

BOOK REVIEWS

Twice Used Songs: Performance Criticism of the Songs of Ancient Israel. By Terry Giles and William J. Doan. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009. xvii + 179 pp., \$29.99 paper.

Terry Giles and William Doan use performance criticism to analyze the “twice-used songs” in the OT. Twice used songs are songs in the OT that have, according to the authors, been inserted into prose narratives. On page 19, the authors list identifying characteristics of such songs. For example, they sit somewhat awkwardly in their contexts, sometimes containing anachronistic details that indicate a use prior to their insertion into the second narratives. They also contribute little or nothing to the plot development of their narratives, but do contribute to the persuasiveness and audience participation of the narratives. They also were intended to be performed. The authors identify a list of fourteen twice-used songs in the OT, as well as a list of five songs twice used but not as songs! Daniel 2:20–23 is an example of the latter. The book also includes a chapter on songs not sung; the song of Moses (Deut 32:1–43) is cited as a prime example. God tells Moses to “write this song,” and according to Deuteronomy 31:30, Moses “spoke” the song to the assembly of Israel.

The original aim of *Twice Used Songs* is to apply performance criticism to these songs. Performance criticism, especially associated with drama and theatre studies, is a relatively recent discipline and the authors demonstrate a thorough acquaintance with the emerging theories in this area. As their diagram on page 15 indicates, performance theory lies at the intersection of a great range of disciplines, and (not surprisingly) they do not provide a concise definition of the discipline. They are, however, clear that “the way of thinking and the manner of communicating that are common in theatre and performance resides just below the surface of much of the Hebrew Bible text” (p. 15). A central distinction in their method is the one they make between iconic presentation and dialectic presentation. The former refers to the elements on display for spectators, whereas the latter refers to the interaction between the place of presentation, the presenters, and the spectators. Twice-used songs are characterized by a form of direct presentation that openly acknowledges the audience and involves them in the narrative.

Giles and Doan rightly connect their approach to the intention of the biblical storytellers and argue that performance criticism will add to the insights of literary approaches because twice-used songs have their own conventions and patterns that literary approaches do not always pick up on. The major songs examined include The Book of Jashar: The Song Scroll (2 Sam 1:17; Josh 10:13; 1 Kgs 8:12–13 LXX); The Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–18); The Song of Deborah (Judges 5:2–31); and The Song of Asaph (1 Chr 16:8–36). There is also a chapter on short choruses such as The Song of Miriam (Exod 15:21)—choruses the authors describe as the “pop music of Hebrew narrative” (p. 119).

With any methodology the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the central question is the extent to which such a performative reading enhances our capacity to hear the biblical text. For purposes of this short review I will focus on the Song of the Sea. As recurs in this book, identification of the song as twice-sung depends on source criticism. Verses 17 and 13b were probably, according to the authors, written from Jerusalem, perhaps with the temple in view and thus “demonstrate” how the Song fits

awkwardly in its narrative context. The song is undoubtedly very old and had a life prior to its inclusion in Exodus 15. The authors follow Dozeman in identifying verses 1–12, 18 as the pre-Exodus song. This is first analyzed as an example of an iconic mode of presentation, which stresses being rather than becoming. Verses 13–17 were added when the song was reused as part of the Exodus narrative. Nevertheless, the song as a whole in Exodus 15 has a complex literary structure with the refrain in verse 11 as the apex. Giles and Doan conclude, “The function of the song is not to further the narrative story of the exodus but to draw the reader (or listener) into the drama of the story by presenting a device whereby the reader (or listener) can ‘sing along’ and so be part of the telling of the story. The song offers the chance for embodiment: physical and vocal participation” (p. 66).

It is surely right that the Song of the Sea draws the reader into the drama of the story; indeed, contemporary settings would be a great help in drawing readers into the drama of Scripture and making this our story. But this is hardly new and thin pickings for an approach that is as heavy theoretically as presented in this volume. In this respect, it forms a contrast with the inductive approach of Meir Sternberg in his *Poetics of Hebrew Narrative*, a book that is profoundly fruitful exegetically while less theoretical in the top-down sense.

A tension also remains between the dependence upon source criticism and upon a literary analysis of the song. It does not seem to me that the song fits awkwardly in its narrative context and the literary analysis raises questions about the validity of the hypothetical reconstruction of the pre-Exodus version. Furthermore, taken as a whole, it is not the case that the song stresses being rather than becoming; both are clearly in view.

In spite of these concerns, it does seem to me that readers can gain much from a performative analysis of biblical texts, and clearly of some more than of others. Works such as Shimon Levy’s *Bible as Theatre* are rich with suggestive exegesis. *Twice Used Songs* is helpful in introducing one to the theory of performance and in opening up ways in which performance criticism may prove fertile. Work remains to be done in demonstrating the exegetical fecundity of such an approach.

Craig G. Bartholomew

Redeemer University College and The Paideia Centre for Public Theology,
Ancaster, Canada

The Prophets of Israel: An Introduction. By Jack R. Lundbom. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, xiii + 258 pp., \$24.00 paper.

Jack R. Lundbom, the author of the three-volume Anchor Bible Commentary on Jeremiah, introduces the prophets the same way he presented them to an adult Sunday school class and in several prophetic lectures overseas. He begins by identifying six characteristics of Israelite and ancient Near Eastern prophets: (1) they have a divine call; (2) they speak God’s word; (3) they have divine visions; (4) they do mighty works; (5) they are filled with the Spirit; and (6) they pray. The problem with this list is that some Israelite prophets (and most ancient Near Eastern prophets) exhibit only one of these characteristics. (Obadiah only claims to speak the divine revelation he received.) Meanwhile, false prophets sometimes claim to have several (the false prophets in Jeremiah 23), and non-prophetic individuals have one or more of these characteristics (e.g. Pharaoh had visions).

Chapter 2 begins by identifying common features of the messages of the prophets. They spoke about future events as well as criticized present day individuals and na-

tions. Some prophets criticized foreign nations while others focused on social injustice. Not all prophets were authentic prophets of God, for some only preached peace and prosperity, did not confront evil, prophesied for money, and spoke words that did not come from the God of Israel. The bulk of chapter 2 surveys the central teachings of each prophet, beginning with brief comments about Samuel's critique of Saul, Nathan's confrontation of David, and Elijah's miracles. Lundbom's chronological survey of the writing prophets quotes many verses from each prophetic book to illustrate the variety of things each prophet said, but he includes few in-depth discussions of exegetical, theological, or historical issues. He states that Amos focused on social justice and believed God had an interest in all nations, while Hosea presented the compassion of God in spite of Israel's covenant unfaithfulness. Zephaniah warned the people during the reign of Josiah that the Day of the Lord was near, while Obadiah called the nations to destroy Edom for its abuse of the Israelites after Jerusalem's fall in 586 BC. All of these summaries appear to be aimed primarily at the beginner or a lay audience.

Each book has some brief historical comments about its date, followed by theologically important ideas in each prophecy. Lundbom states that Amos 9:11–15 was a "later add-on" (p. 57), doubts Micah wrote 4:1–8 (p. 60), and concludes that Isaiah did not write chapters 24–27, 34–35, or 40–66 (pp. 63, 73, 78). Nevertheless, he does accept 9:2–7 and 11:1–9 as messianic prophecies. He admits he does not know the date of Joel, but he places it in a late pre-exilic setting. He treats Isaiah 40–55 as a separate group of oracles and concludes that it was an exilic message given to Israelites in Babylon, while Isaiah 56–66 was a post-exilic message for people in Jerusalem (p. 106). He does not interpret the suffering servant as a description of the nation of Israel, but as an individual the church has identified with Jesus. He believes Jonah was a "folktale" (p. 121) that counters the narrow mindedness of the post-exilic era. For some unknown reason, he does not include a discussion of the prophecy in the book of Daniel.

Lundbom ends the first section of the book (chap. 3) by dealing with matters of prophetic authenticity. The basis for authentic prophecy was the extraordinary inspirational event in which the Spirit spoke to the prophet. The prophets achieve authenticity when they respond to these events, though authenticity lies in the inspired verbal response, not in the prophet's being. The OT does not speak of "false prophets" (the Old Greek translation does), but of prophets who speak falsehoods and deceive people through their evil acts or speech. Sometimes prophecy is authenticated by signs (Exodus 4; 1 Kings 18; Isa 7:14; Ezek 4:1–3) or visions (Jer 1:13–16). The Israelites were not to accept prophets that followed other gods, were immoral, prophesied for money, or spoke things that were not fulfilled. Of course, in unique situations, God himself may choose not to fulfill a prophecy if the recipients change their ways (Jonah 3–4; Jeremiah 18).

In the second half of the book, Lundbom describes rhetorical characteristic of poetry (chap. 5) and the prophetic use of signs, wonders, and symbolic acts (chap. 6). He begins by explaining some of the major characteristics of Hebrew poetry and prose; then in the next forty pages, he illustrates various rhetorical markers in ancient Near Eastern and biblical prophecies. Although Sumerian, Egyptian, and biblical scribes never produced books on rhetoric like the Greeks and Romans, they employed an array of rhetorical methods. Lundbom illustrates the use of various types of repetition (for emphasis, to express the superlative, anaphora, epiphora), alliteration, inclusio, chiasmus, tropes (metaphor, simile), euphemism, parable, allegory, metonymy, comparisons, contrasts, aspects of argumentation, humor, irony, hyperbole, litotes (understatement), dialogue, pathos, and several other rhetorical features. This chapter often goes well beyond what most Sunday school classes can absorb and it seldom explains the persuasive impact of these rhetorical figures, except when talking about argumentation.

Chapter 6 treats various wonders (Elisha's miracles), signs (Moses in Exodus 4), and symbolic acts (Ahijah tearing a garment; Elisha lying on a dead child; Isaiah going naked; Jeremiah burying a cloth; Ezekiel lying on one side 390 days) as unique but

effective ways of communicating God's message. In his conclusion, he questions whether Billy Graham and Martin Luther King Jr. should be considered modern prophets.

