizing the use of imperative forms and the threefold repetition of a stanza (2:7; 3:4; 8:4) that provides the most obvious interpretive key (see my "Song of Songs: Increasing Appreciation of and Restraint in Matters of Love, *AUSS* 42 [2004] 305–24)? If Exum would have us appreciate the text, where is the careful analysis, for example, of the use of imperatives in connection with verbs of pursuit and consummation? Similarly, why not consider how the Greek text so clearly agrees with OT usage in explaining the significance of terms like "gazelles" and "does?"

J. Cheryl Exum has given us an important interpretive work in this commentary. However, readers must understand that the commentary has more to do with modern attitudes toward sexuality than it does with the Song of Songs.

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Hosea. By Ehud Ben Zvi. FOTL 21A/1. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, xiii + 321 pp., \$55.00 paper.

Just as the rest of the volumes in the FOTL series, the latest commentary by Ehud Ben Zvi on Hosea seeks to contribute to the ongoing application of form criticism by an evaluation of the genre and setting of this prophetic book. However, with the evolution of the form-critical method, there has come a renewed focus on the conceptually structured units of the actual text. Therefore, this commentary proceeds successively from the structure of the book as a whole to each smaller unit. Moreover, to emphasize the tendency toward a more textual understanding, each unit begins with a section evaluating its structure before proceeding to separate sections explaining its genre, setting, and intention. The author's comments regarding the structure of each unit will be especially helpful for the one reading the commentary alongside the actual text of Hosea.

Ben Zvi is not concerned to read Hosea as part of the larger context of the Twelve. This is not because he has overlooked this aspect but because he believes Hosea makes "a strong textually inscribed request to its primary readership to understand it as distinct from the others [i.e. the other books in the Twelve], and as a unit in itself" (p. 7). Thus Hosea should not be read merely as a subunit of the larger book of the Twelve, but as an independent unit.

As an autonomous entity, the structure of the book as a whole is indicative of all other prophetic books, which include an introduction, a body of prophetic readings, and a conclusion. It is the conclusion of Hosea (14:10; Eng. 14:9) that rightfully holds particular importance throughout the commentary in that it provides the "interpretative key for the entire book, and it characterizes the book as a didactic book, to be read, reread, and interpreted by those who are wise, discerning, and righteous" (p. 317). For Ben Zvi, then, each individual unit of the book is evaluated as to its meaning for the intended readership of the book, namely, the "small group of literati" who not only possessed the intellectual acumen to read the text but also "saw themselves as the guardian, broker, and interpreter of the knowledge communicated by the divine to Israel in the form of the written texts that they composed, edited, redacted, copied, read, and read to others" (p. 317). This group of literati among whom and for whom the present text was com-

posed lived many years after the time of the world that is presented within the book. Thus, the basis on which this commentary was written is the social setting of the literati, which was post-monarchic and post-exilic. As such, the book functioned to justify YHWH's actions in the past and to educate the community through its reading and rereading of the book.

The primary strength of the commentary is the skill of the author. Ben Zvi reveals a clear, expert ability to interact with other scholarship within form criticism as well as OT interpretation in general. The breadth of material presented in the bibliography speaks both to the author's competence and to the relevance of this volume to OT scholarship. Moreover, given that the author has contributed a number of articles on Hosea along with the commentary on Micah in the FOTL, the reader can be confident in the comprehensiveness of research in OT prophetic literature. In light of the author's level of expertise, however, one who is completely unfamiliar with the goals and methodology of form criticism may find this volume somewhat confusing and not as useful.

At the same time, a further strength is that Ben Zvi has provided a glossary of genres discussed within the commentary. Thus, one unfamiliar with terms such as "Ancient Israelite Book" or "Didactic Prophetic Reading," which are used consistently throughout the commentary and by form critics in general, can read a succinct paragraph describing that genre.

The reader who will find this commentary most useful is one who has wrestled through the issues of sources, authorship, intended readership, redactors, and the like, and has come to a conclusion similar to Ben Zvi's that the ultimate goal of reading the book of Hosea is not so much an engagement with a hypothetically reconstructed source document as with a proper understanding of the concrete readers of the text. Thus, one would have to be convinced that a correct comprehension of "the social identity, the world of knowledge, the theology and ideology of these readers" (p. 5) is the proper starting point and interpretive grid for a faithful reading of Hosea. Ultimately, then, the one who espouses form criticism will receive the most benefit from the book. However, other OT students, professors, and teachers will find the volume informative, useful, and an excellent example of the results of contemporary movements within a form-critical approach to reading OT prophetic literature.

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The Dead Sea Scrolls: What Have We Learned? By Eileen M. Schuller. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006, xvii + 126 pp., \$17.95 paper.

This book is a slightly expanded version of the John Albert Hall Lectures that Eileen Schuller delivered at the University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, in October of 2002. The four oral presentations are augmented by a five-page introduction (pp. xiii–xvii), a five-page look to the future (pp. 105–9), a six-page bibliography (pp. 110–15), and an index of names and subjects (pp. 119–26). Schuller makes no pretensions to present new discoveries or to be comprehensive or complete. Her goal is much more restricted: to chart the accomplishments in the first 50 years of Qumran studies (chap. 1) and to offer discussions that concentrate on three specific areas (chaps. 2–4) where the scrolls have made an important contribution to how we now think about early Christianity and Judaism.

Chapter 1 begins well, documenting the accomplishments of Dead Sea Scroll scholarship in decade increments starting with the discovery of the manuscripts in

1947. The engaging and detailed reports of the first four decades (24 pages for 1947–87) lead to great expectations for the last two. Alas, the eventful fifth decade is dismissed in less than four pages—the drama of the fall of 1991 receives all of 4 lines—and the years from 1997 to the present are accounted for in a page and one half as the chapter quite literally runs out of steam at the end.

Chapter 2, “What We Have Learned about Scripture,” does better. Schuller documents the fact that this is one area of study where early disappointments have made way for rather hyperbolic-sounding statements from key researchers in the sixth and most recent decade of study: “It is not too much to say that the two hundred biblical scrolls discovered at Qumran have revolutionized our understanding of the text of the Bible in antiquity” (Eugene Ulrich addressing a conference in Jerusalem in 1997). Some of the early frustrations (e.g. no information to end the debate as to the date of Daniel or the number of Isaiahs) have been forgotten as researchers have come to realize that these manuscripts—one thousand years older than anything previously available—have much to tell us about the transmission of the Hebrew Bible in the Second Temple period. On two small points I would emend.

First, the fact that Esther is missing from the list of biblical books found in the caves is certainly not because of “a fluke” or “by chance” since it is so short. It is clear that the festival of Purim is not included in the calendar texts, and thus it follows that Esther—for any of various reasons—had been excluded from the category of authoritative Scripture. Second, Schuller does not mention the fact that the book of Nehemiah is also missing from the scrolls.

In Chapter 3, “What Have We Learned about Worship,” Schuller reflects her own special area of expertise. In this chapter we are not hearing a report of what others have done but are sitting at the feet of the master. Prayer and liturgy were nearly non-existent in the meager offerings from antiquity until the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Schuller, along with a handful of other scholars, has developed this study into a sub-discipline of its own.

Chapter 4, “What Have We Learned about Women,” follows in the same suit. Some readers will probably be surprised to find such a chapter in a book about the Dead Sea Scrolls. After all, what does a celibate Jewish sect have to tell us about women? The fact of the matter is that it is no longer taken for granted that the sect was celibate, at the very least not at all times and in all places. As Schuller quips, “[I]n the early days of Qumran scholarship the question was posed as ‘Was anyone married in the community?’ Now it is, ‘Were any members unmarried?’” (p. 98). This chapter ends with an update on the recent challenges to the early claims that the graveyard contained only male burials. That there are female remains is now clear (at least seven, with four children); how they are to be understood is less so. Only 4% of the graveyard has been examined in detail, a figure so small “as to make any conclusion almost meaningless” (p. 101).

Given the restricted focus, how might such a book be used? Chapters 2–4 would provide welcome “additional readings” for any course focused on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Chapter 2 would offer just the right amount of information for any class that dealt even in passing with the text of the Hebrew Bible. Chapter 4 would allow the scrolls to have a voice in the increasing number of gender-related courses in university course listings (at Trinity Western University we just added “Gender and the Bible”). For me—as I missed Schuller’s lectures at the University of Victoria—it supplied the opportunity to spend an enjoyable and thoughtful evening with one of the premier Dead Sea Scroll scholars of our day.

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A Beginner's Guide to New Testament Exegesis: Taking the Fear out of Critical Method. By Richard J. Erickson. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005, 239 pp., \$18.00 paper.

Richard J. Erickson, associate professor of New Testament at Fuller Seminary Northwest in Seattle, has taught exegesis for over twenty years. For much of that time he used Gordon Fee's *New Testament Exegesis*, an exceptional handbook that Erickson gradually realized was overwhelming beginning students (pp. 13–14). Erickson concluded that the complexity and thoroughness of Fee's presentation gave "too much meat to beginners in need of milk" and left students convinced that they "will never be able to do a proper job, now that they see all that is involved" (p. 14). While Fee's work is more appropriate for scholarly exegetes, Erickson's *Beginner's Guide* is geared for pastoral exegetes—whether the beginning student or the busy pastor.

The aim of the book is to "lay a groundwork for the exegesis of the Greek New Testament" (p. 15) in hopes that students will embrace exegesis as a lifelong calling (p. 220). Rather than overwhelm and paralyze readers with the exegetical ideal, Erickson encourages them to enjoy the exegetical journey. He writes, "Just remember never to overload yourself but always to keep the ball rolling, however slowly. . . . Strive not for perfection, but for persistence." (p. 220). Yet Erickson's encouragement for exegetical work over the long haul at a realistic pace should not be taken as an excuse for academic laziness. Because "understanding the text is of paramount importance to those of us who pin our ultimate hopes and expectations on its message" (p. 20) and because he is "convinced beyond all doubt that faithful exegesis of Scripture is indispensable to the full-bodied life of the church" (p. 220), Erickson advocates a disciplined, responsible, wholehearted commitment to exegesis. As the subtitle suggests, "taking the fear out of the critical method" does not mean abandoning the critical method.

The book is organized into ten chapters to fit with the quarter system used at Fuller, although the material can be adapted for use in the semester system. The first five chapters relate to the overall exegetical task, the next four apply critical methods to specific genres of the NT, and the final chapter touches on the relationship between exegesis and application, the ministry of preaching and teaching, and the importance of embracing exegesis as a lifelong task.

Erickson spells out his exegetical assumptions and "frame of mind" in the opening chapter. He writes as a committed Christian who believes "the Bible, in both Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God" (p. 18). In addition to the Scriptures, the church has also been given gifted leaders and the Holy Spirit to aid in the task. The exegetical "frame of mind" flowing out of these assumptions includes the priority of exegesis, the importance of study in the original languages, a willingness to hear afresh what the Scriptures actually say (and not just what we want them to say), and the valuable role of the community in understanding God's written revelation. Exegesis provides the tool for projecting ourselves back into the ancient text in order to listen accurately to what the text meant—the first step toward eventually recontextualizing the message for the contemporary reader.

The next four chapters introduce the reader to exegetical issues relevant to the entire NT. Erickson begins in chapter 2 with a clear introduction to textual criticism. He defines terms, illustrates his explanations with samples and analogies, and offers a useful framework (p. 46) for determining which textual problems are exegetically significant. He closes the chapter by introducing the reader to various tools for the task (e.g. concordances, dictionaries, atlases, synopses). Chapter 3 begins with an explanation of how biblical texts are held together or synthesized by their various interlocking parts (i.e. words, phrases, clauses, sentences) in order to convey their message. By recognizing how texts cohere, interpreters are better equipped to analyze their literary structure and meaning. Erickson demonstrates an awareness of the value of linguistics for NT

exegesis. Chapter 4 continues the analysis of structure with a look at syntactical and discourse analysis. After defining relevant terms, Erickson provides a diagramming method (both in English and Greek) for analyzing both sentences and discourses. This would have been an appropriate place to point readers to other reliable tools for diagramming syntactic and semantic structure (e.g. Guthrie, Mounce). In chapter 5 Erickson shifts the discussion from literary context to historical-cultural context. Interpreters need to grasp both the general historical-cultural setting as well as the more specific historical occasion lying behind the text (p. 99). To this chapter he adds a section on word studies and a section on making the ancient message relevant to contemporary readers. The “beginning student” would have profited from an expansion of this particular chapter, even at the cost of some of what is offered later in the book. Unlike most books, however, Erickson provides a wealth of free supplemental material (23 pages on chapter 5 alone) on the InterVarsity Press website.

In the second half of *A Beginner's Guide*, Erickson shows how critical methods may be applied to the basic genres of the NT. In chapter 6 he approaches letters as occasional documents that should be understood through a combination of mirror-reading, rhetorical criticism, and syntactical analysis. The chapter closes with a very helpful “Simplified Procedure for Epistle Exegesis” (pp. 130–33). (Readers would likely welcome a similar procedure for the remaining two genres.) Chapters 7 and 8 focus on applying the critical methods of historical, form, and source criticism to NT narratives. Erickson thoroughly explains and illustrates each methodology and discusses in detail how to use Aland's *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*. He then proceeds to narrative criticism by reflecting on things like plot, character, setting, parables, allegory and allegorization, type-scenes, parallel accounts, OT citations and allusions, speeches, *logia*, and summary passages. There is little doubt that these two chapters will be the most intimidating for the beginning exegete. In chapter 9 Erickson treats the nature and function of apocalyptic literature, along with offering guidelines for reading the book of Revelation responsibly. He takes an eclectic approach that acknowledges the primacy of the original setting without restricting its fulfillment to the first century (p. 202). In the final chapter Erickson deals with the use of exegesis in ministry and life. The book concludes with a helpful four-page glossary of terms, an annotated bibliography of useful tools, and thorough subject and Scripture indices.

Erickson's *Beginner's Guide* is a fine example of substance with style. On the one hand, the reader can expect a rigorous introduction to critical exegetical methodologies from a moderate-evangelical perspective. On the other hand, the user-friendly, readable, pastoral style will be effective in transforming students into lifelong exegetes. Using encouragement, humor, personal illustrations, examples, clarity, and an abundance of practical wisdom, Erickson engages readers as a demanding but compassionate guide. His contribution (including the book and the supplemental material on the web) ranks among the very best available for teaching NT exegesis.

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Two Gospels from One: A Comprehensive Text-Critical Analysis of the Synoptic Gospels. By Matthew C. Williams. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006, 256 pp., \$21.99 paper.

In *Two Gospels from One*, Matthew Williams's aim is straightforward: to examine “the so-called text-critical (or linguistic) argument for the Synoptic Problem, which says that Matthew improved the language and style of Mark's gospel and is, therefore, the

later gospel" (p. 11). The result of this examination is a good case for Markan priority, even if there are some niggling difficulties with the book and its argument.

Williams opens his study with an introduction to linguistic and text-critical approaches to the Synoptic problem (chap. 1). Williams appropriately highlights B. H. Streeter's formulation of this linguistic argument for Markan priority, following this up with a survey of major studies on the argument since Streeter. Then, because Williams proposes to use text-critical principles to approach the linguistic argument, he provides a chapter survey of the history of textual criticism and its criteria for discerning between primary and secondary readings of a text (chap. 2). These first two chapters establish Williams's general approach and specific methodology: he is focusing solely on the linguistic argument for Markan priority as compared with Matthew, and he is testing this argument by applying what are generally agreed to be the most reliable principles of textual criticism for distinguishing primary from secondary readings.

Williams begins the heart of his argument by examining Mark's textual apparatus for approximately 27 percent of Mark's Gospel (chap. 3), using the 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament as the base text and considering the major variants as scribal changes to Mark's Gospel. This is not done uncritically, but with a recognition throughout that the NA 27th may not always reflect the "original text" of Mark and that some of the variants in the textual apparatus may be closer to an original reading. Throughout the analysis, Williams thus judges the primary and secondary readings where possible, according to the best practices of textual criticism discussed earlier, and notes the kinds of changes that scribes tended to make to Mark's Gospel. The next chapter then examines the textual differences between Matthew and Mark, once more using the NA 27th edition as the base text (chap. 4). Again, Williams makes judgments on primary and secondary readings according to text-critical principles—determining that Matthew almost always has the secondary reading—and notes the kinds of changes that Matthew made to Mark. The final chapter then compares these differences between Matthew and Mark with the scribal variants noted earlier, concluding that Matthew made the same types of changes to Mark's Gospel that Markan scribes made and that text-critical criteria clearly and consistently support Markan priority and Matthean posteriority.