Although Lundbom does introduce the prophets and explain some of their methods of communication, probably few teachers will want to adopt this text for a class on the prophets because the survey of the prophetic books is brief and fairly elementary. In addition, the strong emphasis on rhetorical features would more likely fit in a hermeneutics class rather than a survey of the prophets.

Gary V. Smith

Union University, Jackson, TN/Bethel Seminary, St Paul, MN

Reading Joshua as Christian Scripture. By Douglas S. Earl. Journal of Theological Interpretation Supplement 2. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010, xiv + 277 pp., \$37.95 paper.

For many scholars, the "assured results" of historical criticism in biblical studies have left the Bible rooted in the past and disconnected from the life and theology of the Christian faith. In this book, Douglas Earl attempts to resolve three issues he believes are problematic for the book of Joshua: (1) the book's uncertain significance for Christianity; (2) the implications of the results of historical criticism, which mean one can no longer have confidence in the book's historicity; and (3) challenges from a modern ethical consciousness (e.g. genocide) that make it difficult to assert the book of Joshua is trustworthy or useful as the word of God.

The book is divided into three sections consisting of several chapters each. Section 1 ("An Introduction to the Hermeneutics of Reading Joshua as Christian Scripture") introduces the problem and puts forward Earl's methodology. The author argues that since we can no longer assert the book of Joshua is "divine revelation" in any straightforward sense, we are forced with the choice of either excising the book (with Marcion) or finding a way to reconstrue the issues in the book so it is useful (p. 12). His solution in taking the latter path is to read Joshua as "myth," which he defines as "the means by which people learn to shape their identities and lives and relate to the community of which they are a part" (p. 15). Earl surveys a variety of approaches to myth and concludes that distinguishing between the narrative or discourse level and the underlying structure allows us to find a kind of spiritual sense that pushes toward the new covenant. Reading the book as myth assumes a plenitude of interpretations, but the interpretation must be "fitting" as well (p. 53), and the reader should have a sufficient knowledge of the historical context.

This foundation of sufficient knowledge is found in Section 2 ("Making Joshua Intelligible as Discourse: Starting to Read Well"). Earl begins with a discussion of Joshua's place in the tradition of ancient Israel, assigning various sections of the book to D (essentially chaps. 1–12) and P (essentially chaps. 13–22). Following a brief chapter on the genre of the book (in which he concludes that Joshua is *not* a "conquest account"), he argues that the concept of *rx* (often translated, "to put under the ban") functions symbolically to reveal community boundaries and never was a part of any conquest. For Earl, this idea of *חרם* is perhaps the central theme of the book as it challenges and qualifies the nature of separation and identity in Israel.

In Section 3 ("Reading Joshua"), Earl begins by briefly discussing the differences between the Old Greek and masoretic Hebrew versions of Joshua and concludes the choice of text is not relevant for a mythological reading. (He chooses the MT for pragmatic reasons.) This discussion is followed by a commentary on each chapter of the book,

in which the author notes literary devices and themes, quotes from Origen and other early Christian interpreters, summarizes the results of modern scholars, and suggests implications of these themes in a Christian framework. Earl sees the narratives of Rahab, Achan, and the Gibeonites and their respective encounters with the issues of identity and conversion as the major poles for the message of the book.

Earl's concluding chapter synthesizes all of these points in an attempt to show how one might use "texts such as Joshua as imaginative resources" filtered through Christian tradition (p. 205). He argues that Joshua's modification of identity from genealogy to that defined by character and responsiveness to God is a preparation for the gospel. In addition, characteristics associated with faithful response to God such as obedience, initiative, zeal, boldness, and trust may constitute a Christian sense of salvation and the "fullness of God" (p. 229). He recognizes that these ideas are not in keeping with the original intent of the book, but he argues that they are in agreement with the new intention brought about by Joshua's inclusion in the Christian canon.

Earl's endeavor to demonstrate the value of Joshua for the church is admirable, and he presents some provocative insights on certain themes in Joshua, such as the application of חַרֵם as a catalyst for determining true loyalties and the implications of "conversion" for the *community* rather than for individuals only. However, *JETS* readers will likely find Earl's hermeneutical moves unhelpful for several reasons. First, readers who do not share Earl's skeptical views regarding the book's divine origin and historicity will not find his approach essential in the first place. His belief that the results of higher criticism have made it necessary to create a Christian reading for the book since it can no longer be seen as inherently revelatory will be, for many, equivalent to fixing what is not broken.

Second, although Earl rejects certain interpretations (e.g. post-colonial readings in which Rahab is considered a traitor) as not fitting to the historical context, the mythological reading presented here is also explicitly divorced from the author's original intent, causing one to wonder why this interpretation is any more convincing.

Third, the book has a surprisingly narrow focus. Earl's main attention is on Rahab, Achan, and the Gibeonites and their response to חַרֵם. This is no doubt a central issue, but what about the requirement to circumcise the wilderness generation, the issue of monuments and memory, the picture of God as a warrior, the connection between loyalty and victory, the distribution of the land, the cities of refuge, and more? Although the author briefly touches on these points, his book centers on Rahab and Achan, and this limits his vision of what the book of Joshua can offer Christian theology.

Earl is to be commended for his desire to find the relevance and theological significance of Joshua as Christian Scripture. While his methodology suffers from several weaknesses, he moves the conversation forward by asking important questions about how OT narrative can speak to the church today.

Eric J. Tully
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

The Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World. By Raymond F. Person Jr. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 6. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010, xii + 205 pp., \$26.95.

It is a general scholarly consensus that the Chronicler(s) used the books of Samuel-Kings in his constructing of Israel's history. This view assumes that Samuel-Kings must have been written before Chronicles. In a previous work (*The Deuteronomistic School:*

History, Social Setting, and Literature [Studies in Biblical Literature 2; Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2002]), Raymond Person followed the work of Graeme Auld and challenged that consensus view, arguing that the Deuteronomic History (DH) was still being redacted in the Persian period (p. 6). In the present work, Person follows up on his thesis by tracing how his understanding of the DH impacts its relationship to the book of Chronicles. His thesis is that “the Deuteronomic History and the book of Chronicles are Persian-period historiographies produced by competing scribal guilds” (p. 163).

After an introductory chapter that traces the consensus view of the DH and its relationship to Chronicles, Person turns in chapter 1 to the first major objection to his theory that these two works are contemporaneous. This objection is the view that the DH and Chronicles can be linguistically dated to different periods. Person notes that the ability to date texts by categorizing them as Early Biblical Hebrew or Late Biblical Hebrew has been significantly called into question, most significantly by the work of Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd. The argument that scholars should be cautious about using linguistic features to date texts is certainly correct. However, while Person’s use of this argument is correct in stating that it counters arguments *against* his thesis, it does not to my mind count as an actual argument *for* his thesis.

In chapter 2, Person seeks to contextualize Israelite scribal activity within the scribes’ oral culture. Israelite scribes, according to Person, should be understood not as mere copyists but as transmitters of traditions that allowed for a degree of fluidity in the material they transmitted. In support of this view, Person surveys references to scribes in the Hebrew Bible and also interacts with recent studies on orality. While our manuscript witnesses for the biblical material support the thesis that ancient scribes were comfortable with a degree of multiformity in the transmission process, we should probably be cautious about drawing too many conclusions from modern parallels such as the Serbo-Croatian oral poetry Person uses as an analogy (p. 48).

Chapter 3 picks up where chapter 2 left off, tracing the idea of multiformity in oral traditions. After commenting again on this phenomenon of multiformity, Person traces the existence of multiformity in the DH and Chronicles. His chief example in the DH is the multiple versions of the story of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) in the LXX and MT. In the book of Chronicles, Person looks at some of the conflicting use of genealogies, and drawing on the work of James Sparks argues that what looks like conflicting genealogies from our modern perspective may not be considered conflicting when understood in their ancient context. The purpose of this chapter is to show that the traditions of DH and Chronicles were comfortable with a certain level of multiformity, a fact that is certainly confirmed by our manuscript evidence of these works.

In chapter 4, Person surveys the existence of multiformity in the synoptic passages in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. He surveys a significant number of texts in some detail. His conclusion, contrary to the scholarly consensus that Chronicles used Samuel-Kings, is similar to the thesis proposed by Auld some years ago, that Samuel-Kings and Chronicles both drew from a shared text. Where Person parts company from Auld is that Person’s shared text is “an early form of Samuel-Kings” that is not represented by any of the extant manuscripts (p. 126). Person has certainly made his case for multiformity in these ancient texts. One need only look at the differences in Samuel-Kings between MT, LXX, and the Qumran material for textual support of this thesis. However, I wonder what is gained by arguing for a shared text when the shared text is (allowing for some multiformity in the transmission process) essentially the text of Samuel-Kings?

Having surveyed the synoptic material between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, Person turns to survey the non-synoptic material in chapter 5. Here I think Person makes a valuable contribution in that he seeks to minimize the supposed ideological distance between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. He argues that many of the non-synoptic passages

can be understood to be included not because of vast ideological differences between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles but because of the general trend include in written form elements "from the broader oral tradition" (p. 160). This is the reason Person posits for the additions to the shared text in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. One need not accept Person's whole thesis to appreciate his discussion of the complementary nature of the material in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles.

Person concludes by restating his thesis about Samuel-Kings and Chronicles as contemporary historiographies from competing scribal schools and discusses some of the implications his research has for our understanding of the interplay between literary texts and oral cultures. Person's nuance of Auld's thesis is quite cautious and much appreciated for that. However, his general thesis of a shared text is so close to the consensus model that one wonders if it really is different. His case for multiformity in the textual traditions is, in my opinion, a helpful contribution that needs to be utilized in future studies of Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. Ultimately, this is a helpful study and I find many of Person's arguments convincing. However, I am not sure the main thesis of this book is quite as far removed from the consensus model as the author seems to suggest.

Benjamin J. M. Johnson
Durham University, Durham, UK

The Message of Esther. By David G. Firth, Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2010, 140 pp., \$18.00 paper.

David Firth's *Message of Esther* is included in The Bible Speaks Today OT series edited by J. A. Motyer. Though described as a commentary series on the cover, these volumes are characterized in the general preface as neither "commentaries" nor "sermons." In the author's preface, this volume is identified as an adaptation of a "series of talks" presented in a Bible study.

The author's preface provides some of the most interesting comments as Firth describes how he was led to the study of Esther and the preparation of this book. It also highlights how the effect of preaching the story of Esther blesses and benefits the preacher and the hearers.

Given the informal, narrative goal of the volume, it begins oddly with an extensive bibliography of more than fifty sources and a sixteen-page introduction that wrestles with the canonicity of the book and whether or not Esther is actual history or historical fiction. Firth is mindful of critics such as I. B. Paton who reject the inerrancy of Esther because of alleged historical inaccuracies. Firth adopts a "mediating position" (p. 23) that argues that while the events in Esther may have happened, yet they likely did not happen as literal history. Firth calls this "dramatized history" (p. 24). How this approach commends itself to be readable is not at all clear. It is doubtful that this middle position will convince the higher critics, nor does it satisfy those who would see this as a less than subtle attack on the inerrancy of the Bible. With such an extensive bibliography Firth could have included the Keil and Delitzsch observation that critics of Esther's historicity raise their objections "first from the habit of making subjective probability the standard of historical truth, and next from an insufficient or imperfect attention to the customs, manners, and state of affairs at the Persian court on the one hand, or an incorrect view of the meaning of the text on the other" and therefore, "we are perfectly justified in adhering to a belief in the historical character of the whole

book" (C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament Vol. 3* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, repr. 1988] 309–11). Firth, in introducing what would best be described as a devotional commentary, requires the reader to wade through this critical argument against the historicity of Esther. Perhaps these critical debates could have been relegated to several footnotes or to an appendix.

Firth vacillates between an attempt to be colloquial and to be collegial. On page 48, he begins, "Since the study of grammar does not rank highly on the priorities of many today the subtlety of the biblical narrative is often missed precisely because so much depends upon the care with which the words are chosen." It is understandable but unfortunate syntax. Continuing with a running commentary that can at times be intuitive and helpful, the book is unremarkable overall. Struggling to be clever, Firth is prone to cliché: "the best way to avoid a hangover is to stay drunk" (p. 39) and "revenge is a dish best served cold" (p. 41). The book also ends abruptly without an effective summary or recapitulation.

David Pitman

Temple Baptist College, Cincinnati, OH

Proverbs: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture. By Andrew E. Steinmann. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis: Concordia, 2009, 719 pp., \$42.99.

Andrew E. Steinmann is an established OT scholar, a prolific author, and an experienced professor. Currently a professor of theology and Hebrew at Concordia University Chicago, Steinmann's *magnum opus* commentary on Proverbs begins with a thoughtful analysis of the book's authorship and date. He rejects critical scholarship's view of authorship and concludes that "Solomon himself wrote under divine inspiration as he was led by the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Pet 1:21)" (p. 16). Steinmann divides the authors of the sections of Proverbs as follows (p. 2):

Section	Author
1:1–9:18	Solomon
10:1–22:16	Solomon
22:17–24:22	Wise people
24:23–34	Wise people
25:1–29:27	Solomon (as copied by Hezekiah's men)
30:1–33	Agur, son of Jakeh
31:1–9	Lemuel (or his mother)
31:10–31	Unknown

As part of the introduction, the author focuses on word studies of terms that are characteristic of wisdom literature and that "show the broad scope of the concept of wisdom and its application to all areas of life" (p. 25). After a brief section on how to understand and apply the book of Proverbs, the introduction concludes with a chart that lists the differences between the MT and LXX texts.

The commentary proper is divided into two parts: textual notes and commentary. In the textual notes section, the author takes apart each Hebrew phrase, sometimes giving the part of speech of a particular word, sometimes giving the verbal root gloss, and always referencing important intertextual words/phrases within the OT. The detailed nature of these notes can be seen in that Steinmann even stops to point to the function

of the disjunctive accent (p. 51). Unfortunately, the accent marks did not transition accurately from whichever software was used to the word processing document.

The commentary section moves quickly from looking at the ancient meaning to looking ahead to a NT correlation. Commenting on 1:1, Steinmann asserts that “by naming ‘Solomon’ as the ‘son of David,’ the superscription gives the entire book of Proverbs a Christological orientation” (p. 54). Referring to 1:2–7, the author affirms that “Proverbs is not simply about the natural knowledge of God that even unbelievers can glean from viewing creation and to which their conscience testifies (Rom 1:28–22, 32; 2:14–16). Proverbs is about the saving knowledge of God that comes through his Son, Jesus Christ” (p. 55). The commentary section is replete with NT references, the author stating forcefully from the beginning that “the theme and guiding principle of Proverbs is the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (p. 56).

Steinmann divides the first nine chapters into ten addresses to a son and three poems about wisdom. More of Solomon’s proverbs (10:1–22:16) are divided into sections about a wise son and a foolish son. Throughout the commentary, there are insightful excursuses on important topics, such as “The Metaphor of the Path in Solomon’s Wisdom” (p. 255), “The Words of Wise People (Prov 22:17–24) and Its Relationship to the Wisdom of Amenemope” (p. 447), and “Luther on Proverbs” (p. 499). Explanatory charts appear under figures, and they include “The Growth of Proverbs” (p. 19), “Contrasts between the Two Women” (p. 180), and “The Chiastic Structure of Proverbs 26:1–12” (p. 524). The commentary concludes with two useful indexes of both subject and Scripture references.

The commentary’s strengths lie in its simple division between the textual notes and commentary, the insightful excursuses (especially the one entitled “Proverbs 1–9, Christ, and the Ten Commandments”), and the detailed indexes. The fact that HALOT and BDB are referenced throughout is also helpful for those who are interested in more in-depth linguistic analysis. While the NT correlation and Christological interpretation could be seen as strengths by some, they could be viewed as weaknesses by many who would prefer a more in-depth analysis of the text vis-à-vis the ancient audience before making a leap to the NT. For example, in commenting on 1:1, Steinmann suggests that “by naming ‘Solomon’ as ‘the son of David,’ the superscription gives the entire book of Proverbs a Christological orientation” (p. 54). Similarly, when the son is warned to reject the temptation of the adulterous woman (2:16–19), the author affirms that “the temptations presented by the world, the devil, and the sinful flesh . . . lead away from Christ and his blessings, and toward death and eternal condemnation” (p. 99). He goes so far as to outline 30:1b–10 as “God’s kingdom of grace: the church,” and 30:11–33 as “God’s kingdom of good order” (p. 587). All these examples could be seen by many as a hermeneutical stretch.

I recommend this volume to be used alongside more exegetical works, such as Tremper Longman’s work in the Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms series.

Tiberius Rata
Grace College and Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, IN

Lamentations. The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. By Robin A. Parry. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, xii + 260 pp., \$22.00 paper.

Robin A. Parry was former editorial director of Paternoster Press and works now as an editor for Wipf and Stock. He wrote several books such as *Old Testament Story and*

Christian Ethics: The Rape of Dinah as a Case Study and *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*. As the so-called “evangelical universalist,” he also wrote and edited *The Evangelical Universalist* and *Universal Salvation? The Current Debate* under the pseudonym of Gregory MacDonald, a combination of Gregory of Nyssa and George MacDonald, a Scottish theologian of the nineteenth century.

The unique Two Horizons Commentary series has focused on the interaction between two essential theological aspects: biblical exegesis and theological reflection. In terms of “theological reflection,” Parry makes an important contribution to the study of Lamentations, which he says “never really attained a place of prominence in Christian spirituality and reflection” (p. 1). His commentary is written with precision, lucidity, and an ethical sensitivity to the context when he deals with the theologically complicated issue of suffering.

The commentary consists of three major parts: introduction, commentary, and theological reflection. The introduction to the commentary includes discussion on authorship, date, and place of composition, the exilic and ancient Near Eastern context, the poetry and general structure, and the canonical location of Lamentations as well as theological discussions on sin, punishment, and hope in covenant context.

The introduction is quite provocative. Challenging Christian readers, Parry states that “the theology of Lamentations is not Christian theology” (p. 2) and that “there will never be such a thing as the Christian interpretation of Lamentations” (p. 3). He further explains this statement at several places of the theological reflection section (e.g. pp. 177–80, 191–93), criticizing Christianity for not being fully aware of the significance of suffering in Lamentations, but he has made a few errors in his discussion. First, he treats Christianity as identical with Western cultures that, as he mentions, “are notoriously averse to pain and tragedy” (p. 1). Second, he confuses the original readers with the implied readers. His statement that “Lamentations was not written by Christians, nor for Christians” is right in light of the original readership, but it does not make his following utterance “the theology of Lamentations is not Christian theology” (p. 1) correct. Nevertheless, his challenge is still valid in view of the fact that much of Christianity has forgotten and even ignored the significance of suffering for Christian theology. The rest of the introduction is quite enjoyable to read. Parry provides a nice summary of the general structure, following William Shea’s insight that the book as a whole is divided into 3+2 chapters like *qinah* meters, and of biblical scholars’ theological views on Lamentations.

The commentary proper addresses Parry’s own translation by means of general outline and verse-by-verse exegetical comments. In the exegetical comments, the author does not provide many new insights. Rather, he summarizes previous scholarly discussions and critically evaluates them. Like many other scholars, Parry thinks chapter 3 is central for understanding the theology of Lamentations and suggests the salvation of the valiant man from current suffering is a foretaste of the community’s future hope. Furthermore, his excursuses are quite helpful but too short to deal with many problematic issues (pp. 106–13). One wishes Parry had spent more time explaining the major problems in the excursuses.