The book is well written, with helpful previews and summaries for each chapter to guide readers through even the most technical discussions. As one would expect, Greek is used throughout in textual discussions, but always with accompanying translation. The book displays an adequate but not comprehensive breadth of research in the relevant subject areas, which is reflected both in the body of the book as well as in the bibliography at the end. The book concludes with what appears to be a thorough subject index.

There are some general difficulties that I see with the book and its argument, problems of varying significance that nonetheless do not detract from the overall positive achievement of the book. First, although one is not to judge a book by its cover, one should be able to judge a book to a certain extent by its title, and the title simply does not fit the contents well. The book is not about two Gospels (i.e. Matthew and Luke) deriving from one (i.e. Mark), but rather it is purely concerned with Matthew's use of Mark. I suspect the title was to be an antithetical play on the Griesbachian *One Gospel from Two* (ed. David B. Peabody, Lamar Cope, and Allan J. McNicol; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002). Also, the book is not "a comprehensive text-critical analysis of the Synoptic Gospels," in spite of its subtitle. Any future editions of the book should consider a change of title to reflect better the book's contents.

Second, the book evinces occasional category confusion regarding Synoptic source theories. This is especially grievous in the suggestion that Williams's research effectively substantiates the "Two Source Hypothesis" (p. 204) or "Oxford Hypothesis"

(p. 215) when in fact it merely supports Markan priority: Q is no better off after Williams's research than it was before. Markan priority is not equivalent to the Two Source Hypothesis; rather, Markan priority is one foundation for the Two Source Hypothesis, just as it is for other theories such as the Farrer Hypothesis (Mark without Q). This same category confusion is evident early in the book when the Farrer Hypothesis is mentioned as a variation on the Two Source Hypothesis (p. 26, n. 24), when more properly both are alternatives based on Markan priority. Anyone in doubt about this distinction should read Mark Goodacre's *The Case against Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), a work absent from Williams's bibliography. While this may seem like a minor issue to some, the detailed nature of the Synoptic problem and the technical nature of its proposed solutions demands that we use precision in our terminology for discussing the problem and its solutions.

Third, I would object to the use of "objective" language that appears early in the book to describe the nature of Williams's text-critical approach (e.g. p. 22). The method is not entirely objective, as Williams himself later in the book makes clear (e.g. p. 63). It is much better to leave the language of "objectivity" out from the beginning than to use it early and be forced to qualify it often.

Fourth, moving to more substantive matters, there is a lack of clarity throughout the book on the role of ancient scribe versus the role of ancient author or even biographer, that is, how the role of the evangelists as authors might be similar to or different from the role of scribes as copyists. The issue is raised at several points, but Williams's argument lacks any significant, sustained discussion of this matter. This is no small thing, as the comparison between the roles of ancient scribes and authors is foundational to the basic validity of Williams's text-critical approach to the Synoptic problem.

Fifth, Williams works through the text-critical apparatus of Mark but not the text-critical apparatus of Matthew. Thus we only have one side of the coin in terms of foundational text-critical research for the comparison of Matthew and Mark that follows. Are there significant scribal changes made to Matthew that parallel proposed Markan changes to Matthew? I doubt this is the case, but we cannot say for certain without any parallel investigation of scribal changes to Matthew in the Matthean manuscript tradition.

In spite of these difficulties, Williams's research has put more teeth into the linguistic argument for Markan priority, and thus this book has value for scholars and students involved in Synoptic studies.

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Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark. By Suzanne Watts Henderson. SNTSMS 135. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, xv + 287 pp., \$90.00.

This recent addition to the Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series is an erudite analysis by a careful and able thinker. Henderson's *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* is a revision of her doctoral thesis completed under Joel Marcus at Duke and the fruit of a seed initially planted in her master's work at Princeton Seminary. Henderson examines the interrelatedness of Christology and discipleship within Mark's particular apocalyptic context, extending into the eschatological outlook of the book.

The book strikes an admirable balance of assembling textual data and critical analysis that pushes the framework for reading the second Gospel in a positive direc-

tion. "Jesus' Mission and Theirs: Christology and Discipleship in Light of Mark's Apocalyptic Gospel" is the title of Henderson's first chapter (pp. 3–27), where the author raises the question of the nature of the disciples' incomprehension (p. 4). To address this issue she first analyzes the nature of discipleship with respect to Jesus. Her primary contention throughout is that "Mark's Jesus forges a relationship with his followers that is characterized by both *presence* and *practice*" (p. 4). That is, "the disciples are meant to continue Jesus' *practice* of wielding the power associated with God's apocalyptic reign. In this sense, Jesus here authorizes them as collective participants in the Christological mission that characterizes his own purpose and destiny" (p. 4). This mission is "to give advance notice of God's decisive victory over the powers of the present evil age" (p. 4). By combining the followers' call "to be in Jesus' *presence* with the expectation that they will *practice* the demonstration of God's coming kingdom," the evangelist sets the terms for understanding the Gospel's account of the disciples' mounting incomprehension (pp. 13–14). Thus Henderson wants to move the discussion forward by examining six "call-to-follow" pericopae to unpack the nature of discipleship (pp. 15–16).

The first major section of this study (Part 2: "Patterns of Discipleship," pp. 29–94) examines the relationship that Mark's Jesus establishes with those who "come after" him. Chapter 2 ("The Calling of the Fishers in Mark 1:16–20," pp. 31–65) looks at the initial call to discipleship. For Henderson, the location of the call narrative on the heels of Jesus' proclamation of God's coming kingdom (Mark 1:14–15) cues readers to see that from the outset the disciples' loyalty to Jesus entails not just acquiescence to his leadership but also "active engagement in his own mission" (esp. pp. 64–65). In chapter 3, "The Commissioning of the Twelve in Mark 3:13–15" (pp. 66–94), Henderson argues that in Mark 3:13–15 Jesus elaborates in great detail on the purpose and the authority that characterize his sending out of his followers: their mission, like that of Jesus, will entail both proclamation and deeds of power, extending Jesus' authority to those whom he appoints as his agents in the campaign against the forces of the present evil age.

The next major section of the book, Part 3, is called "Discipleship in Action" (pp. 95–237). It explores the disciples' development as practitioners of their calling to both presence and practice. Chapter 4 ("Discipleship as Presence in Mark 4:1–34," pp. 97–135) focuses attention on Jesus' instructions in that text and reads them as paradigmatic for what it means to be "with him." Henderson suggests that the shift from "come after" (1:17) to "be with" indicates that "Mark's Jesus enlists his followers primarily as companions as he proclaims God's impending reign" (p. 97). Chapter 5 pertains to "Discipleship as Practice: Jesus' Sending Out of the Twelve in Mark 6:7–13" (pp. 136–68). In this text, Henderson finds that Mark's account notes the burgeoning success of the disciples' missionary activity. In her view, "Mark reports their unqualified effectiveness."

Chapter 6, "Discipleship as (Transforming) Presence: The Wilderness Feeding in Mark 6:30–44" (pp. 169–203), examines a second passage that portrays discipleship as presence, the story of the miraculous feeding in Mark 6:30–44, which she argues illustrates that even to be "with him" entails active involvement in Jesus' own mission. For it is the disciples who diagnose the crowd's physical hunger, provide the means for the crowd to be fed, and even distribute the loaves. The subject of chapter 7 is "Discipleship as (Foiled) Practice: The Motif of Incomprehension in Mark 6:45–52" (pp. 204–37). Here the author considers the outright failure of the disciples in the second sea-crossing story (Mark 6:45–52). Jesus' intention to "send out" his disciples cues the reader in to the fact that just as Jesus has wielded God's kingdom authority over the sea in the first sea-crossing story (Mark 4:35–41), so here he expects his followers, endowed with his very power, to quell the demonic force they encounter in an adverse wind. When they fail to do so, he offers an epiphanic reminder to prompt the disciples' recollection of the

authority Jesus has conferred upon them. In the end, when the disciples defer to and marvel at Jesus' own miraculous abilities, they have misunderstood both the "apocalyptic showdown" that this windstorm represents and their own part in it. Instead, Henderson suggests that only when the disciples are again "with him" in the boat does the gale subside, a detail that implies that their practice of discipleship depends not on their own miraculous abilities but on the authority derived solely from being with Jesus. Part 4, "Conclusion" (pp. 239–61) contains a single chapter (chap. 8), "Further Thoughts 'On the Way'" (pp. 241–61), which contains a summary of findings, impact of findings, and "final thoughts." Afterward is a bibliography (pp. 262–73), an index of passages cited (pp. 274–84), and an index of modern authors (pp. 285–87).

Henderson commendably avoids speculative source theories and a host of potentially fruitless avenues by dealing with the text in its final form. She works instead with the "intelligible unity of the text" (p. 22). Important are Henderson's frequent and insightful observations pertaining to inadequacies in current views of Mark's portrait of discipleship. For example, she indicates that the fact that Mark includes in his Gospel narrative the account of the disciples' successful missionary journey (Mark 6:12–13) strongly undermines the notion that they remain entirely reliant on Jesus' presence for the dispensing of God's power (p. 208). In addition, her contention that "understanding" in Mark connotes more than Jesus' status as God's suffering Messiah (p. 209) is a step in the right direction.

Henderson's thesis is one that I am inclined to embrace but, disappointingly, find wanting of evidence. The textual evidence adduced seems to be inordinately scant to warrant any substantial conclusions. Moreover, without finding even slight evidence of her thesis *throughout* the Gospel, and not just a select handful of verses in the first several chapters, it is premature to offer it as an agenda of the second evangelist. In summary, I feel the work has promise in raising some very important issues on the subject it addresses. More careful and comprehensive examination of the evidence and scholarly discussion on the subject of Markan discipleship could bear more definitive fruit. These shortcomings, though, do not detract from Henderson's ability to relate exegetical minutiae to broad narrative themes in a manner that is both refreshing and instructive. Exegetes who can work within a narrative framework or narrative readers who attend to exegesis are becoming increasingly rare in critical scholarship, and I value Henderson's sensitivities to both. The maturity of her writing makes even the most technical features of the book enjoyable to read.

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Why John Wrote a Gospel: Jesus—Memory—History. By Tom Thatcher. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006, xviii + 193 pp., \$24.95 paper.

Tom Thatcher, associate professor of New Testament at Cincinnati Christian University, sets out to explain *Why John Wrote a Gospel*. His thesis is hinted at in the subtitle, *Jesus—Memory—History*.

Seeking to explain why John would commit a Gospel to writing, Thatcher argues against the view that John sought to provide a historical archive of what Jesus said and did so that others would trust Jesus. Thatcher contends that the Gospel of John testifies against this way of understanding its author's purpose. While discussing texts such as John 2:17, 22; 7:37–39; 12:16, 31–33; 13:6–11; 20:9, Thatcher suggests regarding John 12:32–33 that the disciples' "subsequent recall of the saying was thus somewhat

different from, and in John's view better informed than, their first memory of Jesus' words" (p. 30). Yet these texts in John do not tell us that it was the disciples' *recall* that was different. The texts say that it was their *understanding of what was recalled* that was different. John does not say that the disciples remembered something different than what actually happened. Rather, he recounts what happened, and then he notes the disciples' post-Easter insight into what happened.

This is a crucial point because it informs the whole of Thatcher's argument. Thatcher writes, "In these three cases [John 7:37–39; 12:31–33; 13:6–11], as with John 2:22 and 12:16, the disciples' *memories* of Jesus—the initial recollections of those people who witnessed his actions, based on their empirical experiences—*must have been altered* in light of the deeper understanding to follow" (p. 30 italics mine). He then suggests that John's account of what happened has undergone "revision through memory," such that John was "oblivious" to the "problem" that he "consistently postures his images of Jesus as someone's direct 'witness,' yet makes these recollections contingent upon a subsequent faith in Jesus' resurrection and the Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible" (pp. 31–32). This explains Thatcher's subtitle: *Jesus—Memory—History*. The "history" is "Jesus" once he has been revised through "memory."

It is important to point out that John is claiming to describe what actually happened during Jesus' life, subsequently explicitly noting how his interpretation of those words and deeds changed after the resurrection. On the basis of these places where the author presents a historical incident, notes a misunderstanding, and then notes later understanding, Thatcher is claiming that John was unable to distinguish between what happened and his own altered interpretation of what happened ("John [was] . . . apparently oblivious to this problem" [p. 32]).

According to Thatcher, "John portrays memory as a gift of the Holy Spirit to all believers after Jesus' death and glorification" (p. 32). He argues that in John's view the anointing of the Spirit described in 1 John 2:20–27 makes a written historical archive unnecessary (pp. 32–33). He claims that most of John's contemporaries would have been illiterate or would have had no access to texts of the Gospel. He claims that written documents have "symbolic value" (p. 40). Then the conclusion is posited, "It seems likely, then, that John wrote a Gospel primarily to capitalize on the potential symbolic value of writing" (p. 48; cf. p. 142). All the premises on which this conclusion is based are, being as kind as possible, questionable. Can Thatcher's reading of 1 John 2:20–27 bear the weight he puts on it? Does John present the Spirit as functioning in lieu of, or in conjunction with, his own eyewitness account of what happened during Jesus' life? What if more people could read than Thatcher thinks? If there is so much symbolic value in written documents, why did the AntiChrists (*sic*; see below) not write their own "Gospel" until much later, and why were these not more successful? The early Christian rejection of spurious documents, the loss of many other written documents, and the careful preservation of the biblical texts would seem to indicate that biblical books were understood to possess more than merely "symbolic value." Can the "symbolic value" of the biblical texts account for the astonishing growth of the church in spite of its inauspicious beginnings, regular persecution and disadvantage, and the martyrdom of key leaders?

Thatcher argues that the Epistles of John were written first, and then in order to counter the AntiChrists John wrote the Fourth Gospel. The Gospel of John was not written as a historical archive of what actually happened. John has the Spirit; he does not need the written record. Moreover, "[T]he persuasive power of appeals to 'what the book says' is enhanced by the fact that most people can't check the book to challenge these claims" (p. 142). The Gospel served a symbolic function. The people who sided with John pointed to the authoritative written text to settle disputes, even if they could not check what it said for themselves. Does Thatcher suppose that ancient people would

be persuaded by the symbolic power of a document whose contents they could not verify? Thatcher describes John and his allies as exploiting the “vagueness inherent in memory” (p. 153). The evidence in Richard Bauckham’s recent *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) would weigh against such suppositions.

Some sections of this book seem to legitimate the position held by the opponents of John (see esp. pp. 74–81). Thatcher does not argue for the position held by the Anti-Christians, but he does write,

Applying these principles to the problem at hand, it seems that the AntiChristians were a threat to John, not simply because they disagreed with his theological position, but because they were able to create a coherent and appealing Christian counter-memory [*sic*] of Jesus. . . . There is, in fact, no clear evidence that the AntiChristians rejected John’s traditional database or doubted that Jesus did most of what John claims that he did. Nor is it clear that the AntiChristians developed their vision by importing alien, Gnostic elements into the orthodox Johannine framework; certainly there is no evidence to suggest that they thought they were doing this or intended to do so (pp. 79–80).

What is perhaps most surprising about this book is Thatcher’s audacity. He overturns the authority of the Gospel of John by unhinging it from historical reality and reshaping it into John’s creative attempt to make Jesus relevant to his situation (p. 85). He then suggests in many places that the way John remembered things is analogous to the way that he has remembered and interpreted his own experiences. Thatcher gives many of his own experiences as examples of the ways all people remember things—he tells of the time he threw a rock through a church window (pp. 54–58), of the way he remembers how to operate his lawnmower and advise students (p. 59), of what happened among some Roman Catholics who claimed visions of Mary in his hometown (pp. 93–99), of the way he [mis]remembers the Wounded Knee Massacre (pp. 112–19), of reading to his son about an African spider-god (pp. 120–21), and of the way he believes he saw a World Series game in person, even though he knows he was not at the game, and then he tells of how he is not sure whether it was a World Series game or a regular season game and does not know the year it took place (pp. 145–46). If I believed all this was analogous to the way John remembered, I would be very depressed, yea, hopeless. Thatcher expresses his greetings to a doctoral student who may be writing a thesis “a century from now” on “the major concerns of Johannine scholarship in the twentieth century” (p. 159), but a surprisingly small amount of space in the 167 pages of this book is given to discussing the actual words and concepts found in the Gospel and Epistles of John. The Gospel of John will continue to command attention, but I find it difficult to take the argument of *Why John Wrote a Gospel* seriously.

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Acts in its Ancient Literary Context: A Classicist Looks at the Acts of the Apostles. By Loveday C. A. Alexander. Library of New Testament Studies 298. London: T & T Clark International, 2005, xi + 290 pp., \$130.00.

Alexander imagines Acts situated among the many volumes on a “Greco-Roman bookshelf,” and she envisions how the original readers of Acts would have received the book in such a literary context (p. 1). In chapter 1, Alexander considers what the reader’s response (and the cultural expectation) would have been concerning Luke’s

preface. She concludes that the Gospel's preface most closely parallels the prefaces to "technical literature" or *Fachprosa*. The language is "literate but not literary, a written language designed primarily for conveying factual information" (p. 4).

Chapter 2 notes that influential scholars have paralleled Luke's prefaces with the literary prefaces found in various Hellenistic historians. Alexander investigates "how far this consensus assessment is justified" (p. 23). She agrees that "Greek literature contains numerous examples of multi-volume works linked by a recapitulatory sentence at the beginning of successive volumes" (p. 25), while she also recognizes that a specific author's original intent may have varied between the composition of the first preface found and the composition of subsequent volumes (p. 27). Furthermore, the literary conventions at the beginning of Acts would not necessarily cause ancient readers "to think immediately of historiography" (p. 30). According to Alexander, the recapitulative preface is far more common in other ancient genres, such as philosophical and scientific inquiries (p. 34; cf. her responses to her detractors on pp. 12–19).

Chapter 3 interacts with Talbert's "succession structure" of Luke-Acts and his focus on "philosophical biography," although Alexander proposes that we situate Luke-Acts within the larger set of "intellectual biography." Nevertheless, "Even at a quick glance, it is evident that there are similarities and differences here" (p. 51). For example, Luke never mentions Paul's death (cf. Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of the Philosophers*). Thus, "[W]hile Luke and Diogenes share a certain number of narrative concerns, they differ considerably in their manner of expression" (p. 57). Alexander asserts that "the hellenistic school tradition" reveals the kind of "social matrix" behind the production and preservation of Acts, and she maintains that the narrative template of Paul parallels the influential paradigm of Socrates (p. 62). While Alexander assembles various debatable parallels between Socrates and Paul (pp. 63–67), some correspondence does seem probable in Acts 17.

Alexander then turns to examine both the similarities and differences between Acts and the "voyage motif" in ancient novels. Chapters 4 and 5 include a fascinating investigation of the "mental map" presupposed by Acts (borrowing from the recent work of "cognitive geographers"). Such a study highlights the interaction between geography and worldview as a frame of reference. Among other insights, this approach demonstrates the "Jerusalemo-centrism" of the narrative (if I may coin a neologism). At the same time, Luke structures Acts in order to present the "invasion" of foreign territory with the Gospel (p. 86). Chapter 5 compares the mental cartography found in Xenophon, Chariton, Paul's own letters, and Acts. All these authors shared the eastern Mediterranean basin as a geographical context. Yet the comparative examination accentuates the factual, pragmatic attention to detail in Acts, as well as the realism of Luke's topography (p. 116). Alexander also contends that Acts is more coastally oriented than Paul's epistles (p. 118).

New Testament scholars have debated whether "history" is the best categorization of the literary genre of Acts. Chapter 6 maintains that some literature that is generically "history" can be factually unreliable, while literature of other genres can be historically valuable. Beyond the factual data within the narrative, other factors must be considered in order to establish literary genre. How would an ancient reader mentally categorize Acts? There are various features which "make it difficult" to sustain a classification as fiction (p. 158). The narrative "is described in intensely (even boringly) realistic terms" (p. 158). There is also no "feeling of romantic fantasy" as in ancient novels (p. 159). On the other hand, unlike Hellenistic historiographers who tended to distance themselves from religious judgments and theological explanations, Acts presumes a "shared religious experience" (p. 163; cf. p. 141).

Alexander testifies that she is "disconcerted" with a number of recent studies that argue for "significant affinities" between NT narratives and classical epics, such as

Homer and Vergil (p. 165). Acts differs from them in literary mode, scale, scope, and heroic values. Alexander finds more “functional” than “generic” similarities between Acts and the great epics: Acts “could be labeled ‘epic’ insofar as it embodies the community’s conception of its own past” (p. 169). She also finds a conscious linguistic echo of Homer in Acts 27:41 (p. 175). Nevertheless, Luke’s main “hypotext” is the Greek Bible, and Acts belongs in the narrative world of the Greek Scriptures rather than the classical epics (p. 172).

Chapter 8 seeks to construct “a rough typology of apologetic readings” in order to ascertain how closely Acts parallels ancient apologetic (p. 184). Alexander surveys the widely divergent options available: Acts as internal apologetic within inner-church polemic; Acts as sectarian apologetic in relation to Judaism; Acts as an apologetic/evangelistic work addressed to Greeks; Acts as a political apologetic in relation to Rome; and Acts as an apologetic legitimation or self-definition. Alexander concludes that the “high level of disagreement” concerning the “precise lineaments” of Acts’s apologetic situation are “particularly damaging to the attempt to configure the text as apologetic” (p. 190). On the other hand, the narrative does contain “a whole series of dramatic situations which call for apologetic speech,” such as Paul’s trial speeches (p. 193). Yet, within the text of Acts, Paul does not always fully address the accusations brought against him (p. 198; cf. Acts 16:20–21 in context).

In chapter 9, Alexander tackles the “notorious puzzle” of the peculiar ending of Acts. She examines “four obvious narrative features” of the book’s conclusion: the geographical location of Rome; the dramatic scenario of a debate with the Jewish community; the hermeneutical framework provided by a lengthy quotation from Isaiah; and the dramatic act of Paul’s proclamation. She then retrospectively considers similar phenomena in the opening chapters of Luke: the role of the Roman Empire; the reaction of the Jewish community in Simeon’s song and Nazareth synagogue; the Isaianic quotations in Luke 3 and 4; and the dramatic proclamation of John the Baptist. Alexander concludes that there is a retrospective literary unity of Luke-Acts from the reader’s perspective, though she also relates her “(reluctant) conversion to authorial unity” (p. 224). Along the way, she buttresses an important theological (as well as literary) insight: Acts 28 closes not with an upbeat triumphalism but with an ambivalent tragedy: the general rejection by the Jewish community (pp. 226–27).

Although chapter 9 (“Reading Luke-Acts from Back to Front”), with its comparisons between the epilogue of Acts and the Lukan prologue, would have formed a *niceinclusio* for the entire volume, Alexander continues with one further study. Chapter 10 reviews two papers by Wifstrand concerning the language of Luke-Acts. By borrowing from recent refinements of the concept of diglossia, studies of the diachronic elements of Atticism and classicism, and examinations of Luke’s Jewish/biblical/Septuagintal Greek, Alexander reconsiders the “sociolinguistic significance” of Luke’s style (p. 232). She concludes that Luke himself was not bilingual, he had been socialized in Jewish Greek literature, and he manifested proficiency in a form of classicism.

Even as the Book of Acts had its own history, so did this work by Alexander. Alexander’s passionate interest in Acts can be traced back to her original doctoral project concerning *The Preface to Luke’s Gospel*. Apart from the first chapter, the essays in the volume under review were previously presented at various academic conferences between 1993 and 2004 and have been formerly published in sundry journals and compilations (p. xi). The diverse history of this collection leads to some natural weaknesses, including a certain lack of flow. While Alexander claims a “coherent sequence” for this volume, she also acknowledges its inherent limitations, including an inevitable “centrifugal” pull and a certain amount of repetition (pp. xi, 19). The volume lacks a unifying conclusion, and perhaps an index of topics would have been helpful as well. Yet the book remains a worthy acquisition for academic libraries (*especially* those that do not own

the same materials as separately published articles) as well as those scholars doing research in the literary character of Acts.

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Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul Expect Early Christian Communities to Evangelize? By Robert L. Plummer. Paternoster Biblical Monographs. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006, xviii + 190 pp., £19.99 paper.

Did the apostle Paul expect the early Christian communities to evangelize? This is the subtitle of the book and also the central question that Plummer seeks to answer. Framed in another way, did Paul command the churches that he addresses in his epistles to imitate him in centrifugal missionary outreach? His answer, supported by lexical, exegetical, and logical argumentation, is a resounding affirmative. To some, Plummer's conclusion may seem obvious and thus the question hardly worth asking. However, the history of interpretation on this issue has been divided, and therefore a fresh look at the evidence is justified. Plummer makes the disturbing observation from his survey of the research that few books written by missiologists are informed by sound methods of biblical theology and, conversely, biblical scholars rarely interact with insights from missiologists. Surely this is a call to both groups for better integration of their respective disciplines.

The thesis is established in four main chapters, which are carefully organized. This work, the author's revised dissertation, is heavily documented with footnotes and includes an extensive bibliography of works related to Pauline mission. Scripture and modern author indices make the book serviceable.

In the first chapter Plummer surveys the history of interpretation. He first distinguishes the contributions of those who see continuity between Paul's mission and the intended mission of the churches from those who argue for discontinuity. The latter hold that Paul enjoins a centripetal method of attraction through godly living and individual witness through word and deed, but neither commands nor expects strategic missionary planning and outreach from the churches. Centrifugal mission, then, is the domain of the apostles and those designated representatives from the churches who join the apostolic team. The division of writings into pre-1950 and 1950–present categories seems rather arbitrary, though Plummer claims that the former depend more on *a priori* logical appeals, while the more recent writings develop substantive exegetical data to establish their claims, whether of continuity or discontinuity. On the discontinuity side, Plummer seems initially to dismiss the widely recognized contribution of Roland Allen (*Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*) with the judgment, "A distinctively Pauline basis for ecclesiastical activity is notably lacking" (p. 11). Later, however (pp. 64–67), he qualifies his criticism by endorsing the complementary elements of Paul's missionary vision recorded in his letters and in Acts respectively. Allen's primary focus on the Spirit as the catalyst in the Pauline mission, drawn largely but not exclusively from Acts, fits beautifully with Plummer's focus on the gospel as the dynamic force of the unitive mission of Paul and the churches. On the discontinuity side, the fine contributions of W. P. Bowers are recognized and in due course given a detailed response.

Chapter 2 is crucial in Plummer's attempt to establish missional continuity between Paul and the churches. The distinctly Pauline linkage between the apostolic evangelistic commitment and the obligation of the local churches to imitate that commitment is not

the Great Commission of Jesus (Gospels) nor the empowerment of the Spirit (Acts) but the gospel as the effective force that goes forth and accomplishes God's will. Taking his clue from two key texts, Rom 1:16 and 1 Cor 1:18–25, the author develops the theme of the gospel as God's dynamic, self-diffusive power that drives both apostles and churches to missionary outreach. One would expect at this point a careful analysis of the εὐαγγέλιον word group in order to provide a sound basis for the deeper connection of gospel with power. Regrettably, there is no attention paid to the rich OT background of εὐαγγελίζομαι in the various terms of the בשר בשר word group, especially those cases where the idea is one of the inbreaking of God's kingdom and saving power (e.g. Ps 96:2–3; Isa 40:9; 41:27; 52:7). Plummer also moves quickly to assume an equivalency in Paul between “gospel” and “the word of the Lord.” Though the connection seems self-evident at times, a more careful lexical basis for the equivalency through a study of λόγος and its OT precedents (דבר, אהר, etc.) would lend more weight to the conclusions. Nevertheless, a series of passages is surveyed, effectively establishing that the dynamic force of the proclaimed gospel or word of the Lord defines and energizes both the apostolic mission (1 Cor 14:36; 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Tim 2:8–9; Col 1:5–7; 1 Cor 4:15; Rom 15:18–19) and the mission of the churches (1 Thess 2:13–16; 2 Thess 3:1; 1 Thess 1:8; Col 3:16–17; 1 Cor 15:1–2). Since the role of the Spirit in these passages seems downplayed (e.g. 1 Thess 1:5–6; Rom 15:16, 19), it is therefore important when Plummer affirms, when looking at the broader NT understanding of mission, that both the word of God and the Holy Spirit “must be present to have a complete understanding of the church's missionary motivation” (p. 66).

Are there, then, clear texts in Paul's letters where he commands the churches to engage in centrifugal missionary outreach? Plummer tackles this question in chapter 3. He looks first at passages where the churches are enjoined to “active witness,” that is, to go out and make the gospel known to nonbelievers. In arguing his case, the author utilizes the tools of a careful exegete with keen sensitivity to the context of each passage. Though the texts are not numerous and are concentrated in three letters (Phil 1:12–18; Eph 6:15; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 7:12–16; 14:23–25), the case is a compelling one: “There can be no doubt that Paul instructs and approves of his churches actively proclaiming the gospel” (p. 96). Why, then, are there relatively few imperatives to missional activity in Paul's letters? Though Plummer offers three suggestions—the occasional nature of the letters, focus on divine rather than human activity, and the emphasis on passive witness to back up the already engaged active witness of the churches—one is still left a bit puzzled by the paucity of references. The chapter concludes with a careful look, illumined by context, at key texts that underscore the importance of “passive witness,” that is the speech, attitudes, and behavior of believers that will make the gospel attractive to outsiders (2 Cor 6:3–7; 1 Thess 2:5–12; Titus 2:1–10). The treatment of Titus 2:1–10, with the rendering “make attractive” for κοσμέω (v. 10), is especially cogent. One cannot but agree wholeheartedly with the conclusion that Paul views the Christian life as one seamless fabric of “gospel-determined existence,” one that integrates bold proclamation and godly demeanor.

Chapter 4 adds several lines of incidental evidence that Paul expected the churches to imitate the apostolic pattern of missionary activity: divine confirmation of the gospel through miracles; prayer for the churches and requests for prayer for his mission; expectation that the churches build one another up through teaching; and suffering for the gospel as a shared experience of the apostle and the churches. The final chapter draws out implications from the central thesis, namely, that the gospel as God's dynamic, saving power drives both apostle and churches to missionary activity. One implication that sticks is: “Missions . . . should be returned to the church” (p. 144). Churches and mission agencies must partner together if there is to be an accountable, sustainable, and broad-based missionary movement in the apostolic pattern.

This book should become an important resource for Bible college and seminary faculty who teach the missional pattern of the apostle Paul to aspiring church planters.

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Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi: Carmen Christi as Cursus Pudorum. By Joseph H. Hellerman. SNTSMS 132. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, xii + 239 pp., \$80.00.

In the introduction to his study of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2, Joseph Hellerman states his thesis: “that Paul, in his portrayal of Jesus in verses 6–8 has taken Rome’s *cursus* ideology and turned it on its head” (pp. 1–2). Verifying this hypothesis involves establishing the social context for the letter to the Philippians, a task that occupies the first five chapters of this monograph.

Hellerman dedicates the first two chapters to demonstrating the significance of honor in the social world of the Roman Empire. After a brief remark on the stratification of Roman society, he comments on methodology, offering a validation of the use of “non-historical source material.” Such sources are valuable, he argues, because they can present cultural and social values in a pure, idealized form (as understood by their authors), untainted by the troubling conflicts and details of the mundane world (pp. 4–6). With abundant use of primary source materials, Hellerman then proceeds to portray the social world in which the Roman colony of Philippi (and, therefore, the church in Philippi) was embedded. Crucial to this portrait are: (1) the rigid distinction between the elite and the non-elites; and (2) the details of the stratification among the elite. The three major aristocratic orders (senators, equestrians, and local municipal decurions) were themselves subdivided. Among senators those who could claim consular ancestry claimed priority over families newly appointed to this high status. Equestrians were distinguished from one another more thoroughly than senators, demonstrating “the ubiquitous tendency in the Roman world to divide and subdivide into groups and subgroups, in order to clearly define the social pecking order” (p. 11). Reinforcing this intra-elite hierarchy were the various means by which a man offered public evidence of his elite status. Hellerman describes these expressions under the headings of attire, occupation, seating at public events, seating at banquets, and the legal system.

Having demonstrated this stratification among the elite, Hellerman’s second chapter relates the social structure to a primary social value: honor. Readers not familiar with the primacy of honor in the first-century Mediterranean world will benefit from this concise presentation, while those already acquainted with this phenomenon will appreciate the abundance of illustrative primary source materials. Of greatest significance to Hellerman’s thesis is the *cursus honorum*, “a sequence of offices that marked the standard career for the Roman senatorial class” (p. 51). Under the Republic the elements of the *cursus* were military service, quaestor, aedile, tribune, praetor, consul, and censor. Imperial Rome, with the accumulation of power into the imperial household, “saw the powers associated with the various magistracies gradually eclipsed, so that honor became even more central to the positions in the *cursus*” (p. 52). In this environment success in pursuing the *cursus honorum* constituted a public résumé validating a person’s claim to honor and elite status. While the bulk of the witnesses for this phenomenon are from Rome itself, Hellerman offers evidence that the *cursus* was replicated in the provinces.