The most valuable section of the commentary is theological reflection, even though it is somewhat lengthy (more than 75 pages). In this section, Parry provides intertextual reflection on Lamentations in connection with various contextual settings such as Jeremiah, Isaiah 40–55, and the NT, as well as modern contexts such as Christian anti-Semitism and political theology. The author further discusses Christological connections (the cross and resurrection of Christ) with Lamentations in light of Lady Jerusalem, the destroyed temple, valiant man, and the captured Messiah. Finally, Parry expands his discussion into the issue of theodicy and divine suffering as well as Lam-

entations in Christian spirituality and ethics. His discussion of theological reflection is insightful and even quite challenging in its contextual settings. Yet, Parry's discussions are sometimes far-fetched in that he connects the suffering in Lamentations with somewhat irrelevant issues. For example, his Christological interpretation of Lamentations is rather problematic because the sufferings in Lamentation clearly resulted from divine punishment for Israel's transgressions (Lam 1:5, 8, 17; 2:14; 3:42; 4:6, 13, 22), whereas Christ was free from sin. Parry admits this lack of correspondence (p. 213), but he makes lengthy discussions on the suffering of the innocent in his theological and ethical reflection. The main theme of Lamentations is not how to deal with the suffering of the innocent, but urgent lament for salvation in the face of severe divine judgment.

Another example of Parry's far-fetched application of Lamentations is seen in his connection between God's presence in the midst of suffering and the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues (p. 205). It is correct that the Spirit of God participates in people's sorrow and pain (Romans 8), but it is unnecessary to connect that with the Spirit's participation in the gift of speaking in tongues.

In spite of some drawbacks, Parry's contribution is a valuable addition to the Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary series. Those who are interested in reading Lamentations ethically will enjoy the commentary.

Sung Jin Park
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, OH

Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey. By Mark Allan Powell. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009, 560 pp., \$44.99.

Mark Allan Powell is Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH where he has served his alma mater for 23 years. He has dozens of publications to his name, including studies and commentaries on Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts among other areas of the NT. Powell is able to bring years of experience and insight from the academy, the classroom, and the church into a single volume introducing the NT for either college or seminary students.

The book's format includes the recent trends of engaging students with plentiful use of photographs, maps, textboxes, and sidebars, as well as several hundred hyperlinks (more than eight per chapter) to a designated website (www.IntroducingNT.com) accompanying the textbook. The use of a website over and against a CD-ROM is to be commended, since updates can be posted and the internet is easier for access than an external device. Dozens of the photographs throughout the book display examples of Christian art, not merely for illustration or aesthetic appeal, but to convey the history and diversity of Christian influence on surrounding culture. Technical terms are defined on the spot with occasional sidebars, and Powell is able to reduce the complexities of tedious subjects such as form criticism or deconstruction into readable, digestible paragraphs.

Powell makes astute usage of textboxes as opportunities to explore important tangents and implications without interrupting the flow of the chapters. Some of these textboxes explore vague historical characters in more detail such as John Mark, Titus, Silvanus, "the elect lady," or the brothers of Jesus. Other textboxes offer comparisons between NT books to demonstrate distinctives or dependence, such as Mark to Matthew and Luke, John to the Synoptics, Acts to Paul's letters, Colossians to Ephesians, the Johannine letters to the Fourth Gospel, or 2 Peter to Jude. Still other textboxes

introduce contemporary discussions on gender (e.g. "The Christian Household" in Ephesians, "Married Only Once?" in the Pastorals, or "The Weaker Vessel" in 1 Peter), morality ("Condemnation of Homosexuality" in Romans), interpretive difficulties (head-coverings for women and baptism for the dead in 1 Corinthians), paradigm shifts ("The New Perspective on Paul" in Romans and "The Jews and God's Wrath" in 1 Thessalonians), and even pop theology ("Caught up in the Clouds" in 1 Thessalonians). Readers should find plenty of reasons to maintain interest in the content of each chapter.

The arrangement of this textbook follows the canonical order of the NT books with six additional background and summary chapters on "The New Testament World," "The New Testament Writings," "Jesus," "The Gospels," "New Testament Letters," and "Paul." The chapters follow a standard arrangement for each of the NT books. The opening paragraph serves as an ice-breaker to pique the reader's interest in some aspect of the book, often utilizing an intriguing analogy from a variety of sources such as movies (2 Corinthians, Hebrews), music (Mark, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter), literature (Revelation), poetry (James), trivia (Matthew), church history (John, Romans), or the college experience (Paul, 2 Peter, Jude). The content of each chapter is then covered under at least four headings. First, an "Overview" summarizes the content of the book. Second, under "Historical Background," Powell examines what is known regarding important historical and literary issues such as authorship, date, audience, and purpose, with consideration of both internal and external evidence. At this point regarding each of the Gospels, Powell inserts an additional section on distinctives to highlight the unique and important contribution that each individual Gospel makes concerning the portrait of Jesus. The next heading, "Major Themes," is the heart of each chapter of the textbook. Powell uses ample space in this section so that the main messages of each NT book can be understood in their proper context. Finally, in each chapter's "Conclusion," Powell offers some brief implications for church practice, personal devotion, or contemporary theology.

Powell does not dodge any of the major issues that generate much debate and differing conclusions. The careful reader of *Introducing the New Testament* will find that he takes time to summarize the polarities of an issue and generally lands in a workable, mediating position with "most" or "the great majority" of scholars (Powell's phrases) with appropriate consideration to the evidence from other views. For example, with the Gospels, Powell places Mark around AD 65–73 with Matthew and Luke in the 80s. For authorship, Powell shows the Gospels to be anonymous, but the author of Mark seems to be from Paul's circle, the author of Luke seems to be one of Paul's travel companions, and Matthew may have been a source, possibly the compiler of Q, for that Gospel. Regarding the "Synoptic Puzzle," Powell spends four pages explaining about Q and the Two-Source Hypothesis. Even though a little more space could have been used to explain alternate theories, nevertheless Powell's treatment of the issue is a reasonable description that shows the Synoptic Problem has yet to be completely solved.

Powell's chapter on "New Testament Letters" describes the materials, process, and structure of ancient letter writing. The majority of the chapter discusses the thorny issue of authorship and pseudepigraphy, a subject that affects one's understanding of much of the NT. Powell carefully shows that the issue is not merely a two-sided, either-or proposition but involves levels of authenticity and a variety of evidence from the early church and in contemporary discussions. In graphics and discussions later in the textbook, Powell's position on the Deutero-Pauline letters allows for taking them either as the work of Paul or a later disciple (e.g. see pp. 234, 247, 401–4), with the resulting differences on historical reconstruction and theological perspective being mentioned. Only with 2 Peter does his moderation on the issue of pseudepigraphy not provide much room for the stated authorship of the book.

Regarding Revelation, Powell carefully explains the historical setting, genres, and interpretive views for properly understanding this difficult book in its context. Unfortunately, the lengthy discussion of these matters seems to have infringed on the discussion of major themes that usually constitutes the heart of each chapter. In Revelation especially, the main themes deserve further elaboration since readers who suddenly become aware of the book's historical context often need extensive help reconstructing what the main message of the book actually is. The crucial issue of worship in Revelation could be fortified, and among others, the faithfulness of a beleaguered community of faith warrants consideration as a major theme. Nevertheless, the chapter functions effectively to plant readers of Revelation in the historical context of the seven churches of Asia Minor.

Overall, *Introducing the New Testament* will be gladly received as a substantial resource for NT classes and will be utilized in a wide variety of contexts. His emphasis on the major themes of each NT book is to be highly commended. Too often in biblical studies, background issues can undermine and even distract from the main goal of historical inquiry—what the book actually meant. Powell does not allow this to happen. Students of the NT will find Powell's introduction to contain the cumulative highlights of a seasoned scholar, the *crème de la crème* from years of NT teaching. *Introducing the New Testament* is a wonderful resource that will be read and utilized for years to come.

Jeff Cate

California Baptist University, Riverside, CA

Christianity in the Greco-Roman World: A Narrative Introduction. By Moyer V. Hubbard. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010, xix + 320 pp., \$24.95 paper.

Moyer Hubbard, Associate Professor of New Testament at Talbot School of Theology, has written an excellent introduction to the Greco-Roman world that uses insights from the ancient Mediterranean cultural milieu to interpret the NT. Hubbard has not composed a thorough survey of the history and culture of the era but discusses those aspects of Greco-Roman social history that may help us understand the NT better. "The fundamental conviction undergirding this project," he declares, "is that the better one understands the historical and social context in which the NT (and Paul's letters) was written, the better one will understand the writings of the NT themselves" (pp. 1–2). Hubbard wrote this text for students, developing it from a series of lectures he presented at Biola University. Although the volume attempts to utilize insights from the Mediterranean world to help us understand the NT, his particular focus is the writings of Paul, especially Paul's ministry in Corinth. The reader who would like to understand how insights from the Greco-Roman world might help us to interpret Luke or 1 Peter more thoroughly will have to look elsewhere. Hubbard's work does not attempt to be comprehensive.

The professor looking for a text to introduce the Greco-Roman world to students has many offerings to choose from. John Stambaugh and David Balch (*The New Testament in Its Social Environment* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986]), Bruce Malina (*The New Testament World* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993]), Albert Bell Jr. (*Exploring the New Testament World* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998]), James Jeffers (*The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999]), Wayne Meeks (*The First Urban Christians* [2d ed.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002]), and Everett Ferguson (*Backgrounds of Early Christianity* [3d ed.; Grand Rapids:

Eerdmans, 2003]) all wrote similar works that are accessible to students. Some of these, unlike Hubbard, include a summary orientation to Second Temple Judaism. The distinctive feature of Hubbard's volume is the narrative section that introduces each major section of the book. These are fictional vignettes that attempt to help the reader understand the culture and institutions of first-century Corinth. Hubbard weaves together archaeology with the sociology of the city, using characters from different periods in Corinth's history as the main protagonists in each short "story." Hubbard's purpose is didactic, since "we learn as effectively through narrative as through discursive, informational-based treatments of a topic" (p. 2). Since "story can be a powerful vehicle for communicating truth" (p. 2), Hubbard takes on the mantle of the storyteller. Zoe travels from Cenchrea to Corinth, passing through Isthmia where the games are held and looking upon Acrocorinth before entering the eastern gate of city. We never see the places referred to since pictures are painted with words only. The book contains no photos and sports only one simple map of the Roman Empire (pp. 6–7).