A more focused examination of Roman Philippi begins in Hellerman's third chapter. The history of the colony is presented, with an emphasis on the prominent role of Augustus Caesar in transforming the Macedonian city into a Roman colony with a pronounced military orientation. Roman citizens constituted a numerical minority, but "an ideological majority, particularly where issues of honor, status, and social values were concerned" (p. 71). Social stratification within the army was replicated among the militarily-oriented Philippians, mirroring the stratification evident in the imperial capital. Another social impact of the Romanization of Philippi by former soldiers and their descendents was the prominence of the imperial cult in Philippi: "public rites and honors associated with the veneration of the emperor—as well as the location of the cult's temple in Philippi's Roman forum—regularly reminded the colony's residents of Augustus' place as the founder of the colony and of the position of the imperial family at the top of the empire's hierarchy of power and prestige" (p. 87).

Again narrowing his focus, Hellerman turns to a discussion of honor and status in Philippi in his fourth chapter. Abundant evidence on this topic is available in the inscriptions found in Philippi, a phenomenon reflecting "the incessant desire of members of the aristocracy to proclaim their social status publicly in the form of monuments erected throughout the colony" (p. 89). More than twenty such inscriptions are reproduced by Hellerman, and typically these records emphasize the tribal identity, military service, municipal offices, and civic recognition of the person, now etched in stone. These inscriptions constitute a sort of genre, since they are a record of the *cursus honorum* completed by the person named; they present public documentation of the person's honored, elite status.

This portrait of Philippi is confirmed in the way this city is described explicitly in Acts and implicitly in Philippians (examined in the fifth chapter of Hellerman's study). Though eight other Roman colonies are named in the narrative of Acts, only Philippi is identified explicitly as a "colony." Hellerman explains this unique treatment as evidence of an intent by Luke "to draw attention to the Romanness of the settlement" (p. 111). In Phil 3:5–6 Hellerman finds "Paul's pre-Christian *cursus honorum*" (p. 123). Acknowledging the similarity in content with material contained in 2 Corinthians 11 and Galatians 1, Hellerman argues convincingly that "structurally Philippians 3 has more in common with Philippi's honor inscriptions than with the autobiographical statements found elsewhere in Paul's letters" (p. 126). That Paul proceeds to dismiss these qualifications as "rubbish" (Phil 3:8) is seen as a conscious and conspicuous rejection of the dominant value system of Roman Philippi.

Paul's repudiation of his own *cursus honorum* is consistent with the portrait of Christ in the *carmen Christi*, as Hellerman argues in his sixth chapter. The first portion of the hymn is described as a *cursus pudorum*, "a succession (or race) of ignominies" (p. 129). Though Christ had a rightful claim to the highest possible status, being in the form of God, he accepted willingly the humiliation of "slavery" and crucifixion. At this nadir in Christ's *cursus* (as perceived by the dominant culture), a reconstruction of Christ's honor begins. The crucified one received exaltation at the hands of God; great honor was bestowed by the one whose supreme honor is beyond challenge. In this powerful text Paul rejects the world's evaluation of honor (enshrined in the *cursus honorum*) in favor of the only assessment that matters in the kingdom of which Paul is a herald. Paul's purpose is "to engender behavior among his readers which he deems appropriate for those whose citizenship is in heaven" (p. 129).

While the Christ hymn in Philippians has not lacked scholarly attention, Hellerman's monograph is a valuable addition to that bibliography. Clearly, the principal value of this study is in the examination of this familiar text from a less familiar perspective. New insights into the Christ hymn in particular and the entire epistle are gained when these facets are examined. Beyond this accomplishment, Hellerman has compiled copious background material (including primary sources), familiarity with which will enhance

any study of this epistle (and any exegesis of the related portions of Acts). Finally, Hellerman has presented an accessible introduction to the concept and significance of honor in the NT social world, and (for those unfamiliar or unconvinced) has demonstrated the worth of sociological criticism.

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Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle. By Perry L. Stepp. New Testament Monographs 5. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2005, xvi + 227 pp., \$85.00.

This monograph is a revision of a Ph.D. dissertation written under the supervision of Charles Talbert at Baylor University. The title, however, may not make immediately clear to many readers the subject matter of the book. It is fundamentally a study of the Pastoral Epistles in light of other ancient literature, asking what, if anything, the Pastorals tell us about the issue of apostolic succession.

Stepp does a good job of describing the contemporary importance of the issue of succession. Very succinctly he describes the development of the idea of apostolic succession for church leaders, the Reformers' protest against apostolic succession, and recent comments showing that this issue is significant in current efforts at dialogue between different Christian traditions. To address this key historical and ecclesiastical concern, Stepp seeks to develop an understanding of ancient views of succession and then to compare those with the Pastoral Epistles, which contain the most overt discussions of leadership succession in the NT. Stepp's goal is to discern what sort of succession is intended in the Pastorals and how this should shape our understanding of church ministry today.

Chapter 1 is a brief introduction that sets out the basic aim of the book (just described), the flow of the chapters, and the methodology. The key aspect of the methodology is that Stepp seeks to discern how readers at the time of writing would have understood the text, particularly by identifying literary conventions in the biblical text that are also found in other texts from the same time period. Stepp writes, "The critic reading a biblical text from the perspective of the authorial audience constructs that audience by reading the biblical text against texts from the milieu surrounding it, comparing the literary conventions in the biblical text with the conventions of contemporaneous texts and society" (p. 9). Thus Stepp compares the references to leadership succession in the Pastorals to references to leadership succession in other writings of the ancient world. In this way, Stepp hopes to better understand what these texts mean rather than reading back into them the ecclesiastical debates of the last 2 millennia.

Chapters 2 and 3 survey ancient texts (prior to AD 200) that describe the function of succession, with chapter 2 focusing on Greco-Roman texts and chapter 3 focusing on Jewish and Christian texts. Stepp has identified 60 texts in his database, and each text is examined to see how succession functions and what (if any) common terminology or conventions emerge. The discussion is quite detailed, and it is not difficult to get bogged down. However, Stepp does an excellent job in summarizing at key points and in illustrating with charts and graphs. Stepp concludes that discussion of leadership succession would have been a convention readily recognized by first-century readers. While the examination was helpful in a number of ways, I was not entirely convinced that this was an established convention.

Chapters 4 and 5 are then examinations of 1–2 Timothy and Titus in light of the results of the study of the succession texts. In the examination of these letters, Stepp asks two main questions. "First: Would the authorial audience have found evidence

of succession in this document? And if so, which relationships would they have read/understood in terms of succession? Second: If the authorial audience would have inferred succession in a relationship, how does that succession function? What would they have understood that succession to achieve for the people involved in the succession and for the people around it" (p. 14)? Stepp finds a number of passages in these three letters that address succession on various levels—from Christ to Paul, Paul to Timothy and others. One key point made by Stepp is that the succession (in the Pastoral Epistles as well as in the other texts) does not require a total equality of a leader and his successor. The continuity is not in personality or even giftedness but in the task handed down. "Note that this is not a succession of office, but of tradition, and thus *not* parallel to 1 Clement 42, which does refer to the passing on of offices. Here [specifically 2 Tim 2:1–2], the focus is on vitality of the tradition, making sure that the proper teaching of the true gospel continues and is ubiquitous" (p. 175). Chapter 6 provides a brief reading of the Pastorals in light of the results of the study.

Chapter 7 summarizes the findings and results. Stepp discusses implications for study of the Pastorals and implications for our understanding of Christian ministry. In regards to the Pastorals he suggests four implications. First, he supports the trend of emphasizing the need to treat 1–2 Timothy and Titus as discrete letters before harmonizing them. Second, this study suggests the unifying theme of the Pastorals is Paul's departure and absence (not bourgeois Christianity, for example). While this is an important aspect, I am not sure if it works as *the* unifying center. Third, Stepp argues that profitable work can be done on the Pastorals without tying oneself to a specific opinion on authorship. In the end he suggests Timothy may be the most likely author. I agree that we must focus on the text itself regardless of views of authorship, but authorship does eventually affect much of our interpretation. I also remain unconvinced of any need for non-Pauline authorship. Fourth, Stepp concludes that the letters are written after Paul's lifetime but not long after his passing. Particularly, he notes that there is no need to push them into the second century.

With regard to the nature of Christian ministry Stepp suggests three implications. First, Christian ministers today "stand in a stream that begins with Jesus Christ and continues through the ages, to the present, and then on into future generations" (p. 202). This is not due to the passing on of an office but of a message, the gospel. This is a helpful, valuable reminder—a specific application of the communion of the saints. Second, Stepp notes that in the Pastorals "authority for Christian ministry comes from the calling of God to minister, and not from hierarchy or office or title" (p. 202). Rightly he notes that the concern of the Pastorals is not with the title of leadership but with character. This point in application may need also to be tempered with the place of the church in recognizing and confirming one's calling. Without this we can swing from Catholic hierarchy to mere self-appointment, from imposition to lack of accountability. Third, the gospel produces proper belief and behavior. This is indeed a key point in the Pastorals and might even serve as a better "center" than Pauline absence. Lastly, Stepp provides some helpful practical thoughts about being more intentional in marking leadership transition in our own day.

In summary, this is a well-executed study. Stepp is exemplary in his clear and frequent summaries, an indispensable feature in a technical work. His use of charts and graphs is also very helpful. He makes many beneficial observations along the way in his examination of the letters, often provoking new thoughts for me since the topic of leadership succession has not typically been granted such focus. While I am not convinced in all the particulars, this is a helpful study of one element of the Pastoral Epistles.

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Reading with Anthropology: Exhibiting Aspects of New Testament Religion. By Louise J. Lawrence. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005, xix + 212 pp., \$22.99 paper.

Biblical scholars have increasingly used models, theories, and methodologies from anthropology to provide new perspectives on the biblical text. In many cases, biblical scholars select anthropological models to gain new lenses through which to examine the biblical data. They then read the biblical text through the new lenses that these anthropological models provide. *Reading with Anthropology* takes a different approach. Rather than reading the biblical text through generalized models, Lawrence provides cross-cultural ethnographic data that she then reads alongside the biblical data. This approach gives the reader a transparent cross-cultural comparison that not only provides new understanding of the dynamics of the biblical text but also allows the reader to examine the ethnographic data themselves to evaluate if the comparison is appropriate for the biblical data.

Lawrence begins her book with two chapters on background for reading with anthropology. In chapter 1 she provides readers who are not familiar with social-scientific criticism the history and development of the use of anthropological and sociological models in biblical studies. In chapter 2, she seeks to address the question some might raise about the validity of using social science models in biblical studies. She notes that social science has in the past been reductive, explaining religious actions in terms of social realities rather than in terms of transcendent reality. She notes that social-scientific criticism "arose to redress an imbalance in another direction, namely an inordinate importance being put on thought and belief to the neglect of physicality and society" (p. 20). She finds the integration of transcendent and social reality in two concepts from recent anthropological studies. The first is the concept of embodiment, in which the body "literally 'embodies' belief, cultures and values" (p. 27). The second is the concept of humans as ceremonial animals in which they "embody beliefs and practices in their day to day lives" (p. 29). This integration of the social with the transcendent provides the heuristic framework for her cross-cultural comparisons.

In the next seven chapters of her work, Lawrence offers what she refers to as museum exhibits, in which she is the curator who selects the ethnographic exhibits on display. She models her presentation after the Pitt Rivers Museum in which objects are exhibited by themes rather than cultural and geographic boundaries. Her book provides selected themes in which she places ethnographic data from various cultures alongside scriptural data. Rather than focusing on ethnographic data from Greco-Roman, Mediterranean, and peasant cultures, she compares ethnographic data from various regions of the world that all have the trait on exhibit. Her selections are, as she notes, eclectic and reflect current interests in both anthropology and biblical scholarship. However, by selecting a broader range of ethnographic data, Lawrence provides fresh cross-cultural perspectives on the biblical data.

Her first exhibits are based on the current interest in biblical scholarship on the identity of Jesus as a religious practitioner. In chapter 3 she compares Mark's presentation of Jesus with shamans and Luke's presentation of Jesus with the collectively based shaman healer. In chapter 4, she addresses the identity of Jesus using concepts from the study of folklore and mythology and how these "inform the practice, behavior and self-identity of the groups addressed by them" (p. xv). In this chapter, she compares John's narrative of Jesus with one type of folklore, the trickster narrative. The trickster is an anthropological construct of individuals in narratives who are often the mediators between human beings and the gods, often "occupying the space between social boundaries" (p. 62). She argues that Jesus in John's narrative is likewise one who mediates between humans and God and is in the world but not of it. "Jesus himself reflects and embodies God's presence within the world" (p. 63). Those who wish to be followers of Jesus must also enter this liminal space.

Her next two chapters explore gender from two different perspectives. Chapter 5 explores the interpretation of willing deaths as initiations into manhood by the oppressed. Lawrence examines how willing deaths display traditional concerns of masculinity and honor in various cultures. Chapter 6 compares Jesus' ministry to women and the role of women in the early church with ethnographic data from religious traditions in which women play a dominate role. By doing so she "offers a different way in to considering the character of the earliest Christianity and of the women's place within it" (p. 103).

The final three chapters present ethnographic data that address morals and values of a group. In chapter 7, Lawrence demonstrates how poetry can be a genre in which the marginal find a voice and can express values and sentiments that contradict the status quo. In chapter 8, she examines ethnographic data on the "community of goods" and explores how attitudes toward material goods embody moral values of a group. In her comparison with other groups she concludes that the historicity of the Acts account should not be rejected but as with other groups these values "were held as an ideal to be aspired to, rather than a custom to be practically embodied" (p. 190). Her final comparison in chapter 9 examines the notion of social memory and how meals in many communities including the early forms of Christianity were a way of remembering and reinforcing social unity (p. 190).

As an anthropologist, I find that Lawrence avoids some of the pitfalls of studies that use anthropological models by examining ethnographic data alongside biblical data rather than examining it through generalized models. Readers are seeing data interpreted through a new lens (the anthropological model) but are able to observe it as a cross-cultural comparison. This transparency allows readers with little or no anthropological background to examine the data and evaluate the validity of her observations and conclusions.

Another strength of her book is that when she uses anthropological concepts or models Lawrence provides a list of ethnographic characteristics in which a particular trait is found. This also allows readers with little or no knowledge of the anthropological concepts on which her conclusions are based to evaluate if biblical data meet the ethnographic criteria. For those wishing to explore the concept further she provides adequate references to find and read the original sources of her data and concepts and determine if she has accurately and adequately examined them.

One weakness with her approach is that it is an eclectic collection of comparisons. While they provide insights into some aspects of biblical culture, the reader is not given an evaluation of these observations. Because she has chosen to examine ethnographic data that are not directly tied to the geographical and historical setting of the biblical text, while providing interesting insights, they may not provide the most productive explanation for the behavior of people living in the setting of the biblical text nor reflect the original intent of the writers of the biblical text.

Overall, *Reading with Anthropology* is a refreshing change in the use of anthropological models in biblical studies and provides a model for others who desire to use anthropological resources to gain new insights into biblical texts.

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Knocking on Heaven's Door: A New Testament Theology of Petitionary Prayer. By David Crump. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006, 345 pp., \$22.99 paper.

Books on prayer often show evidence of the personal piety of an author and sometimes offer helpful suggestions for the practice of prayer, but many lack serious engage-

ment with biblical texts in which prayer is discussed or modeled. In *Knocking on Heaven's Door*, David Crump, professor of religion and theology at Calvin College and author of *Jesus the Intercessor: Prayer and Christology in Luke-Acts* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992), has bridged the gap between exegesis of texts on prayer and practical applications of exegetically derived insights. In choosing to limit his discussion to biblical passages that address petitionary prayer, he has focused his discussion and is able to spend more time on interpretive issues in particular texts. Furthermore, since petitionary prayer is the area that creates the greatest number of difficulties for praying believers, his choice to focus only on this aspect of prayer makes the topics discussed in the book extremely relevant.

The book is divided into three main sections. Each section contains three or four chapters in which particular passages are addressed, followed by theological reflections on prayer in the sections discussed. The first main section (chaps. 1–4) addresses petitionary prayer in the Synoptic Gospels, with special attention given to Jesus' comments in Mark 11:22–25 after he curses the fig tree; the healing of the epileptic boy in Mark 9:14–29; Jesus' Gethsemane prayer in Mark 14:32–42; and the parables of the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5–8) and the widow and the judge (Luke 18:1–8). The second main section (chaps. 5–7) concerns the Lord's Prayer, with dedicated discussions of the phrases "our Father," "thy kingdom come," and especially how we should interpret "thy will be done." Nestled between the second and third main sections are chapters 8 and 9, which are about prayer in the Johannine literature, with special attention to asking in Jesus' name, and prayer in the Acts of the Apostles, respectively. The third main section (chaps. 10–12) concerns Pauline prayer, with special attention given to Rom 8:26–27. Chapter 13 is a summary of petitionary prayer in the General Letters and Revelation, followed by a final chapter (chap. 14), which contains five conclusions that should, according to Crump, set the boundaries for our theological reflections on prayer. His five conclusions, in his own words, are: (1) we pray to a personal God; (2) a personal God is willing to be moved; (3) prayer can change those who pray; (4) we pray between the (eschatological) times; and (5) power appears through suffering.