Zoe's adventure serves as an introduction to Hubbard's discussion of "Religion and Superstition" in Corinth and elsewhere. After an ordered survey of ancient religious beliefs and practices, he ties these findings with specific NT texts: "Monotheism in Corinth," "Faith in Galatia," "Magic in Acts." Hubbard liberally salts the chapters with relevant quotations from the literature of the era, embedding them in the descriptions or placing them as separate block callouts. The blend of story, discourse, quotation, and application to the NT makes for lively reading, which may even hold the less-interested student's attention. The sections that follow explore the topics of "Education, Philosophy, and Oratory," "City and Society," and "Household and Family." The "Epilogue" suggests that "social and political factors enabled the followers of Jesus to propagate their faith and win converts" (p. 230). The text ends on page 235, leaving the following 80 pages for notes, bibliographies, and indices, including an index of the text block callouts found on almost every page. Hubbard has made sure that we do not become lost on the journey.

Hubbard's book has some curious features. For example, the initial discussion on "Religion and Superstition" presents relatively little information about formal religion in the Mediterranean world but focuses instead on superstition, magic, divination, oracles, omens, astrology, combined with brief discussions on Diaspora Judaism and skepticism. Hubbard does not take us on a tour of traditional religions in Corinth but only mentions the deities one would have encountered in this city and Isthmia. Much more could be said about the beliefs and customs surrounding the Temple of Apollo, the Asclepeion, the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, or the temple of Octavia located right on the forum. The sanctuary of Poseidon in Isthmia is not part of *le tour*; the Corinthian temple dedicated "To All the Gods" receives no mention, and the altar and images in the forum remain invisible (see Pausanias, *Descriptions of Greece* 2.2.6–2.3.2). Although Hubbard's discussions are quite interesting and varied, surprising gaps remain throughout the book. The reader is left without any introduction to the history of the Roman world and receives little orientation to the political organization of the empire (pp. 122–23 are not enough).

The purpose of the narratives in *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World* is to introduce the reader to as many cultural bits and pieces as possible in a short compass. These unique sections are somewhat helpful, but for some reason Hubbard chose to try his own hand at storytelling rather than rely on ancient authors to take care of this task. He mentions, for example, the Isis procession in Cenchrea. Why not simply include an extended quotation from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (*The Golden Ass* 11)? Inserting an ample selection from the "Banquet of Trimalchio" (Petronius, *Satyricon* 5) would have served as an engaging introduction to the section on "City and Society." Would that Hubbard's literary art approached that of the historical novelist Colleen McCullough

(*The First Man in Rome* [New York: Morrow, 1990]). This literary technique can be effective for teaching history and culture (see Bruce Longenecker's *Lost Letters of Pergamum* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003]), but when the ancients can speak well for themselves, why not give them full voice as Hubbard has done with the one-line quotations?

Most of the texts that help orient students to the world of the NT (or OT) include little discussion of the nature of the relationship between the biblical text and its socio-historical context. *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World* is no exception to this rule. Through orienting students to the ancient Mediterranean world, Hubbard hopes that "passages will become clearer, metaphors deciphered, images sharpened" (p. 2). Yet in our era of renewed debates on how biblical texts relate to the contexts in which they were born (see, for example, Peter Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005] and the revival of *religionsgeschichtliche* perspectives in NT studies), we cannot dodge the hermeneutical question underlying this interplay. Hubbard, for example, discusses Paul's visions (pp. 53–56) and ancient methods of receiving supernatural guidance (pp. 33–36) but does not elaborate on how these similar perspectives on divine communication relate to one another. Is Paul just "keeping up with the Joneses"? Does the NT "just reflect the ancient world in which it was produced" (Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation* 15)?

Christianity in the Greco-Roman World would be a good text to use in any introductory course on the NT and its social world, both on the undergraduate and graduate levels. The treatments of each topic discussed need to be supplemented with further readings from the primary literature and other books, book chapters, or articles, including discussions on the relationship between the NT and its environment. As part of a required reading list, the text will serve students well.

Gene L. Green
Wheaton College and Graduate School, Wheaton, IL

The Historical Jesus: Five Views. Edited by James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009. 312 pp., \$26.00 paper.

It seems like there is a multiple-views book on nearly every conceivable theological subject. Yet not all multiple-views books are created equal. Some are genuinely helpful guides, while others are the literary equivalent of rearranging familiar pieces of furniture in a new way. *The Historical Jesus: Five Views* is an example of the former.

The book begins with a useful 45-page introduction that provides a brief but not shallow overview of the history of Jesus research and a summary of the present state of the quest that quickly but not lightly covers much familiar ground. The footnotes should prove useful for readers desiring to dig more deeply.

The easiest area to criticize in a book of this sort is the selection of contributors. Why not scholar A rather than scholar B? Why is this perspective represented rather than another? Selecting the right contributors is thus crucial for a multiple-views book. To play upon John Dominic Crossan's well-known phrase concerning which sources to prefer in his Jesus research, "Wrong anywhere there, wrong everywhere thereafter." One could quibble with Beilby and Eddy's choice of contributors but one cannot say that the inclusion of any was unjustified.

The contributors are, from left to right, theologically as well as historiographically, Robert M. Price, John Dominic Crossan, Luke Timothy Johnson, James D. G. Dunn, and Darrell L. Bock. Price is without a doubt the most skeptical of the group as to what historians can know of Jesus, while Bock is the most optimistic. Clearly Crossan and

Dunn are major players, with multiple major books on Jesus. Johnson and Bock are also significant contributors to the quest—and significant commentators on the state of the quest. Price is the banana in the bowl full of apples. Yet the inclusion of Price makes the book more interesting. In fact, some of the most interesting parts of the book are the responses to his essay and his responses to the essays by others. In my estimation Price stole the show because his view was so unique (odd?).

Price's essay is the first. He forthrightly lays out his methodology. Constructively Price integrates the criterion of analogy, dissimilarity, and ideal-types as keys to historical investigation. He boldly proclaims that his first and greatest commandment is the principle of analogy: "How do we decide what probably did or did not happen in the past? When we are looking at an ancient account, we must judge it according to the analogy of our experience and that of our trustworthy contemporaries" (p. 56). He admits that his application of both the criteria of analogy and dissimilarity is more radical than that of others. In fact, he writes of Norman Perrin, "he failed to see that the criterion of dissimilarity must be all devouring" (p. 60). His final methodological move is a critical one, "Consensus is no criterion" (p. 61).

So how does Price understand the historical Jesus? He argues that Jesus likely never existed. The stories and sayings of Jesus one finds in the Gospels have their origin in the NT epistles, or in the OT, or "in Middle Eastern religions based on the myths of dying-and-rising gods" (p. 75). He mixes and matches pieces that do not fit well together while begging the question at times. He supports his particular application of the criterion of analogy by an appeal to the ideal-type of legend along the lines of Hermes, Pythagoras, or the Buddha. This leads me to suspect that his application of ideal-types actually has priority but he brings analogy and dissimilarity to the fore because they are more broadly accepted, albeit in varying forms in the guild. When I applied the criterion of analogy to his thesis I found an ideal-type that largely seemed to fit what he was arguing: the conspiracy theory!

Crossan continues down a path that he has been on for many years. Juxtaposing two kings—Jesus and Caesar—and two kingdoms—God's and Rome's—Crossan presents Jesus' kingdom as one of *collaborative eschatology*, based on justice, non-violence, and acceptance of all, whereas Caesar's Rome was an imperial kingdom built on violence. As usual, Crossan gives new meanings to familiar terms. Jesus is *Jewish*, but his Judaism represents a paradigm shift from what has come before. Jesus' kingdom is *eschatological* but in a new way. Jesus is a *healer* but of social stigmas, not medical diseases.

Johnson proposes that we can "learn the human Jesus" in many ways. He can be learned by faith and through worship as a living person. He can be learned historically, although this Jesus will necessarily be limited in scope due to the inherent limitations of historical research. Nevertheless, we can know that certain statements about Jesus are probably true from historical investigation. Yet Johnson's goal is to introduce the reader to another way. That way is by reading the canonical Gospels "literarily" (i.e. taking them seriously as complete literary works and seeing what can be learned of Jesus by reading them seriously as such). I had to wonder what the difference would be between the historical Jesus discovered in this way and the historical Hamlet.

Dunn summarizes his massive *Jesus Remembered* and in doing so couples three protests against how Jesus research has typically been conducted with three proposals as to how it should proceed. Protest one is against the view that "*faith is something which prevents a clear historical view of Jesus*" (p. 200, italics his). Dunn's first proposal is that "*the quest should start from the recognition that Jesus evoked faith from the outset of his mission and that this faith is the surest indication of the historical reality and effect of his mission*" (p. 203, italics his). Protest two is against the assumption that "*the only way to understand both the relation of the traditions in the Synoptic Gospels and the earliest transmission of the Jesus tradition is in literary terms*" (p. 207, italics

his). Proposal two maintains “*the necessity of taking the oral phase of the history of the Jesus tradition with all seriousness . . . that it is in fact possible to envisage the oral phase of the Jesus tradition*” (p. 211, italics his). Protest three is against the idea that “*the quest must look for a Jesus who was distinctive or different from his environment*” (p. 216, italics his). Finally, proposal three is that “*we should look first of all for the Jewish Jesus rather than the non-Jewish Jesus*” (p. 219, italics his). I found all three proposals reasonable if not taken to the extreme.

Bock insists that evangelical scholars can and should involve themselves in historical Jesus research despite the fact that, “For many critics, the evangelical view of Scripture is said to skew evangelicals’ discussion of Jesus issues. For many evangelicals, especially lay evangelicals, the skepticism surrounding much of historical Jesus work is to be shunned as a rejection of the Bible as the Word of God” (p. 249). He then argues that Jesus’ actions are windows affording historians a glimpse of Jesus’ intentions and proposes that these actions, which Bock summarizes, reveal the gist of Jesus’ mission. He also gives special attention to the reasons for Jesus’ death and insists that historians have good reason to think that the resurrection narratives are not just the creation of the early church.