Crump has made a concerted effort throughout the book to connect the conclusions he has drawn from biblical texts to real life case studies of people (himself included) who have struggled with applying biblical teaching on prayer. This does not mean that *Knocking on Heaven's Door* is light reading. In fact, Crump moves back and forth between personal anecdotes and discussions of minute details of particular texts, with greater attention being given to the particulars of the texts under consideration. Although Crump has made a real attempt to address concerns of thinking laypersons in this book, it is hard to imagine that most of our laypeople will have the endurance to read through the entire book (cf. his use of such technical terms as "intercalation," p. 25).

I have been enriched by many of Crump's insights into particular biblical texts and found numerous helpful insights, especially in his discussions of prayer in Acts (chap. 9) and his section on factors that hinder prayer in the General Letters (chap. 13). Still, I have three broad areas of concern with this book.

First, at a number of points in the book, Crump accepts exegetical conclusions that are minority positions in the history of interpretation of particular passages. Thus, for example, readers will learn that faith is *not* a condition for answered prayer in Mark 11:22–24 (pp. 33–38); that the "faith" in Mark 9:23 is Jesus' own faith, not the faith of the father of the demon-possessed boy (pp. 49–53); and that neither the parable of the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5–8) nor the parable of the widow and the judge (Luke 18:1–8) are about persistence as a condition for answered prayer (chaps. 3–4). He acknowledges on p. 73 in his comments on Luke 11:9–10 that he has done this at a number of points: "Once again, I realize that I am arguing against a long-standing interpretive tradition." Granted, each interpretation is possible as it stands individually. Yet, considering the preponderance of these minority positions and that in each case

these decisions fit into an overall conception of petitionary prayer, one wonders whether at least some of Crump's decisions have not been unduly influenced by his overarching theology.

Second, there is a tension in the book that I was unable to resolve. Crump often seems to state emphatically that we *do not know* how we should pray. One of many such examples will have to suffice: "All those who still hope for the resurrection continue to slog through the mire of this sinful, terrestrial bog and find themselves so thoroughly hampered by their fallenness that formulating prayers fully submitted to the mind of God—prayers that always conform to his plans and desires, that reliably elicit the Father's 'amen'—remains far beyond their mortal grasp no matter how long or how hard they may try" (p. 204). But he occasionally speaks of "a deepening sensitivity to the Spirit's guidance" (p. 217), and "individual responsiveness to the Holy Spirit's prompting" (p. 248). So, which is it? Are we quite unable to know how we should pray, as Crump seems to assert at many points, or does the Spirit guide us in how to pray, as Crump occasionally mentions but does not emphasize? Concerning Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane ("not my will"), which is paradigmatic for Crump (pp. 54–59, 72, 93, 126, 145, 256–58, 285), is it "about hearing God's response and allowing him to realign our wills according to his design," (p. 58), or is it that we ask "but then trust in God's wisdom and goodness to do what is best" (p. 72)? Crump's emphasis seems to be that we are usually unsure about the will of God but need to keep praying anyway. Jesus, however, knew ahead of time that his death was God's will (Mark 8:31–33; 9:9, 12–13, 30–32; 10:32–34; 12:1–12; 14:17–25 and parallels—Crump acknowledges this on pp. 54 and 145) and came to a place of renewed acceptance of that plan in the Garden. In Paul's case, Paul apparently stopped praying for the removal of his thorn after he came to understand that God's will was that it not be removed (2 Cor 12:8–10). Both Jesus in the Garden and Paul with his "thorn" became committed to God's will because God disclosed his will to them. Crump's emphasis, in contrast, is that we generally pray in the dark but should keep praying anyway.

Third, although Crump has articulated a helpful distinction between "biblical necessities" (the "basic ingredients of biblical theology") and "theological possibilities" ("the various heuristic, explanatory models devised by Christian thinkers in order to account coherently for the many theological claims of Scripture," p. 282), he has, in my opinion, wrongly included one "theological possibility"—a statement on providence—into the final section where he claims to lay out the boundaries of "biblical necessities." Crump claims: "Whereas certain events are necessary occurrences, others never move beyond the realm of possibility. The future has options. The NT insists that God is sovereign in the sense that the 'game' of history never spins outside his control, never veering from his final goal, but he makes no claim to sovereignty in the sense that every individual event (or every play in the game) always occurs exactly as he willed or fore-ordained" (p. 290; cf. pp. 130, 168–69, 183, 224). Many, including myself, will disagree with Crump's conclusions concerning God's providence. However, more troubling is that Crump has included such statements in the section in which he summarizes the "biblical necessities"—the border beyond which "any ball crossing the divinely inspired chalk lines is out of play" (p. 284).

Readers, thus, will find in this book a wealth of detailed analysis of biblical texts that touch on the question of petitionary prayer. They should be warned, however, that as they read *Knocking on Heaven's Door*, a book that addresses a topic of great importance, they need to read carefully and with discernment.

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The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide. By Warren Carter. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006, xi + 148 pp., \$16.00 paper.

Anyone conversant with the list of sections at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature knows that NT and empire studies are on the rise—perhaps they have even hit their dénouement. In recent years it is safe to say that many studies on the NT and empire seem a bit skewed. Most studies tend to forsake everything else in the NT for a “politics only” reading of the text. At times, this leaves one bewildered, wondering if such exegetes are actually interpreting the NT or if they are simply reading their own disgruntled political baggage into the text. In light of some of the extremes among those engaged in NT and empire studies, it is refreshing to find a balanced approach to this topic from a leading scholar of the “movement,” Warren Carter. Carter’s work, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament*, is nothing but a balanced approach to this often touchy subject.

Roman Empire is not meant for a scholarly audience. It is certainly a helpful synthesis of primary source material on the Roman Empire, especially if one is conversant with the classical literature itself. However, Carter seems to have a senior undergraduate or first-year seminary audience in mind as he pens this work. *Roman Empire* would certainly make a wonderful complement to other books on NT backgrounds used in elementary NT courses. However, the simplicity of Carter’s work does not take away from its erudition.

The book itself is comprised of eight chapters with an introduction and a postscript. In chapter 1, “The Roman Imperial World,” Carter makes good use of James C. Scott’s work on “hidden transcripts” (e.g. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992]), as he argues that the NT writings are not “public writings” but are in fact writings that are written from and for communities of followers of Jesus, who was crucified by the empire. It is from this thesis that Carter develops the idea that the NT is trying to tell us how early followers of Jesus “negotiated Rome’s world” (p. 12). Carter also suggests that early Christian negotiation of the empire shaped for Christians in the first-century an alternative way of being human and participating in a human community that reflected God’s purposes.

In chapter 2, “Evaluating Rome’s Empire,” Carter presents us with five different, yet sometimes overlapping, ways that the NT writers negotiated Rome’s world. They include: (1) arguing that the empire proper is of the devil; (2) suggesting that Rome’s world is under God’s judgment; (3) urging acts of transformation among Jesus’ followers; (4) engaging in the act of setting up alternative communities to the empire; and (5) urging submission to, praying for, and honoring the emperor. In this chapter Carter not only contributes to the important unity-diversity debate in NT studies by bringing the question of empire to the table, but he also suggests that followers of Jesus employed various strategies such as survival, accommodation, protest, dissent, and imitation as they tried their best to negotiate Rome’s world.

Chapter 3, “Ruling Faces of the Empire: Encountering Imperial Officials,” is a brief and helpful overview of the types of political authority figures encountered in the NT. In this chapter Carter discusses the role of the Roman emperors, “Jewish” kings, such as Herod the Great, Roman governors, and Roman soldiers. In chapter 4, “Spaces of Empire: Urban and Rural Areas,” Carter gives a lengthy and sustained review of how the empire affected urban areas versus rural ones. He also discusses the Pauline communities as well as the cities addressed in the Book of Revelation and shows how some of the rhetoric of Paul and John might have been heard against the background of the imperial cult. He also notes that different Christian communities in different geographical locales approached the empire in different ways based on their circumstances

and setting. Thus, once again, Carter notes the diversity in the NT's approach to the empire.

In chapter 5, "Temples and 'Religious'/Political Personnel," Carter analyzes the Jerusalem temple as a political institution and also deals much more thoroughly with the imperial cult and its implications for NT studies. He concludes that in the Roman world religion was not a private affair. Instead, he suggests that its observance was explicitly public, very communal, and rather political. As he relates, "Temples were not separate religious entities removed from the political, economic, and social world" (p. 82). Instead, temples, such as the one in Jerusalem along with the one dedicated to Artemis in Ephesus, were deeply embedded in the Roman imperial political structures. Furthermore, he argues that the early Christians had no agreed-upon method for how to deal with these imperial symbols and institutions.

Chapter 6, "Imperial Theology: A Clash of Theological and Societal Claims," is an attempt to synthesize Roman beliefs and imperial propaganda into a type of systematic theology. Following the classical sources and their delineation of the myths of Rome, Carter argues that the empire asserted divine sanction for itself, claiming that the gods had chosen it to manifest the gods' sovereignty, presence, agency, and blessings on earth. In response, Carter opines that the NT writings dispute these mythological claims, arguing instead that over and against them Yahweh's purposes will eventually hold the day. This leads us to chapter 7, "Economics, Food, and Health," where Carter describes some of the day-to-day aspects of life in the empire. Here he looks at imperial life as it is described and critiqued by NT writers such as Matthew, James, and the John of Revelation. He concludes by noting that the lack of wealth, food, and health make up the three building blocks of everyday expressions of life under the sometimes unwelcome guise of Rome.

Finally, in chapter 8, "Further Dynamics of Resistance," Carter analyzes in more detail something he has talked about all along in this text: *the diversity of approaches to the empire offered by the NT writers*. In this chapter Carter concludes that the NT writings present us—as they so often do—with paradox and tension. On the one hand some of the writings such as Revelation offer us a picture of resistance to the empire, while the Pastorals, which Carter does not think Paul wrote, offer us a picture of accommodation. Paul's letters are a bit tricky, and, using Romans as his example, Carter believes that Paul not only offered an ideology of resistance to the empire but also one of accommodation (i.e. Rom 13:1–7).

As far as Carter is concerned, the NT can do many things at once. It can "imagine Rome's violent overthrow, employ disguised and ambiguous protest, and use flattery" all at the same time, which inevitably ends up contributing to the diversity of the NT's approach to the question of how Christians are to "negotiate Rome's empire" (p. 136). Chapter 8 is followed by a postscript where Carter briefly offers some suggestions as to how this study might be applied in the modern twenty-first-century church.

Carter is such a careful and clear scholar that it is hard to know exactly how to criticize him. However, though *Roman Empire* is a thorough, thoughtful, and balanced approach to the subject of NT and empire, I have one major critique of this book. Simply put, I do not think Carter takes seriously enough the fact that Paul might have written the so-called "Pastoral" letters. Carter sees a number of differences between the *Hauptbriefe* and their negotiation of the empire versus the negotiation strategies offered by the so-called "deutero-Paulines." However, Frank Thielman in his book *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) offers a reading of the politics of the Pastorals that shows how the politics of the *Hauptbriefe* are no different from that of the so-called "Pastorals." Thielman suggests that all along Paul has advocated that Christians live a decent, orderly, and peaceful existence. Paul's asseveration has a missionary thrust to it, which is not about resistance or

accommodation to the empire, but about attracting non-Christians to the kingdom of God. Thus, if NT and empire studies are to continue, they will need to take into account the entire canon of the NT, and perhaps even engage in a biblical-theological reading of empire proper. However, this critique should not take away from Carter's fine, balanced work.

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The Apostolic Fathers and the New Testament. By Clayton N. Jefford. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006, xii + 267 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Jefford's work bears a title quite similar to that of the two-volume *The New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, published by Oxford University Press in 2005 to commemorate the centennial of the appearance of *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905). However, that is where the similarities end. Unlike this mammoth 2005 Oxford study, in which Jefford himself participated, the goals for his little work at first seem quite modest: "[T]his volume is not designed to be a methodical, text-critical comparison of NT texts with parallels from the apostolic fathers, focusing upon the variations in manuscripts and sources" (p. 3). This very subject had been the sole concern of Volume 1 of the 2005 Oxford study as well as that of the 1905 Oxford study. Jefford wisely did not choose to reduplicate these efforts. Nor did he choose to separate the various Fathers in his investigation of various topics and themes, as was done in Volume 2 of the 2005 Oxford study. Rather he has focused on them *collectively*, and it is in this collective focus that Jefford's work stands out as truly unique.

Jefford, a Roman Catholic scholar who teaches in the School of Theology at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in southern Indiana, has authored or co-authored four other books on the Apostolic Fathers, the most recent being *The Apostolic Fathers: An Essential Guide* (Abingdon Essential Guides; Nashville: Abingdon, 2005). Since his 1988 dissertation at Claremont Graduate School on the *Didache*, Jefford has been a recognized authority on the Apostolic Fathers, which explains why he was among the twenty-eight scholars selected for the two-volume 2005 Oxford study mentioned above.

Like a good Roman Catholic, Jefford begins his study with a confession. Chapter 1, entitled "Finding a Time and Place for the Texts," is Jefford's admission to his "own starting points and assumptions" in this study (p. 4). After providing an excellent survey of the various dates and provenances proposed by scholars for each Apostolic Father, Jefford lays out before his readers his own set of presuppositions and conclusions about these matters. He includes in his study all those works traditionally referred to as the "Apostolic Fathers": *1 Clement*, *2 Clement*, the *Didache*, *Barnabas*, the seven genuine letters of Ignatius, Polycarp's *Letter to the Philippians*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, the *Epistle to Diognetus*, and the so-called Fragments of Papias. "It is my hope," he writes, "that the present volume will serve as a worthy example of how the apostolic fathers may serve to underpin our further investigations into early Christian Scripture" (p. 5).

After this introductory essay, six more chapters follow, each focusing on a particular topic or theme. Chapter 2, "The Authority of Texts and Traditions," investigates "genres of tradition" such as letters, sermons/homilies, martyrologies, apocalypses, sayings, parables, miracles stories, creeds, hymns, and prayers that are shared between the writings of the NT and those of the Apostolic Fathers. In chapter 3, Jefford turns to the "Codes of Conduct and Christian Thinking" that are mutually shared by these

writings in their use of virtue and vice lists, household codes, and two-way metaphors, and in their concepts of discipleship and righteousness.

In chapter 4, "Imagery of the New Testament Faith," Jefford investigates the degree of dependence that each Apostolic Father had on the various writings that make up the NT. As one might expect, it is here that Jefford is the most tentative and cautious in his conclusions. Even then, certain scholars will still want to disagree with some of his findings. In summary, Jefford's verdict for the *Shepherd of Hermas* serves well for the other Apostolic Fathers, since in most instances they "do not betray certain knowledge of any single biblical source" (p. 121). While the *Shepherd* may show "an awareness of books such as Hebrews or James, there is little evidence to support the use of other biblical texts" (p. 122). The Didachist has an "intimate contact with what is now called the Matthean tradition" (p. 125), but this source cannot be equated necessarily with our present Gospel of Matthew (p. 66). Both Ignatius and Polycarp borrow heavily from Paul. Polycarp also borrows significantly from 1 John (p. 65) as well as from 1 Peter (p. 137); "[t]he potential parallels between Ignatius and the Gospel of Matthew would seem to be endless" (p. 141). In fact, the Gospel of Matthew is the clearest example of a NT text being used by several of the Apostolic Fathers (pp. 142–43).

The remainder of the book addresses three questions: "The Question of Christians as Jews" (chap. 5); "The Question of Christians as Citizens" (chap. 6); and "How Persons and Places Influence History" (chap. 7). I found the last chapter most intriguing, for here Jefford collects historical notices that he has gleaned from the NT and the writings of the Apostolic Fathers in order to construct a picture of what various early Christian communities looked like. For example, I was impressed by his weaving together historical strands from Rev 2:8–11, Ignatius's letters to the *Smyrnaeans* and to *Polycarp*, Polycarp's *Letter to the Philippians*, the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, and other sources into a timeline tapestry depicting a Christian community "in a continuing struggle of faith, at least from the end of the first century through the latter half of the second century" (p. 234). It is in constructing these plausible scenarios for early Christian communities that Jefford best shows his consummate command of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, despite his own humility in this regard ("I freely acknowledge that my own research into the fathers is not balanced," p. 8).