Space does not permit a summary of the replies of the authors to each other but those replies are thought-provoking and useful. The replies of Dunn to Price and vice versa are especially vigorous. The replies of the other four to Price are especially useful to evangelical apologists wondering how to reply to the claim that Jesus never lived, since Price gives the most academically rigorous argument for this position that I have seen. The book would have been stronger had the author of each essay been allowed to respond to the critiques his essay received. A concluding section by the editors might have made for a smoother ending. Neither of these criticisms is telling.

This book is unique so far as I know in that there is no other book presently in print that offers the reader five essays on five positions concerning the historical Jesus, with each author responding to each of the others. There are some useful books that present more perspectives such as Ben Witherington’s *The Jesus Quest* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995) or Mark Allan Powell’s *Jesus as a Figure in History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), but those are one author’s summary and critique of the work of significant scholars. Other books feature a team of scholars examining the projects of major Jesus scholars such as Carey C. Newman’s *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright’s Jesus and the Victory of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999), or Jeffrey Carlson and Robert A. Ludwig’s *Jesus and Faith: A Conversation on the Work of John Dominic Crossan* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), or my own recent offering co-edited with Gary Habermas, *Memories of Jesus: A Critical Appraisal of James D. G. Dunn’s Jesus Remembered* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010). However, such works focus only on one scholar rather than five. *The Historical Jesus: Five Views* allows five authors to speak for themselves and critique one another.

Though the target audience for this book is theology students, working pastors, or educated laypersons, there is much for more seasoned scholars to appreciate in this work. This book should prove useful as a required text in introductory courses on the historical Jesus or Gospel studies. It could also be used as an optional text for courses in NT, systematic theology, or those focusing on Christology. Beilby and Eddy, along with their authors, are to be commended for a job well done. I thoroughly enjoyed and highly recommend this book.

Robert B. Stewart
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA

Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence. Edited by Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb. WUNT 247. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, xvii + 931 pp., €189.00.

The last quarter of the twentieth century, up to the present time period, has seen a remarkable level of interest in the historical Jesus. Scholars such as E. P. Sanders, Ben Meyer, N. T. Wright, James D. G. Dunn, John Meier, John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg, and many others have made substantial contributions to this field. This level of interest has inevitably produced a wide variety of interpretations, models, and reconstructions of the historical Jesus—some more plausible (and more extreme) than others. For this reason, the recent volume edited by Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb, *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus*, is particularly welcome. All contributors are members of the Institute for Biblical Research (IBR) and bring not only extensive expertise in historical Jesus studies, but also a level-headed approach to sifting through the immense amount of historical data. As the title suggests, the book analyzes key events in the life of Jesus (twelve of them) and argues that each are (1) historically plausible and (2) significant for understanding the mission and person of Jesus. As a result, when the twelve events are viewed together as a unit, they exhibit “depth coherence” (p. 825); in other words, the events weave such a complex historical tapestry that it is unlikely that they could have been artificially constructed.

Following a brief introduction by Bock and Webb in the opening chapter and before diving into these twelve events, Robert Webb first offers an important overview of historical methodology in chapter 2. Here, Webb sets the methodological stage for Jesus research on which the rest of the chapters will perform their specific acts. For this reason, Webb’s chapter may be the most critical for the volume’s overall persuasiveness. He provides a helpful overview of the key definitions and categories (carefully distinguishing between “history,” “historiography,” and “historical method”) and offers a defense of the book’s general approach to historical Jesus research, what he calls “methodological naturalistic history.” He contrasts this approach with “ontological naturalistic history” (which is basically an Enlightenment model that rejects the supernatural) and “critical theistic history” (which is a model that allows supernatural explanations of historical events). Whereas these other two models allow one’s ontological beliefs into the realm of historical study, Webb says “the methodological naturalistic view attempts to sidestep the issue . . . without imposing an ontological viewpoint on history/reality” (p. 43). Instead, this model limits the historical discussion to “causation within the physical, space-time universe” (p. 42).

On the surface, such an approach seems eminently reasonable. If various scholars have different (and contradictory) worldviews, then we should just restrict the discussion to some neutral, common ground on which we can all agree. However, while reasonable, it also runs the danger of being overly simplistic. Are scholars really able to check their worldviews at the door so easily? How does a person keep himself from imposing his “ontological viewpoint on history/reality”? This method seems to suggest that one’s ontological worldview can simply be cordoned off from the practice of history in the “physical, space-time universe”—as if the two spheres were not interrelated or interconnected. Yet does historical investigation limited to the “physical, space-time universe” really involve no world view *at all*? Does it not require *some* ontological assumptions? Modern philosophical discussions of ontology and epistemology would certainly suggest that it does. Rather than taking the lowest common denominator approach, a volume such as this one might have benefitted from a *critique* of the “ontological naturalistic history” method. A helpful example along these lines is the collected essays (particularly section 1) in Craig Bartholomew, C. Stephen Evans, Mary Healy, and Murray Rae, eds., *Behind The Text: History and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan,

2003). Nevertheless, even if one might differ with the particular approach advocated by this chapter, it still functions as an excellent (and well-written) overview of critical issues related to methodology.

The next twelve chapters cover the twelve key events in the life of Jesus: "Jesus' Baptism by John" (Robert Webb); "Exorcisms and the Kingdom" (Craig A. Evans); "Jesus and the Twelve" (Scot McKnight); "Jesus' Table Fellowship with Sinners" (Craig L. Blomberg); "Jesus and the Synoptic Sabbath Controversies" (Donald A. Hagner); "Peter's Declaration Concerning Jesus' Identity in Caesarea Philippi" (Michael J. Wilkins); "Jesus' Royal Entry into Jerusalem" (Brent Kinman); "The Temple Incident" (Klyne Snodgrass); "The Last Supper" (I. Howard Marshall); "Blasphemy and the Jewish Examination of Jesus" (Darrell Bock); "The Roman Examination and Crucifixion of Jesus" (Robert L. Webb); and "Jesus' Empty Tomb and His Appearances in Jerusalem" (Grant R. Osborne). Two general strengths are worth noting about these twelve chapters. First, with such a fine collection of scholars, it is no surprise that each of these chapters provides extensive and probing interaction with secondary literature on their topic. Indeed, this allows the volume to function as an excellent resource for up-to-date bibliographical information about the state of historical Jesus research. This is borne out by the length of the chapters; most are well over 50 pages (and some are even near 100 pages). Second, these chapters, as a whole, place their subject/topic carefully and precisely within the context of intertestamental literature and Second Temple Judaism. Such detailed historical analysis makes this volume a treasure-trove of new discoveries about this critical historical time period.

Although one would have no desire to make this volume longer (it is 931 pages!), it is unclear why the historicity of the birth accounts (location, family, lineage) was not examined. Certainly this foundational event (and its surrounding details) would have met the criteria laid out in the beginning of the book: a strong case could be made for its historicity, and it is no doubt significant for understanding the person of Jesus. On this latter point, much of Jesus' messianic identity is tied to his place of birth (Bethlehem), the honor of his birth (visit of wise men, shepherds), his lineage (line of David), and his escape to Egypt (a new "exodus"). Although being born is not technically a historical "act" that a person performs, neither is being raised from the dead, and yet this event was covered in the book. Of course, it is possible (even likely) that an explanation for this omission was given somewhere in the book and, due to the book's length, I may very well have overlooked (or forgotten!) it. Nevertheless, this volume would have benefitted from a treatment of this critical moment in the life of Jesus.

In the end, this volume is a tremendous contribution to the study of the historical Jesus from scholars more on the traditional/evangelical end of the spectrum and should be read by all in the field (and related fields). It not only provides up-to-date analysis of the key historical questions, but also functions as a sophisticated and well-reasoned defense of the historicity of the key events of the life of Jesus.

Michael J. Kruger
Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC

The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition. By James R. Edwards. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, xxxiv + 360 pp., \$36.00 paper.

Since Farrer's "On Dispensing with Q" (1955) and Farmer's *The Synoptic Tradition* (1964), no text has advanced such a fresh appraisal of the Synoptic problem. *The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition* will certainly provoke debate for

years to come. Edwards proposes a new solution, addressing three key questions: (1) the origin and development of the Synoptic tradition; (2) Luke's use of Semitisms; and (3) the need for engagement with early Christian literature. Edwards's proposal rejects Q (chap. 7) and reappropriates the Hebrew Gospel as a major source for Luke's special material (chaps. 4–5): "the high concentration of Semitisms in Special Luke . . . can be accounted for on the assumption that they derive from the original Hebrew Gospel" (p. xxi). Two pieces of evidence support this conclusion: (1) early church testimony (chaps. 1–3); and (2) Lukan Semitisms (chaps. 4–5).

Chapters 1–3 engage evidence from the first nine centuries. Edwards helpfully provides each text in original language and translation in Appendix 1. Chapter 1 discusses the extensive support for the Hebrew Gospel in the early church. He notes 75 references in 24 different sources. Edwards draws three conclusions: (1) There is an extensive and widespread tradition in the early church supporting the Hebrew Gospel (pp. 43, 102–3, 259). This cannot be overlooked; hence, in chapter 3, he argues for the reliability of this tradition, noting early church engagement with modern questions, including the Synoptic problem and questions of authorship (pp. 98–101). (2) The Hebrew Gospel was an early, full gospel written by the apostle Matthew (12 references) in Hebrew (11 references; pp. 43, 103, 260); τὰ λόγια was a *terminus technicus* for a complete Gospel (pp. 3–5). (3) The Hebrew Gospel was a disputed text due to its association with the Ebionites and Nazarenes. In chapter 3, Edwards posits the Gospels of the Ebionites and Nazarenes were a corrupted (?) version of the Hebrew Gospel (pp. 118–23). In spite of this, the Hebrew Gospel was highly esteemed; it is cited more frequently than any other non-canonical text, and often, in a positive manner (pp. 43, 105–6; 260).

Chapter 2 examines quotes to the Hebrew Gospel to show "a pattern of correspondence with the Gospel of Luke that appreciably exceeds its correspondence with either Matthew or Mark" (p. 45). Of these quotes, he notes four could correspond to any Synoptic Gospel, five correspond with Matthew, four with Matthew and Luke, and 25 have explicit and/or thematic parallels with Luke alone (pp. 109–11). As a result, in chapter 3, he posits the Hebrew Gospel was one of Luke's sources (cf. 1:1–4), likely his main source (pp. 112–18). Of these 25 quotes, however, Edwards lists only nine as explicit parallels (pp. 110–11), making the vast majority parallels in theme. Theme often is word use alone, that is to say, the Hebrew Gospel uses a term that is common for Luke elsewhere. So, for example, in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.2–3, Edwards notes ἐξελέξατο, βούλομαι, and δέκα are common terms in Luke-Acts (p. 67). The exact use of these quotes is, for the most part, rare; his "explicit" citations are generally connections in language. If Luke utilized the Hebrew Gospel as his source, we should expect more exact parallels, rather than mere similarities in language with other texts. Moreover, they should occur at a greater frequency as in Luke and Mark, especially since Edwards believes Luke integrated Mark into the Hebrew Gospel (pp. 145–46, 261). Perhaps, if an extant copy were available, more evidence would present itself. Apart from its presence, Edwards's parallels are not convincing.

Chapters 4–5 turn to the second major pole of Edwards's thesis, namely the high concentration of Semitisms in Special Luke. He argues these Semitisms are present because Luke is maintaining the language of the Hebrew Gospel. In chapter 4, Edwards demonstrates two points: (1) in Special Luke there is a "statistically greater number" of Semitisms than in other portions of Luke; and (2) where Mark is the source, Luke uses about the same number of Semitisms as Mark (p. 126). Appendix 2 provides a helpful analysis of every verse in Luke, noting all Semitisms in the Gospel, whether they parallel Matthew and/or Mark or Luke alone. Edwards convincingly argues, of Luke's 703 Semitisms, 653 are unique; this demonstrates a 400% increase in Semitic language

and phraseology in L, demanding a Semitic source (pp. 141–45, 261). In chapter 5, he argues the Hebrew Gospel (or at least a translated version) is the best source. Hebrew was used for sacred texts, and thus a Christian Gospel in Hebrew was likely to emerge (pp. 174–82). Moreover, Edwards argues Luke's Semitisms cannot derive from the LXX nor the Aramaic. Not all of Luke's expressions can be explained on these bases alone (pp. 156–66, 260).

Chapters 6–8 turn to objections generated throughout the discussion. Chapter 6 discusses "the neglect of the Hebrew Gospel" in modern scholarship. Edwards argues this has happened for three reasons: (1) ignorance of patristic material; (2) the lack of an extant copy of the Hebrew Gospel due to its use by the Ebionites and Nazarenes; and (3) anti-Semitic scholarship (pp. 187–208, 261).

Chapter 7 argues for the rejection of Q, though affirming a double tradition. Though Edwards's thesis does not demand dismissing Q, he believes it is untenable. His argument is fourfold: (1) No Q-source is referenced in early Christian material (p. 188); (2) no parallel sayings source exists in early Christian history (pp. 224–33); (3) the Q-hypothesis was formed on a faulty identification of τὰ λόγια as sayings (pp. 212–23); and (4) internal evidence can be explained other ways (pp. 233–40, 261). Edwards's strongest argument derives from the lack of early Christian reference. However, his inability to explain differences in order between Matthew and Luke is problematic. The founding of Q on faulty identification does not demand rejecting the theory, since the Gospel of Thomas suggests sayings sources existed. Internal evidence demands Matthew and Luke did not know each other; they place the same sayings at various places in their Gospels, a reality that cannot be explained apart from a sayings source. The question we must ask is whether we would recognize this Q-source if the early Christian fathers referenced it? Given the difficulty in defining Q's nature, it is doubtful. In all likelihood, Edwards's hypothesis will not undermine Q, but will define L as the Hebrew Gospel.

Finally, chapter 8 addresses the relationship between the Hebrew Gospel and Greek Matthew. Edwards argues, though the Hebrew Gospel was written by the apostle Matthew, we should not link it to Greek Matthew. The lack of Semitisms and the lack of connection to the Hebrew Gospel suggest Greek Matthew is an independent tradition. Greek Matthew was not written by the apostle Matthew, but became associated with him due to the common Jewish audience shared with the Hebrew Gospel (pp. 253–57, 261–62). This conclusion is difficult; it discounts substantial early Christian testimony that suggests the apostle Matthew wrote Greek Matthew as well. We cannot appeal to church testimony to support the Hebrew Gospel and then reject church testimony regarding canonical Matthew's authorship. The apostle Matthew may have written both texts independently of each other. If the Hebrew Gospel was disputed due to associations with the Ebionites and Nazarenes, Matthew could have intentionally presented the story differently.

On the whole, Edwards's work is a welcome contribution that is sure to make an impact on a variety of fields, including Synoptic studies, Lukan studies, and possibly even patristic studies. It has the potential to revive the Hebrew Gospel hypothesis as Farmer's work did for the Griesbach hypothesis. Scholars should not be without this work. Edwards's conclusions have the potential to alter radically the landscape of NT Gospel studies and Lukan studies in particular.

Justin M. Fuhrmann

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

The Historical Jesus of the Gospels. By Craig S. Keener. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, xxxviii + 831 pp., \$60.00.

Although Craig Keener's commentaries on Matthew and John discuss the historical Jesus, the immense number of specialized works on the historical Jesus can cause Jesus scholars to overlook contributions appearing in commentaries. *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* is Keener's attempt to bridge this gap between commentators and historical Jesus scholars, with the Professor of New Testament at Palmer Theological Seminary principally developing two claims: (1) that the genre of the Gospels indicates their intention to convey historical information; and (2) that the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels is coherent, multi-faceted, and matches his historical and cultural context, making it the most plausible reconstruction of the historical Jesus.

Section 1 ("Disparate Views about Jesus") briefly examines the history of the field, highlighting the methodological weaknesses of various proposals. Chapter 1 interacts with von Harnack's civilized Jesus, the apocalyptic Jesus of Weiss and Schweitzer, Bultmann's existential Jesus, and the revolutionary Jesus of Brandon. Chapter 2 argues that, by portraying Jesus as a Cynic sage, Jesus Seminar members John Dominic Crossan and Burton Mack remove Jesus from his cultural context and fail to explain the Jewish influences on Jesus' first followers. Like E. P. Sanders and James Charlesworth, the dedicatees of this book, Keener emphasizes Jesus' Jewish context, but he also highlights the variation among those following this trajectory by examining the deviating proposals of Marcus Borg, Geza Vermes, and Sanders in chapter 3. The fourth chapter asserts that apocryphal and Gnostic gospels, including the *Gospel of Thomas*, are not helpful for reconstructing the historical Jesus, because they stem from the second century or later and often resemble novels more than biographies. Keener considers arguments for layers of Q speculative and circular, maintaining that Q is useful only in its reconstruction from the canonical Gospels. Thus, the canonical Gospels remain the best sources to reconstruct the life of Jesus.

Keener thinks section 2 ("The Character of the Gospels") is his most important contribution, as he utilizes his expertise in Greco-Roman sources to examine the historical value of the canonical Gospels. Chapter 5 addresses the question of genre, arguing that the Gospels are biographies, since they focus on a particular historical figure in the recent, not distant, past and do not feature the novelistic traits found in apocryphal Gospels. The sixth chapter shows the connection between the genres of biography and history through Luke's use of a biography as the first part of his historical work. Keener analyzes the historical value of ancient historiography by discussing its historical aims in chapter 7 and its rhetorical aims in chapter 8, arguing that ancient histories combined research and rhetoric. While ancient historians had freedom to make speeches rhetorically pleasing, add details to flesh out narratives, and offer interpretations of events, Keener notes that they typically did not create events and were expected to find the best sources, even facing criticism for promoting their own agenda at the expense of history. While the evangelists were interested in theology and morals, Keener finds them less interested in rhetoric than elite historians and in a position to record history according to ancient standards. Chapters 9 and 10 then scrutinize the evangelists' written and oral sources. Keener's comparison of the evangelists to ancient historians reveals that the sources used by Matthew and Luke (Mark and Q) are surprisingly early and that Matthew and Luke seem as, if not more, conservative in using their sources. He deems the oral sources likely to be reliable for several reasons: because disciples typically preserved their teacher's sayings faithfully, education in the Mediterranean emphasized memorization, Jesus' disciples exerted control over the short period of oral transmission, and the sayings of Jesus typically fit his historical setting rather

than that of the early church. Keener also notes that the use of the standards such as multiple attestation, coherence, uniqueness, embarrassment, and Palestinian environment to question the authenticity of a saying is an argument from silence; these criteria, however, can offer positive support for genuine sayings or actions of the historical Jesus when utilized with appropriate cautions.

Section 3 ("What We Learn about Jesus from the Best Sources") consists of eleven chapters detailing how the description of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, particularly Mark and Q, is historically probable. Chapter 11 describes Jesus' ministry as a continuation of John's prophetic call to repentance. The focus of chapter 12 is that Jesus' Galilean context lends probability to Jesus being a charismatic sage, loyal to the law, who called fishermen as his first disciples. Chapter 13 asserts that Jesus' parables should be considered authentic unless proven otherwise, and chapter 14 discusses the radical discipleship demanded by Jesus' teachings on the present and future aspects of the kingdom. According to chapters 15 and 16, Jesus' position on issues such as possessions, divorce, and purity and his conflicts with the Pharisees reflect a Jewish milieu and are likely authentic. Chapter 17 contends that Jesus was both a sage and a prophet, as his miracles, sayings, and actions show him to be an eschatological prophet who founded a renewal movement. Chapters 18 and 19 address the matter of Jesus' messianic consciousness, holding that Jesus conceived of his mission in messianic terms and spoke about his roles as the eschatological judge and the special mediator of God. The argument of chapter 20 is that Jesus not only predicted his death but provoked it and interpreted it at his last meal as that of a martyr turning away God's anger. Chapter 21 chronicles how the actions of the Jewish authorities and Pilate in the arrest and execution of Jesus are historically probable. Keener notes the continuity and discontinuity between Jesus' resurrection and Jewish beliefs and the early belief of his disciples in an empty tomb and resurrected body of Jesus in the final chapter. Extended discussion of Jesus' miracles will appear in a forthcoming book.