Sometimes Jefford's conclusions surprised me. For example, *1 Clement* represents "the collective voice" of "a college of ruling presbyters" rather than that of a single individual, so that "[t]he advice given throughout is pastoral and pleading, never authoritative" (p. 17). I cannot reconcile such an understanding with Clement's call for the Corinthians "to bow the neck" in submission and "become obedient to the things which we have written through the Holy Spirit" (*1 Clem.* 63.1–2) or with his warning that "if some be disobedient to the words which have been spoken by Him through us, let them know that they will entangle themselves in transgression and no little danger" (*1 Clem.* 59.1). Another surprise was his view that *1 Clement* may not evince an early use of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The influence may have been the other way around: *1 Clement* may have actually served as a source for Hebrews as well as for the Pastorals (pp. 129, 132, 238; he dates *1 Clement* before ad 70, p. 19).

This last point raises my two criticisms of this book. The first one is minor. There are places where I found needless repetition. There may be some justification for the repeated mention of Ignatius's imitation of Paul's Romans (pp. 42, 63–64, 138, 239–40) or Ephesians (pp. 41–42, 139), or even that *Barn.* 18–20 is a later addition (pp. 91, 103, 216–17). Yet sometimes Jefford seems unaware of such duplication. Why include the long explanation about Ignatius's dependence on 4 Maccabees on pp. 225–26 when this has already been explained on pp. 47–48, 167 (see also p. 232)? My suspicion of unconscious repetition seems reinforced by his failure to shorten the reference on p. 226 n. 23 in light of that on p. 167 n. 22. However, such infelicities are not of a serious nature.

My second criticism is more significant and concerns Jefford's assumptions about inspiration and the nature of the writings that make up the NT. He sees our four Gospels as "an evolved literature" much like the *Didache* (p. 20). Thus, the Christology in the Gospel of Mark "may have been somewhat shaped by adoptionism" (p. 64). "The Matthean perspective is a clear reimagining" of what really took place (p. 153). "The author of the Luke-Acts tradition is famous for the manipulation of texts and sources in a quest to present a logical and consistent view of Christian history" (p. 48). Ephesians is "a product of the Pauline school and not of Paul himself" (p. 41), as are Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus (= the "deuteropaulines," pp. 81, 85–86, 155–56). Likewise, the Catholic Epistles are pseudonymous. In my opinion, Jefford should have included his presuppositions about the NT along with those about the Apostolic Fathers in his candid admissions in chapter 1, since they, too, have had an impact on his ultimate findings and conclusions. For example, Jefford sees within the NT itself a dichotomy between those authors who have accepted the Pauline "vision" of Christianity (the deuteropaulines, p. 155) and those "who were concerned to temper Paul's teachings" (the Catholic Epistles, p. 157). Jefford then extends these two polarities into the period of the Apostolic Fathers (pp. 159–60, 166–78), where it colors his perception of them just as it has his view of the NT.

As an evangelical, I can recommend Jefford's book for any seasoned scholar who is interested in the Apostolic Fathers, and who is eager to gain new insights into the history of early Christianity and yet is unafraid to see this history presented from a different perspective. However, I would not recommend it as an introductory text for the inexperienced novice who is yet unskilled in separating chaff from wheat.

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The Missing Gospels: Unearthing the Truth behind Alternative Christianities. By Darrell L. Bock. Nashville: Nelson, 2006, xxiii + 230 pp., \$21.99.

With the publication and fanfare emerging from *The Gospel of Judas* in spring 2006, many probing questions have surfaced about this "missing Gospel" and the possible reasons why it was not included in the final NT canon. During a casual visit to a Barnes & Noble bookstore, one stumbles across a growing number of so-called "missing Gospels" on the bookshelves—Gospels with the names of Philip, Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas (among others) attributed to them. One question that remains is: Do these and other "Gospels" belong in the NT?

A well-known axiom from the Roman statesman Cicero might be appropriate here: "To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to be ever a child." The fundamental question, it seems to me, is how does one construe earliest Christian history and the formation of the NT canon?

Darrell L. Bock, research professor of New Testament studies and professor of spiritual development and culture at Dallas Theological Seminary, is a renowned Gospels scholar with copious publications. In *The Missing Gospels*, Bock remains true to the thrust of his 2001 ETS presidential manifesto, subsequently expanded and published as *Purpose-Directed Theology: Getting Our Priorities Right in Evangelical Controversies* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002)—he laments the lack of evangelical scholarship accessible to a popular audience. In this present book, Bock deftly marries scholarship with accessibility, without compromising intellectual rigor and integrity. We should all take the example of Bock (and others) and make solid evangelical scholarship available to the public.

Bock addresses the following topics: (1) An Overview of the Landscape of Early Christianity; (2) A Discussion of Gnosticism; (3) Christianity's Diversity; (4) The Claims of Walter Bauer and the Roots of the New School; (4) The Nature of God and Creation; (5) Jesus: Divine and/or Human? (6) The Nature of Humanity's Redemption: Spiritual or Also Physical? (7) Jesus' Death: Knowledge, Sin and Salvation; and (8) The New School, the Missing Gospels, Alternative Christianities, and Orthodoxy. His overall fourteen (short) chapters, with study questions after each one, lend themselves to use in a semester-long adult Christian Education class. There are also two helpful appendices: one listing the extant texts beyond the four Gospels; the other, a list of key texts in the Apostolic Fathers. There is a concluding seven-page bibliography for further study.

There are at least three strengths to Bock's approach. The first is Bock's extensive discussion of primary sources. Too often the debate of Christian origins is devoid of an analysis of primary documents. How many seminaries—let alone doctoral programs—require readings and analyses of, say, the apocryphal Gospels? This may be one of the most important contributions to the discussion. Anyone wanting to investigate the primary documents can easily use Bock's book as a reliable guide.

The second, and equally important, is Bock's discussion and investigation of the still lingering shadow of Walter Bauer's hypothesis established in his watershed book *Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Earliest Church* (originally 1934; ET 1971). Simply put, history is written by the winners (proponents of "orthodoxy"); whereas the minority opinion (deemed by the winners as "heresy") may be equally, if not more, important. Thus it may be that "heresy" inevitably trumps "orthodoxy" when all the facts are known. Moreover, it is argued, there were no basic boundaries between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in earliest Christianity.

The third significant contribution is Bock's engaging discussion of Gnosticism. He demonstrates with erudition what Gnosticism is and is not. Bock also lists the tenets of Gnosticism. This is illuminating because Gnostic tendencies are still evident in the preaching and teaching of some churches. (Interestingly, the jacket cover shows the Greek text of Luke 5:32: "I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance," an appropriate verse to combat Gnosticism.) A developed understanding of Gnosticism is essential to any discussion of alternative Christianities. Does Gnosticism in general, or a Gnostic Gospel in particular, remotely fit into the theological landscape of the NT? Even with an acknowledgement of theological diversity in the NT (see J. D. G. Dunn's landmark book), does that allow for an anomaly like Gnosticism to be considered with equal footing? Also, how did the early church respond to Gnosticism, vis-à-vis Irenaeus's treatise *Against Heresies*? Furthermore, Bock grapples with the recent burgeoning scholarship of "The New School"—a popular repackaging of Bauer's hypothesis—that is, Elaine Pagels (Princeton University) and Bart Ehrman (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). Bock is gracious about the contributions of "The New School": these scholars do offer important contributions to the study of early Christianity. Yet Bock is also candid about their significant limitations.

What Bock's tome does with integrity, erudition, and insight is tackle the nagging question: Were there *limits* to theological diversity in early Christianity? Bock recognizes the theological diversity in the early church; yet he does not succumb to the temptation to accept that by limiting diversity in some cases (i.e. Gnosticism in its many forms) the early church squashed what was originally "orthodox." Hence the powerful (= church leaders) overruled the weak (= Gnostic proponents). Could it also be argued that the so-called "powerful" in the church were actually persevering sacred tradition, what the NT refers to as "the good deposit" (see 2 Tim 1:14)? Was there such a notion as "normative" Christianity in the first few centuries (see, e.g., A. J. Hultgren, *The Rise of Normative Christianity* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994])?

Let me offer a confession: I am delighted *The Gospel of Judas* has been discovered, translated, and made available to the public. What is a bit off-putting, however, is the

rush to judgment by some that this and other new discoveries threaten the basic core of Christianity.

Bock's conclusion is worth citing at length:

Orthodoxy is not the product of third-century theologians. Those theologians certainly developed and honed traditional teaching. They gave flesh to the bones and structure to the basic ideas. However, the core of their ideas they worked with and reflected in their confessions can be found in the faith's earliest works. These works embraced what the apostles passed on. The works that we find in the New Testament also testify to this faith. That is why they were recognized as special sources for this teaching, even seen as being inspired by God. Irenaeus was not the creator of orthodoxy; he was created by it. (pp. 212–13)

Perhaps the "missing gospels" are missing from the canon not because the early church created "orthodoxy" to exclude them arbitrarily, but because it was profoundly shaped by what eventually became the canonical Gospels. Hence, the early church was not the creator of orthodoxy; it was created by it.

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God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments. NAC Studies in Bible & Theology. By James M. Hamilton, Jr. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006, 233 pp., \$19.99.

The Gospel according to John has the reputation of being the "spiritual Gospel" within the fourfold Gospel tradition. Its distinct characteristics have caused it to be one of the most beloved books in the Christian canon. Indeed, one recent commentator has said that John's Gospel "penetrates more deeply into the mystery of God's revelation in his Son than the other canonical Gospels and perhaps more deeply than any other biblical book" (Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004] 1). The affection that many Christians have for this Gospel is perhaps matched only by the controversy that has surrounded its interpretation. Yet James Hamilton sounds a clear voice among the din of conflicting opinions in his new book *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments*. This book is the first volume of a new series on biblical theology published by B and H Academic (formerly Broadman and Holman) entitled NAC [New American Commentary] Studies in Bible & Theology. A second recently published volume is Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, eds., *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*.

In *God's Indwelling Presence*, Hamilton sets out to answer the question of what the Bible says about how the Spirit relates to believers before and after the glorification of Jesus. He takes John 14:17 ("He is with you, and he will be in you") to be John's summary of the Bible's teaching on indwelling as it relates to believers under the old and new covenants. Under the old covenant, God dwelled *with* his people in a pillar of fire and cloud, in the tabernacle, and in the temple. Under the new covenant, God dwells *in* a new temple, the community of believers conceived both corporately and individually (p. 3).

Having introduced his thesis in the opening chapter, Hamilton devotes the second chapter to outlining the range of opinions on the question of the Spirit's indwelling presence under the old and new covenants. Chapter 3 surveys the OT and shows that the Holy Spirit did not indwell believers of the old covenant remnant; rather, God dwelled *with* his people in the tabernacle and the temple. Chapter 4 surveys and explains all

the references to the Spirit in John's Gospel and concludes that the Spirit-Paraclete promised in the Farewell Discourse is delivered to the disciples on resurrection day in order to continue the ministry of Jesus. The fifth chapter considers John 7:39 in light of OT expectations in order to show that John presents the reception of the indwelling Spirit by believers as an eschatological blessing experienced only after the glorification of Jesus. Hamilton argues in chapter 6 that regeneration (or "being born again") and indwelling are distinct ministries of the Spirit according to John's Gospel; specifically, indwelling refers to God's eschatological presence within individual believers after the glorification of Jesus. Chapter 7 gives some practical implications resulting from Hamilton's thesis with a particular emphasis on how the Spirit's indwelling presence compels both formative and corrective discipleship within the church.

What stands out about *God's Indwelling Presence* is that it is truly a work of biblical theology even though it is focused on the Fourth Gospel. One of Hamilton's goals is to show that taking John on his own terms means realizing that John was a biblical theologian himself. Hamilton writes, "John's account of the words of Jesus in John 14:17 . . . reveals Jesus of Nazareth as an astute Old Testament theologian" (p. 169). For Hamilton, John's theology of the Spirit is nothing more than what he considers to be Jesus' understanding of the total OT teaching concerning the new covenant ministry of the Spirit. Thus an evaluation of the Fourth Gospel necessitates a consideration of the pneumatology of both Testaments. Hamilton's project is therefore an ambitious one as he covers the whole terrain of the Bible's teaching on the Holy Spirit. But the scope of the project does not make it superficial. Hamilton is interested in taking each biblical author on his own terms without forcing his writing(s) into a preconceived paradigm.

Another positive feature of Hamilton's book is that it brings the Bible to bear in a fresh way upon an old theological controversy, and it does so in a manner that is sensitive to the various voices of the OT and NT. Although the controversy has been dominated for a very long time by the assumption that regeneration and indwelling refer to the same reality, Hamilton shows that if one takes John on his own terms, this assumption is unwarranted. Systematicians and biblical scholars who equate regeneration and indwelling are actually foisting onto John something he never intended (p. 132). According to Hamilton, regeneration (John 3:3, 5) imbues individuals with spiritual life enabling them to believe, but this is not the same indwelling presence of the Spirit that is promised in John 7:39 and 14:16. Regeneration is John's way of referring to the OT concept of "heart circumcision" (e.g. Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 9:26; Rom 2:29) and should not be considered to be the fulfillment of OT prophecies concerning the eschatological gift of the Spirit.

It is on this point that Hamilton makes his most important contribution: The eschatological gift of the Spirit that is promised in John 7:39 and 14:16 is the indwelling Spirit of God that comes to individuals after the glorification of Jesus. According to Hamilton, John's description of the Spirit's indwelling presence is shaped by concepts that are bound up with the ministry of Israel's Temple (p. 144). Thus, Hamilton shows that the standard interpretation of the Spirit's coming does not go far enough; specifically, it is insufficient because it does not make explicit the connection between the ministry of Jesus that the Spirit continues and the new role the disciples would play as God's Temple (p. 143). Hamilton writes, "When Jesus sends the disciples as the Father has sent Him (17:18; 20:21), He confers to the disciples the temple authority that He received" (p. 144). In other words, what Jesus was to the disciples, the disciples become to the world.

No doubt, readers will find things with which to disagree in *God's Indwelling Presence*. But in spite of differences they may have over the meaning of individual texts, readers will be challenged by the author's compelling overall exposition of John's theology of the Spirit. Hamilton has made a significant contribution in this book, and

his work deserves careful consideration by biblical scholars, theologians, pastors, and engaged laypeople wishing to understand what the Bible teaches about God's indwelling presence.

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Jesus' Blood and Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Imputation. By Brian Vickers. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006, 245 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Skillful coursing through difficult and turbulent waters in contemporary theological debate has earned Brian Vickers our highest commendation and thanks. His study of the apostle Paul's vital teaching on the imputation of Christ's (active and passive) obedience is superb in a great number of respects. That said, the work is not without some lingering problems—problems which must be satisfactorily resolved if we are to do full justice to the teaching of Scripture and its “system of doctrine.” (Neither the author nor the reviewer is apologetic when acknowledging and defending the *systematic* coherence and consistency of Scripture's teaching.)

Vickers pursued his doctoral studies under one of today's leading evangelical-Reformed interpreters in Pauline theology, Thomas Schreiner. Both currently teach at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Like his mentor, Vickers is openly indebted to the work of Geerhardus Vos and Richard Gaffin on the matter of the interplay between biblical theology and systematics. The collaborative effort to assimilate—at least in part—Princetonian theology into the faculty thinking at Southern Seminary is engaging (and convincing!). *Jesus' Blood and Righteousness* is a revision of Vickers's dissertation, a publication adding to the ever burgeoning literature on this and related subjects. At present, all evangelical seminary faculties are wrestling—to one degree or another—with the modern-day dispute over Paul's understanding concerning the Mosaic law, including the doctrines of justification, election, and the covenants. The prospect of unity in essentials in our day is, however, quite bleak. Here is where Vickers comes to the rescue with a clear-headed exposition that should encourage the evangelical community to rethink the dominant view of our day, which in the opinion of author and reviewer undermines of the gospel of sovereign, saving grace—the gospel as revealed in the substitutionary atonement of Christ, the Second Adam. “The contention of this book,” writes Vickers, “is that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is a legitimate and necessary synthesis of Paul's teaching. While no single text contains or develops all the ‘ingredients’ of imputation, the doctrine stands as a component of Paul's soteriology” (p. 18). The work proceeds with a brief, but very helpful, survey of the history of the doctrine of justification (and imputation) and moves on to the exegesis of pivotal texts in Romans 4 and 5, then 2 Cor 5:21, concluding with a theological synthesis. The following comments and critique highlight some of the most pressing concerns in this fierce, ongoing contemporary dispute.

In understanding the role of presuppositions in exegesis we must first be clear concerning “presuppositions” themselves. They are not pre-theoretical or speculative notions imposed upon the biblical text, but rather crucial biblical convictions drawn from the text of Scripture itself. Theological interpretation—in which *all* students of the Bible engage—is circular, beginning and ending with exegesis of the text of Scripture. Exegesis brings into dialogue the sister disciplines of biblical and systematic theology. Theological presuppositionalism faithful to Scripture is not a linguistic accommodation to one's cultural-historical milieu—what some say supplies the “language” of theology

in any given age, that is, the rules of the “game.” For this reason, the doctrine of the covenant(s) is not an alien or speculative presupposition in classic Reformed federalism, a suggestion that is actually quite unpersuasive and inconsistent with Vickers’s own exegetical-theological argument. Vickers reasons, “[O]ne does not have to characterize the relationship between God and Adam as a ‘covenant of works’ to maintain a doctrine of imputation within a covenantal framework” (p. 43). But why *exactly* would one reject or oppose the doctrine of the Covenant of Works? With respect to the twofold doctrine of the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, the traditional covenant theologian insists that “in the Reformed tradition the covenant framework is *the* interpretive presupposition that lies behind the discussion of the relevant Pauline texts” (ibid.). The question is, simply put: Does the doctrine of the two covenants enjoy the support of Scripture? Here there can be no equivocation.

Raising the propriety of the (Reformed) doctrine of the covenants for an evangelical understanding of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness in justification takes us a bit ahead of our critique. Vickers rightly maintains that the Protestant doctrine on justification by faith alone—shared by Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and a host of other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformers—was essentially the same, whether in seed form or full flowering (the latter being the contribution of international Calvinism, i.e. Reformed federalism). Though the following point made by Vickers is hotly contested by some modern-day exponents of Reformed theology, our author is correct to assert that “in the framework of covenant theology, justification rests on the active and passive obedience of Christ. . . . [T]he Westminster divines did indeed hold to the necessity of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience” (p. 40, n. 55). Whatever ambiguities are to be uncovered behind closed doors—in the minutes of the Assembly or in others writings of the time—they cannot legitimately call into question or place in doubt the clear intentions of the Westminster divines, namely, the importance of Christ’s active (and passive) obedience in the procurement of the redemption of God’s elect. The clarity of teaching in the Westminster documents should not be missed or ignored. Our author adds a qualifying comment: “It should be noted that in contrast to the Reformed tradition, the doctrine of imputation in the Lutheran tradition is not based on covenant theology. Thus, while the majority of covenant theologians hold to the imputation of positive righteousness and while the covenant framework more or less requires it, the doctrine is not restricted to, nor does it necessarily imply, covenant theology” (p. 34, n. 36). True enough, but the question to be asked is this: Which tradition is more faithful to Scripture? Even the eminent Reformed systematician John Murray questioned the very notion of a covenant of works because, in his mind, the idea of covenant signified sovereign, saving grace (i.e. redemptive provision). With that definition of covenant, obviously, the original state of Adam at creation could not be viewed covenantally. Regrettably, Murray did not reckon adequately with Scripture or the Reformed tradition with respect to this oddity in his thinking. We must not let Murray (or others following in his train) “off the hook.” The system of biblical doctrine requires nothing less than consistency and fidelity to all of Scripture.

It comes as no surprise that the one, major caveat I have with Vickers’s presentation is the portrayal of covenant theology as mere window-dressing (thus reducing theological summation to what fancies the artist-theologian). Rather, the biblical doctrine of the covenants is basic and formative in the progressive unfolding of redemptive revelation. Not only is covenant doctrine essential to *Reformed* theology, it is very decidedly biblical. It is teaching dictated by Scripture itself. The weight and importance of the divine covenants in biblical-systematic theology ought now, at this time in the history of doctrinal development, be incontestable among evangelical-Reformed interpreters (all those adhering to the traditional Protestant law/gospel contrast). Astute readers of this book will have to answer for themselves the question, Why covenant theology?

And the answer requires greater conviction than Vickers furnishes. The terms “covenant theology” and “federalism” are synonymous, indicating that the crucial element in this doctrine is the representative principle associated with the work of the First and Second Adams. It is here that Vickers is a bit unclear and unsure of himself. Regarding the principle of federal representation, he writes: “This is the perspective held in the Reformed tradition, as is evident in the phrase ‘federal theology.’ On the other hand, ‘covenant’ theology is not limited to the Reformed tradition, and other ‘covenant’ theologies may differ substantially from the Reformed variety. What matters here is that Paul establishes the concept of representation as the most basic component of God’s plan of creation and redemption” (pp. 150–51). If federal representation is “the most basic component” in the creation and recreation of humankind, then we all need to be federal theologians. Listening again to Vickers: “‘Covenant,’ broadly speaking, is the biblical structure and the *modus operandi* of the unfolding of the history of redemption. In a real sense the entire Old Testament [and by extension the New Testament] is a covenantal context” (p. 181).

How do other schools of interpretation measure up? Concerning the views of N. T. Wright, Vickers observes: “The connection Wright draws from Adam through Abraham and Israel and through Christ highlights the essential covenantal relationship between God and his people. It must be pointed out, however, that in spite of points of agreement, Wright’s covenant theology and Reformed covenant theology are similar only in name at many fundamental points” (p. 151, n.140). Critical to competing views on Paul and the law is one’s assessment of the Mosaic economy (and administration), what Reformed theology has rightly categorized as an episode in the ongoing manifestation of the single Covenant of Grace extending from the Fall to the Consummation. In the opinion of E. P. Sanders, as read by Vickers, “The most significant issue is the fact that the Mosaic covenant, specifically regarding the law, is not inherently lacking anything; indeed, Paul’s complaint is not that the old covenant was insufficient, but that it is obsolete now that the Messiah has come” (p. 56). Both Vickers and the contributors to *Covenant, Justification, and Pastoral Ministry: Essays by the Faculty of Westminster Seminary California* (ed. R. Scott Clark; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007) underscore the role and significance of the Mosaic covenant in the present-day dispute over the doctrine of justification by faith. Of paramount importance is one’s reading of the works-inheritance principle associated with temporal life in earthly Canaan, the ancient land of promise, type of the believer’s eternal reward in the consummate kingdom of God. Strangely, both volumes have studiously avoided engaging this critical aspect of the contemporary debate in any depth. To reiterate: the operation of the works-principle in the Mosaic covenant has a direct bearing upon Paul’s interpretation of justification as the distinguishing feature of the new covenant, in contrast to the old (see, e.g., the passage in 2 Corinthians 3). Hence, this is not something to be glossed over.

Vickers concedes: “A study of the Mosaic law, including a thorough consideration of the Old Testament and the nature of the obedience required in the law, with a specific view of Christ’s obedience in regard to imputation, would be another valuable contribution to the larger discussion. Such a study would have to include thorough evidence outside the purview of this book” (pp. 226–27, n. 83). It is not as though our author neglects this aspect entirely. After all, Paul’s reading of the Mosaic covenant is crucial in the text of Romans 4–5, which receives focal attention in *Jesus’ Blood and Righteousness*. Much insight is provided in the exegesis of these chapters in Romans. However, some of the issues in interpretation that I see Vickers in need of reassessing are these: (1) the biblical idea of probation occupies a much more formative role in unraveling Paul’s summary overview of history (including the federal principle of representation); (2) to be “under law,” I contend, means to be under probation (and therefore under a covenant-of-works arrangement); (3) to be “under law” in the postlapsarian epoch is to

be under the dominion of sin (therefore, under the power of sin and death common to all who are in Adam); (4) the “specific command” of which Vickers speaks is much more specific—it is to stand under a covenant of works requiring obedience as the grounds of blessing (or curse in the case of transgression); and (5) according to Rom 5:19, believers are *constituted* (not made) righteous on the grounds of Christ’s obedience (which parallels the reality of all being *constituted* [not made] sinners in Adam). The weight of Paul’s argument in Romans leads our author to conclude: “Finally in this regard, the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is not simply a by-product of traditional covenant theology. It is a matter of recognizing a similarity between the relationship of Adam to humanity and Christ to humanity. Romans 5:12–21 is the issue, not a presupposition about whether the relationship between Adam and God was a covenant” (p. 228). Again I ask: How can one contend for the importance of federal representation, yet regard the covenantal framework laid out in Reformed theology as optional, as mere window-dressing?

I register several closing comments. First, Vickers’s reading of Peter Lillback’s *The Binding of God: Calvin’s Role in the Development of Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001) differs sharply from mine and that of others (e.g. Scott Clark and Cornelius Venema). In this connection, it will be necessary for Vickers to engage the most recent work penned by Gaffin (“*By Faith, Not By Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation* [Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2006]) and by Paul Rainbow (*The Way of Salvation: The Role of Christian Obedience in Justification* [Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2005]). Vickers informs his readers that the latter work arrived too late in his hands to receive adequate attention. (I have also reviewed these two books in this issue of *JETS*.) Like Norman Shepherd (whom Vickers bypasses in his study), Gaffin and Rainbow teach justification as present *and* future, a benefit of union with Christ appropriated by means of faith *and* works. In their view present justification is thereby contingent on future judgment according to works.

Second, Reformed interpreters, as exponents of traditional covenant theology, have yet to apply properly the contrasting doctrines of merit under the Covenant of Works and *gospel-grace* under the Covenant of Grace to the popular, long-held notion regarding a gradation of rewards for believers in accordance with their exercise of good works. Vickers warns here against the danger of a “Christian works-righteousness” (p. 230, n. 94). (Iain Duguid in *Covenant, Justification, and Pastoral Ministry* espouses a similar position.) Needless to say, much more work needs to be done in support of this disputed teaching.

Third, alongside a helpful bibliography, the addition of other major, more recent works of Meredith G. Kline, including serious interaction, would greatly enrich Vickers’s study and exposition. The author’s omission of such works is something of a puzzlement to me. True ecumenical theology—what all Christians believe to be the teaching of Scripture—transcends idiosyncratic notions and oddities appearing in the history of doctrine (those associated with one theological tradition or another). Such peculiarities ultimately lack biblical support. Not so in the case of traditional Reformed covenant theology as faithfully expounded by representative, modern-day interpreters like Vos and Kline.

Lastly, as Vickers so convincingly argues, Christ’s imputed righteousness is, in the first place, not ontological, but covenantal; second, it is legal, not transformative (what requires the *imparted* righteousness of Christ). The imputation of Christ’s obedience, active and passive, is an act of divine justice, not a legal fiction. *Jesus’ Blood and Righteousness* captures the essence of the biblical doctrine. What remains is a greater degree of conviction as to the propriety of the federal (covenantal) implications of this teaching in the system of doctrine. Such an excellent disquisition can be made even better—and when it comes to the defense of the faith, it’s all hands to the oar! For further analysis of the Shepherd-Gaffin-Lillback school and other, broader aspects of

the contemporary evangelical debate, see my *Federalism and the Westminster Tradition: Reformed Orthodoxy at the Crossroads* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006).

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The Way of Salvation: The Role of Christian Obedience in Justification. By Paul A. Rainbow. Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2005, 336 pp., \$29.99. "By Faith, Not By Sight:" *Paul and the Order of Salvation.* By Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2006, viii + 114 pp., \$16.99.

Paternoster has published two works by contemporary Protestant expositors that nicely complement one another. Whether they complement the message and cause of the Protestant Reformation will be the critical question left for readers to answer. It would be very hard to miss that the argument of both books is the same in thrust and in substance. While Richard Gaffin (Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia) assumes a less confrontational stance toward the Protestant reformers, Paul Rainbow (North American Baptist Seminary) is uninhibited in his criticism of what he sees to be their glaring misreading of the crucial, biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone. The difference in posture, however, is inconsequential, as we shall see. Rainbow writes as a NT scholar with a solid command of the history of doctrine, Gaffin as a systematician with expertise in Pauline theology (hence his desire to reformulate the system of Reformed doctrine in accordance with biblical theology, which has its own distinct methodology). Together, these two books will undoubtedly serve to advance the contemporary debate among evangelical and Reformed interpreters through their (attempted) restatement of doctrine, one they deem to be evangelical, faithful to the teaching of Scripture.

In this review of two, very similar arguments, focal attention will be directed to the work by Rainbow, the stronger of the two. At times I find his writing highly commendable, at other times highly exasperating. The author of *The Way of Salvation* attempts to bridge the chasm between two antithetical, theological positions by postulating a *via media*. Unfortunately, the result is a work characterized by thoroughgoing confusion, contradiction, and misstatement. Rainbow aims to supplement historic Protestant teaching on the doctrine of justification by faith. In the course of doing so, frequent citation is made to Gaffin's prior study, *The Centrality of the Resurrection*. Of special mention in this connection is Gaffin's attention to the doctrine of union with Christ and its relevance for the *ordo salutis*.

Rainbow states his major contention in these words: "To isolate justification from sanctification is one way to erect a safeguard against works-righteousness, to be sure. But it goes too far and renders the 'faith alone' doctrine susceptible to an inherent ethical groundlessness. If justification be wholly independent of sanctification, then the requirement of sanctification becomes an add-on, and does not arise from the very nature of God's gift of righteousness. On that hypothesis, the imperative to do good does not arise out of the fact that good behaviour is part and parcel of righteousness itself, but from a different principle and collection of scriptural texts" (xix). Rainbow is concerned that the judgment of God be based on the presence and operation of genuine holiness within the life of the believer—divine judgment based on fact, not fiction. (The implication is that in classical Protestant-Reformed teaching the imputation of Christ's righteousness as the exclusive, meritorious ground of the justification of the sinner redeemed and united to Christ, is insufficient—even illusory.) Ethical change, argues Rainbow, must be inherent and transformational. This contention is by no means

peculiar to Rainbow's argument, but it is disturbing to hear it from the lips of one professing to be Protestant and evangelical.

Over a spread of twenty chapters, Rainbow discusses all the important aspects of the debate concerning the doctrine of justification, beginning with a brief sketch of the Protestant Reformation. Other topics include the two covenants (Mosaic and new), two kinds of works (meritorious and those of faith, that is, the "good works" of believers), the imputation of Christ's righteousness, regeneration, and sanctification. The book closes with a theological synthesis, observations on the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*), and an affirmation of the assurance of salvation. Not to appear too novel in his formulation of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith (alone), he ends his study by identifying earlier theologians he views as "forerunners" of his teaching (in part only). These include Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Bucer, Hooker, Baxter, Edwards, and Wesley. The "Concluding Postscript" exhorts Protestants and Catholics today to listen anew to each side of the debate through the lens of contemporary theology and exegesis. An appendix commends the Joint Statement drawn up at Regensburg (1541) as a model and starting point for renewed discussion. An extended bibliography is also provided.

In contrast, Gaffin's treatise is much more narrowly focused on the explication of the doctrine of justification in the Pauline *ordo salutis*, in terms of realized eschatology or, more exactly, union with the resurrected Christ (a preoccupation of Gaffin since his doctoral study in the late 1960s). This presentation began as a series of lectures delivered first at Oak Hill Theological College, London, in May 2004 and then reworked for the Seventh Annual Pastors Conference, which the reader is told was "sponsored by the session of the Auburn Avenue Presbyterian Church, Monroe, Louisiana, in January 2005" (Gaffin, p. vii). The other main speaker at this conference was none other than N. T. Wright. Auburn Avenue is the seat of the "Federal Vision" school, a movement holding similar views to the New Perspective on Paul and the Law, and a hotbed for the teachings of Norman Shepherd.

Did John Calvin and Martin Luther agree in their understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith (apart from works)? Rainbow answers: "In the matter of justification, Calvin was a disciple of Luther almost all the way" (p. 31; Gaffin avers otherwise). Rainbow contends: "In the Protestant outlook, imputation is the thing that saves. Good works are required of the regenerate afterwards, but not with a view to any further aspect of salvation. Justifying righteousness and the righteousness of sanctification rest on different causes, operate in separate spheres, and serve disparate ends. They have nothing to do with each other" (p. 35). In his zeal to advance his own, nuanced discussion concerning justification and sanctification (contra the view of the Protestant reformers), Rainbow misstates and exaggerates the case against the Reformers.

The doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, to be sure, is absolutely critical, but that in no way suggests that everything has been said that needs to be said with regard to exposition of the doctrine of the salvation of sinners justified by grace through faith. Far from it. (Can Rainbow name one respectable work in Protestant dogmatics that begins and ends the locus on the application of redemption with justification and imputation? Rainbow's reading is mere caricature.) As another example of misstatement on the part of Rainbow, he writes: "Having been justified by reason of Christ, believers, moved by the Holy Spirit, start to bear fruit. But their deeds are irrelevant to their righteousness in God's eyes" (p. 35). What respectable Protestant Reformer, past or present, would affirm this statement? Rainbow's manner of argument, his reading of the primary sources, can be justly questioned. His command of the history of doctrine, though impressive, is clearly biased.

Moving to the crux of the issue in this modern-day dispute, how are we to view the (genuinely) *good* works of the saints, those justified and sanctified in Christ Jesus? How do we reconcile Paul and James on justification (wherein justification is by faith and by works respectively)? And how do we construe future judgment according to works?

These questions are not new. What is new are the answers coming from the “evangelical-Reformed” camp (hence the intramural side of the theological controversy). Again, in the words of Rainbow: “Many of these problems revolve around the single question whether the fruit of the Spirit counts toward a finalizing of justification. For this reason, the real Protestant dispute with Rome came to be focused squarely on the issue of Christian works in salvation. Against Augustine’s opinion that fulfilling the law with the help of the Holy Spirit leads to justification, Luther blasted a No” (p. 46).

To his credit, Rainbow, unlike Gaffin, acknowledges more openly the differences he has with traditional Protestant interpretation. He clearly sets his views over against Protestant-Reformed Orthodoxy. (Gaffin equivocates on this score.) The underlying thesis in Rainbow’s interpretation is this: “Whenever Paul says that works of the law form no part of the basis on which God accepts sinners, he means that fallen humanity can do nothing to merit God’s favor. By no means is he denying that good works will be the ground on which God will approve of believers on the last day. . . . [B]oth our initial acceptance into divine favour and our culminating approbation involve a judgment on God’s part in which God attributes righteousness to us, and therefore they together make up that whole justification on which our entrance into God’s eternal kingdom depends” (pp. 82–84).

As for Luther and Calvin, they “did not acknowledge the distinction in Paul’s usage between works of the law and good works. They tried to negate it” (84). (Not so, I say.) For what it’s worth, Rainbow chastises those who deny the doctrine of the imputation of Christ’s obedience, active and passive. (We are hearing the same from Gaffin and John Piper in *Counted Righteous in Christ*.) The more important question is, however: What is meant by imputation? What place does it occupy in the *system* of doctrine? Prominent in the current debate is the teaching of James. The second chapter of James, observes Rainbow, “ought to have stopped Luther and Calvin in their tracks” (p. 213). He adds: “The Reformers must have realized that James 2:14–26 is fatal to their ‘faith alone’ doctrine. They did everything they could to dodge its words and clauses” (p. 223).

Three other affirmations and a conclusion drawn by Rainbow help drive home his point: (1) “[E]vangelical obedience, thus defined, will be critical to God’s decision finally to justify people” (p. 155); (2) “The plenary imputation of Christ’s righteousness to us by faith by no means obviates the fact that Christians must face a final judgment in which God intends to justify us, to the praise of his glory” (pp. 172–73); (3) “Inseparable from the futurity of salvation is its conditionality, God’s past favour does not, in and of itself apart from certain favours which God promises to bestow, supply everything needed to pass the last hurdle” (p. 173). The conclusion of this thinking: “[This] is not to cast doubt on the outcome. A robust doctrine of grace holds that God himself provides everything he requires of his elect. . . . It is simply to say that our justification occurs in two phases. The righteousness God gave us when we turned to him, he actualizes in another dimension before he admits us into the everlasting state” (p. 174).

Contrary to Rainbow’s interpretation, justification is not a process, with a (provisional) beginning and a (final) resolution. Having said that, we are obliged to recognize in the biblical data two aspects pertaining to soteric justification, the constitutive and the demonstrative. Rainbow, like Gaffin, identifies two aspects as “present” and “future.” Quoting Gaffin, Rainbow agrees that “Our sanctification is strategically more ultimate than our justification” (p. 185, n. 26). How does this teaching comport with the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, understood as the sole meritorious grounds of our justification? It simply does not. For Rainbow, the way of salvation, that is, justification, is by faith (which serves as the alone “instrument” receiving the imputed righteousness of Christ) and by *good* works.

Rainbow reasons: “[I]nsofar as justification remains to be concluded at the final judgment, our increase in sanctity precedes that event and supplies one aspect of the basis for a favourable verdict (Rom 8:1–2). What will weigh with the judge in that

day is our faith operative in deeds of love wrought through God's Spirit (Gal. 5:5-6)" (p. 187). As though this determination has not already been made (i.e. fixed once-for-all), Rainbow contends: "The primary purpose of the last judgment, then, is to pronounce definitively on people's everlasting fates, to determine whether they will enter the consummated kingdom of God" (p. 189).

What is at stake for believers at the Final Judgment "is their eternal destiny, not just the secondary issue of rewards; and that the decision will be based on the criterion of their deeds as having demonstrated the reality of their union with Christ by faith" (p. 203). Rainbow endorses the view of Gaffin, seeing "initial justification [as] contingent upon final justification." This construction appears to be "on the right track" (p. 209). Rainbow, like Gaffin, attempts to ameliorate teaching on faith and works as the way of salvation by explaining: "To say that future justification is contingent upon Christian obedience is not to make it uncertain. Inaugural justification places one within the dynamic field of God's grace which ensures a happy outcome. Contingency means that a further condition stands between our present state and the goal; a condition, the fulfillment of which is guaranteed by the same grace which has launched us into trajectory (1 Cor. 1:8-9; Phil. 1:6)" (p. 211). The problem here is the notion of contingency. This will not stand with the biblical doctrine of justification. The formulation of Rainbow and Gaffin is misleading. It is erroneous.

Briefly, three other important elements of doctrine are to be noted in this discussion. Firstly, Rainbow, unlike Gaffin, affirms the works-inheritance principle, antithetical to the faith-inheritance principle, in the covenant with ancient, theocratic Israel (a reinstatement of the principle operative in the first covenant with Adam). This teaching Rainbow correctly regards as basic and straightforward in Scripture. (By implication, Gaffin is missing the obvious.) In view here is the contrast between law and gospel, a vital and constitutive element in Protestant-Reformed teaching. Rainbow explains: "the outstanding feature of the old covenant was its condition that Israel obey the commandments of the Pentateuch in order to enjoy God's blessings" (p. 72). This raises the question: Why does Rainbow proceed to speak of conditionality in the Covenant of Grace—a present justification (by faith) conditioned on future results (i.e. works of faith)? Simply put: *under law* blessing is contingent upon obedience; *under grace* it is unconditional (not based on human achievement). Christ secures the blessing on behalf of the elect. Rainbow's formulation is contradictory.

Second, there is the matter of the (ongoing) warfare between the "flesh" and the "Spirit," Romans 7 being the classic text. Unquestionably, this subject is elusive in most biblical and theological discussions, and one in which Rainbow and Gaffin would have their differences. All can agree, however, that "[a] correct interpretation of the passage is critical for understanding Paul's theological anthropology and his doctrine of sanctification" (p. 148). More attention needs to be given here to the relationship of this battle between the flesh and the Spirit and the law/gospel antithesis as descriptive of the old and new dispensations. On this subject, Gaffin elsewhere mistakenly equates the two, and in so doing undermines the doctrine of the continuity of the Covenant of Grace throughout the history of redemption.

Third, there is the issue of rewards (i.e. gradations in heaven and hell based upon what has been done in the body). The view of Rainbow and Gaffin is part and parcel of their understanding of the role of faith and good works in the life of the believer (and their view of reward for the moral endeavors of the reprobate). Rainbow posits: "God in fairness judges each person individually according to that person's endowments and opportunities. Of those to whom more is given, more will be required (Lk. 12:48), and some who appear last in this age will be first then (Mt. 19:30). Apparently the degree of glory we attain will be determined by our zeal in responding to God's imperatives. The more diligently we strive, the more sure we can be that we are standing in God's grace now and that he will welcome us into his eternal dwelling in the end. Paul nowhere states this rule as plainly as does Peter (2 Pet. 1:5-11). But by his entire life and apostolic

ministry he made himself an example of it" (p. 246). No matter how one qualifies this line of argument with respect to rewards, it reintroduces the notion of merit with regard to one's eternal inheritance, in weal or in woe (as an ameliorating influence with respect to the latter).

All said, strands of Rainbow's thinking move in the right direction, but substantive rethinking and reformulation are needed. The same is true of Gaffin's study. With a view to the long-standing controversy at Westminster Seminary over the views of Gaffin and Norman Shepherd, his former colleague, Gaffin's latest book shows no substantive reformulation whatsoever. *"By Faith, Not by Sight"* might suggest a turnabout of sorts. But that would be a misreading based on wishful thinking. It would be a great mistake to read this book out of context—that being the ongoing seminary dispute. If Gaffin has genuinely revised his thinking in the direction of Reformed orthodoxy, there remains no renunciation of former, erroneous teaching, no repudiation of Shepherd's teaching (which is nowhere mentioned in the book). Despite largely superficial changes in this latest installment of his position, Gaffin aims to leave the door open to rethinking of the issues. (Gaffin concedes that he is still thinking his way through basic biblical, Reformed doctrine.)

In the final analysis, deep inherent problems remain. Having jettisoned the classic (biblical) law/gospel antithesis, Gaffin remains uncertain how to safeguard his theological interpretation. His terminology of a "present justification" and a "future justification," like that employed by Rainbow, is false and misleading. Equally unsatisfactory is the alternative proposal that we speak of two aspects to justification, present and future. (Gaffin admits uncertainty as to how best to explain the present and future components in the doctrine of justification.) Having served on the six-member committee which produced the "Report on Justification Presented to the Seventy-third General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church" (June 2006), Gaffin defies what has been billed there as a "consensus report." In his book Gaffin continues to affirm the contingent nature of present justification by grace—a conditional state looking forward to future justification by works. In so doing, his teaching undercuts the clear affirmation that "justification is a once-for-all accomplished, completed, and perfect act" ("Report," 5). Gaffin cannot have it both ways.

"[T]he antithesis between law and gospel," writes Gaffin, "is not an end in itself. It is not a theological ultimate. Rather, that antithesis enters not by virtue of creation but as the consequence of sin, and the gospel functions for its overcoming. The gospel is to the end of removing an absolute law-gospel antithesis in the life of the believer. How so? Briefly, apart from the gospel and outside of Christ the law is my enemy and condemns me" (p. 103). This explanation will not do. *Law* (and its principle of works-inheritance) pertains to the original Covenant of Works; *gospel* (and its principle of faith-inheritance) pertains to the substitutionary work of Christ, including his fulfillment of all righteousness by means of his active and passive obedience "under the law," which righteousness is imputed to those who believe. Gaffin will have none of this thinking. He calls it a false "polarization." (Let it be said, law and gospel are polar opposites with respect to the way of inheritance.)

Precisely in this connection, the following explanatory comment by Gaffin serves only to obscure the issue in dispute. He writes: "Doing God's will is endemic to the divine image as originally created in Adam and restored in Christ" (p. 101). What is glaringly missing in this connection is the biblical, Reformed teaching on probation as that informs the Covenant of Works. According to Gaffin, "law" (in contrast to "gospel") merely denotes the vain attempt of the sinner to obtain God's favor on grounds of obedience. Gaffin argues for continuity in all the divine-human covenants, pre- and postlapsarian. Echoing Shepherd's teaching, Gaffin defines covenant in terms of promise and command, faith and obedience. The Pauline category of "the obedience of faith" might equally describe covenant faithfulness all across the historical continuum, from creation to consummation. Accordingly, justification is a matter of faith and (non-meritorious) works.

Agreeably, some Reformed interpreters did speak of a “double justification,” or a “second justification.” This was an attempt to reckon with the teaching of James, speaking as he does of a justification by works. Difficulty in theological formulation respecting Paul and James on the doctrine of justification marks Protestant theology from the beginning. What is certain, though now widely challenged, is their conclusion that there are two *different* justifications (rather than a *single* justification having two aspects, the constitutive and the demonstrative). Coordinately, judgment according to works is inextricably related to, but sharply different from, justification. The safeguard in the thinking of the Reformers was what is identified in Protestant-Reformed orthodoxy as the law/gospel contrast. Within the (mature) Reformed wing of the Reformation stands the twofold doctrine of the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, reflecting the antithetical principles of inheritance, one by works and one by faith.

Gaffin reiterates in this book his view that justification, like adoption, unfolds in two stages, present and future. “Paul’s statements on adoption, we may conclude, provide a window on how he would have us view the closely related forensic blessing of justification. As adoption is both present [spiritual] and future [bodily], so too is justification” (p. 93). There is no justification for reading Paul in this manner. Adoption and justification cannot be compared so blithely. What Gaffin is unwilling to acknowledge (without equivocation) is the truth that the justification of sinners saved by grace is definitive and unconditional (i.e. not contingent upon good works, the “doing of the law,” to which reference is made in Rom 2:6–13). Judgment according to works (or open acquittal) on the Final Day does not complete justification, but rather demonstrates or verifies God’s saving grace in the lives of believers in their exercise of good works—works prepared in advance for those who are united to Christ, who are justified and sanctified.

Lastly, by way of critique, the modern-day controversy will not permit the federal, scholastic dichotomy between nature and covenant (or law and prelapsarian “grace”) to stand or go unchallenged. Given the history of the controversy at Westminster Seminary and within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, neither the Reformed nor the broader evangelical community can ignore the twofold doctrine of the covenants as expressive of the law/gospel antithesis. Included here is the crucial doctrine of probation (whether in the case of the First Adam, Israel under the Mosaic covenant, or the Second Adam). For more detail and discussion on this wide-ranging controversy, see my *Federalism and the Westminster Tradition: Reformed Orthodoxy at the Crossroads* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006).

I would be remiss if I did not point out the fact that Gaffin begins his treatment of Paul on the doctrine of justification by commenting on the interplay between two sister disciplines within the theological curriculum, biblical theology and systematics. Gaffin is convinced that the former has much to contribute by way of reshaping and redefining traditional dogmatics. This book is just such an attempt at needed reformulation of the Protestant-Reformed doctrine of justification by faith alone, as he sees it. Whether one is reading *The Way of Salvation* or “*By Faith, Not by Sight*,” the message is the same—one that is out of step with Scripture and orthodox Protestant teaching.

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Emerging Voices, Urgent Choices: Essays on Latino/a Religious Leadership. By Edwin I. Hernández, Milagros Peña, Kenneth G. Davis, and Elizabeth Station, eds. Boston: Brill, 2006, x + 221 pp., \$59.00 paper.

Emerging Voices comprises a series of seven essays devoted to understanding the critical issues facing both Catholic and Protestant churches as they seek to minister effectively to Latino/a communities. Each essay was originally presented at a multi-

denominational summit of Christian leaders held at Duke Divinity School ("Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: A National Gathering to Develop Strategies to Strengthen Hispanic Ministry"), the stated goal of which was "to build and begin advancing an agenda for greater multi-denominational cooperation among Hispanic church leaders" (p. 1).

Each of the essays, consequently, addresses a particular aspect of Latino/a religious life: the importance of ministry that meets the social, spiritual, and material needs of Latino/a communities (essays 1, 4, and 6); the vital significance of developing Latino/a religious leadership (essays 2, 3, and 7); and the progress of Hispanic ministry among Protestant denominations (essay 5).

A chief characteristic of all the essays is their attention to providing accurate statistical information about Latino/a communities. Though commenting on the dearth of reliable information in a variety of areas, the essayists all highlight the significant challenges facing Hispanic communities in their chronic shortage of adequate resources, the tremendous diversity between various Latino/a groups, the growing segment of younger Hispanics who have been inadequately reached by religious communities, and the continued lack of properly trained Hispanic leaders (particularly women). Although this statistical emphasis makes for rather dry reading at times, it does provide a helpful summary of a wealth of information.

Throughout *Emerging Voices*, the primary concern is to highlight the importance of developing Latino/a religious leadership. Specifically, the authors point out that any hope of developing more effective Latino/a ministries rests on the church's ability to attract a larger proportion of women and young Hispanics into leadership development programs and to devote more resources to providing training opportunities to the chronically under-resourced Hispanic community. Several of the essayists also cite the need for evaluating seminary curricula and developing training programs that are more effective at meeting the unique needs of U. S. Hispanic leaders, who are often called upon to serve in such disparate roles as spiritual guide, social and health care worker, and immigration specialist, while routinely working two or more jobs.

A final recurring theme that bears mentioning is the need for better stewardship by the church. The limited economic resources of most Hispanic churches correspond directly to the limited opportunities for educational advancement that, in turn, leads to inadequate training and under-representation in denominational leadership. *Emerging Voices* challenges the church as a whole to think more strategically about how to utilize effectively their resources to support more productive ministry to this vital and growing segment of the American church.

Emerging Voices is to be commending for highlighting a variety of important challenges. Nonetheless, the book is marked by two key drawbacks. First, each of the essays was written independently of the others and draws largely on the same set of statistical data. This leads to some significant overlap and repetition among the essays. Second, the essays do a far better job of establishing the challenges facing the church than making substantive and specific proposals for how these challenges might be addressed. One gets the impression that a more careful reworking of the material after the conference would have helped limit the repetition and sharpen the conclusions reached by the various authors.

Despite these limitations, *Emerging Voices* is a valuable tool for anyone seeking an accessible overview of current statistical information about Latino/a religious life and a summary of the key challenges facing the American church, both Protestant and Catholic, in light of the needs of this rapidly growing constituency. Much more work certainly needs to be done in formulating adequate responses to these challenges, but *Emerging Voices* provides a helpful beginning point.

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