Following a concluding summary are nine appendices, with those on Jewish biography, the resurrection, and post-resurrection teachings of Jesus particularly illuminating. More than half the book consists of its voluminous endnotes, extensive bibliography, and indices of modern authors, subjects, Scripture references, and ancient sources.

This work displays the erudition that one expects from Keener, revealing an exceptional proficiency in both Jewish and Greco-Roman sources as well as thoughtful interaction with relevant secondary works. His summaries help prevent the reader from becoming trapped in his mountain of research and make his arguments lucid. Although Keener's conclusions are traditional, his path to them rests upon objective arguments from standard positions in the academy (e.g. the two-source hypothesis, prioritizing the historical value of the Synoptics over John) and careful examinations of ancient texts to discover the closest parallels. The disclosure of his unexpected change from atheism to Christianity earlier in life enhances Keener's credibility as a scholar in pursuit of truth. He could strengthen the effectiveness of his argument in section 2, however, by including more quotations from ancient texts, showing his readers rather than telling them about the conventions of Greco-Roman historiography, particularly since the use of endnotes makes finding and checking his sources cumbersome; at times, one may wonder whether Keener overstates the value of these sources. Regardless, Keener's work places him at the forefront of conservative Jesus scholars, who likely will adopt many of his conclusions. Interested pastors and students new to the field could absorb the contents provided they can overcome the book's daunting size and moderately high price, but these factors likely will hinder Keener's goal of reaching non-specialists; the possible adaptation into a popularized form, as mentioned in the introduction, would

better fulfill this aim. Undoubtedly, many will remain unconvinced that the burden of proof rests with those who question the historical value of the Gospels, but Keener's meticulous work warrants consideration by all serious Jesus scholars and should create eager anticipation for his book on Jesus' miracles.

Brian C. Dennert
Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL

Rethinking the Gospel Sources. Vol. 2: The Unity and Plurality of Q. By Delbert Burkett. SBL Early Christianity and Its Literature 1. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009, x + 282 pp., \$35.95 paper.

In volume 1, *From Proto-Mark to Mark*, Burkett, Professor of New Testament at Louisiana State University, challenged the most widely-held views about Synoptic origins and the "Synoptic Problem" by arguing against the priority of Mark and the reigning two-source hypothesis. Instead, he argued that Matthew and Mark used common sources, Mark and Luke used common sources, and Mark conflated sources that Matthew and Luke also used.

In this volume he is equally original and challenging. He argues repeatedly that the evangelists were not skillful redactors as redaction criticism had argued but that they were instead skillful compilers. The last sentence of the book ends with the conclusion that "the Evangelists functioned primarily as compilers rather than as composers" (p. 250). In twelve chapters and five appendices he seeks to show the necessity of some form of Q. He defends the idea that "Q existed as a single written source unified by recurring features of style and theme" (p. vii). In the appendices he discusses "editorial fatigue" (a term coined by Goulder) as an argument against Q, features of style and theme in Q, Q in Matthew's order, and Q in Luke's order. He also argues that we have no reason to think that Matthew composed either the interpretation of the parable of the weeds or of the parable of the net (as Jeremias proposed). The book was well-critiqued before publication. In the preface Burkett thanks Dale Allison, David Neville, Leif Vaage, Joseph Verheyden, and William O. Walker Jr. for their comments that led him to rewrite the entire book. As a result of John Kloppenborg's perceptive review of the book for publication, Burkett rewrote most of the book again!

The first chapter is largely an interaction with and rejection of Goodacre's arguments against Q based on the priority of Mark and Luke's use of Matthew. For Goodacre, the minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark show that Luke depended on Matthew. Burkett answers that "most of the minor agreements arose when Matthew and Luke both preserved the reading of Proto-Mark while Mark revised it" (p. 4). In addition, he presents arguments against Luke's use of Matthew and arguments for Q (e.g. it is not likely that Luke has scattered Matthew's tidy Sermon on the Mount without rhyme or reason). He concludes that it is more likely that Matthew drew from Luke's Q.

In the second chapter, the author addresses the topic "Q: Unity or Plurality?" Some scholars have defended the unity of Q from the fact that Matthew and Luke follow Q's order and literary unity. Other scholars have argued for Q's plurality by literary hypotheses (Bussmann) or various oral hypotheses (Horsley, Dunn). Chapters 3–6 delineate the unity of Q; chapters 7–11 examine aspects that suggest plurality.

Burkett's third chapter identifies the minimal assured contents or "core" of a unified Q on the basis of the common order of Q parallels and, more importantly, the style and

theme of that common order. In chapter 4, he discusses the rest of the double tradition and whether it, too, came from the same source as the core of Q. He concludes on the basis of style and theme that it does. Chapter 5 addresses an intriguing issue, the possibility that some Q material may be unique to one Gospel. Burkett believes that we cannot be certain, though the chances are good that when themes are common they also came from Q. Chapter 6 contains a table of the original order of Q and discusses places where Matthew and Luke have reordered the Q material.

Chapters 7 to 11 discuss the possibility of Q's plurality. Matthew and Luke sometimes agree closely in wording and sometimes not at all. In chapter 7, Burkett explores the causes of verbal disagreement between them and also the high degree of verbal agreement between them, which he attributes to the fact that the two evangelists functioned primarily as compilers. The remaining chapters deal with places where the evangelists combined Q with other sources (Mark [chap. 8], M [chap. 9], L [chap. 10]) and other causes for differences in wording (the insertion of one Q passage into another [Matthew 3 times, Luke once] and editorial revision [chap. 11]).

The author summarizes his conclusions in chapter 12 under three headings. First, "any plausible theory of Synoptic relations requires the Q hypothesis" (p. 213). Second, although previous scholarship has not fully decided on either the unity or the plurality of Q, Burkett believes that there is an adequate basis for accepting the unity of Q. Finally, he suggests that Q existed as a unified written source much as we have it in the Matthew-Luke forms. Any "future study of Q must go hand in hand with further study of parallel material from M and L" (p. 215).

Since Burkett's book is the second of three projected volumes on the sources of the canonical Gospels, any evaluation of it is a tentative task at best. A fair evaluation would have to take into account both the first and third volumes. The first volume argues that theories of dependence, including the two-source theory that Matthew and Luke depended on Mark and Q, have never been able to shake off the criticism raised by the "minor agreements" of Matthew and Luke against Mark. Burkett, rightly in my opinion, rejects the view of Goulder and Goodacre, which champions Luke's use of Matthew and dispenses with Q altogether, since this requires of Luke an implausible editorial procedure. Butler and Farmer have argued for Matthean priority, with the latter propounding that Mark abridged Matthew and Luke, but they have not convinced many. Burkett has concluded that these simpler theories do not work. In his view, all three Synoptics drew from earlier written sources that have been lost. His theory proposes that Proto-Mark underwent two revisions, Proto-Mark A used by Matthew and Proto-Mark B used by Luke. As to what the projected third volume will cover, Burkett does not say.

With this caveat, Burkett's book certainly shows that Synoptic studies and theories of composition are alive and well. I will not attempt a detailed evaluation of Burkett's book; suffice it to say that he has come up with a brilliant new theory that deserves to be heard and taken into account by future commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels and studies of the Synoptic problem. The weakest part of his argument is probably that the Synoptic authors were more compilers than they were redactors. In conclusion, we may never know how the first three Gospels relate to each other, but they do relate in some way. Burkett has done a brilliant and highly competent job of rethinking of the whole Synoptic problem. For that, we are deeply in his debt.

Leslie Robert Keylock
Evangelical University and Seminary, Plant City, FL

Methods for Matthew. Edited by Mark A. Powell. *Methods in Biblical Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, xvi + 261 pp., \$26.99 paper.

Cambridge University Press has begun a series, *Methods in Biblical Interpretation*, to introduce readers to old and new hermeneutical approaches in the context of specific books of the Bible. This collection of six essays on Matthew surveys the historical-critical method, literary approaches, feminist criticism, historical Jesus studies, social-scientific approaches, and postcolonial criticism. The first three chapters then apply their methods to Matt 27:57–28:15, a segment of the resurrection narrative, while the last three treat 8:5–13, the healing of the centurion's servant.

Donald Hagner and Steven Young subsume under the historical-critical method genre and form criticism and redaction criticism, as well as the standard items of historical background. What they do *not* mean is the historical-critical method as classically enunciated by Ernst Troeltsch and popularized for English readers in the book with that title by Edgar Krentz. Instead, they mean historical criticisms as opposed to newer theological or literary criticisms. The material on the resurrection narrative reads like a distillation of the most important material from Hagner's WBC volumes on Matthew without any unifying point or points.

Mark Powell, who has also edited the entire volume, surveys literary criticisms, delving into narrative criticism in by far the greatest detail, but also briefly defining reader-response and postmodern approaches, rhetorical criticism, and *Wirkungsgeschichte* (a term that is otherwise not capitalized when it should be—pp. 56–57). Unlike Hagner and Young, Powell *has* a central contrast he wants to highlight through a narrative-critical reading of the resurrection: those in human positions of power (the Jewish leaders) are rendered impotent, while the female followers of Jesus prove faithful and are empowered to lead Jesus' new community (and the male followers also to the extent they recover from their faithlessness).

Elaine Wainwright surveys feminist-critical approaches, especially to Matthew, and corrects both those who find Matthew hopelessly patriarchal or completely liberating, isolating elements of both in his perspective. Similar to Powell, she discovers no faithlessness among the female disciples and imagines that this portion of the resurrection narrative may have been meant to authorize women leaders in Matthew's community, just as 28:16–20, beyond the bounds of the sample passage, may have authorized the male disciples. Of all the contributors, Wainwright seems to have the greatest edge to her tone as she corrects everyone else who has studied this material and method but never gotten it quite right!

Craig Evans divides his treatment of historical Jesus studies into three main subsections addressing the questions of where we find information about Jesus (not in extra-canonical treatments); why historical context is crucial (so that Jesus is portrayed as convincingly Jewish and Galilean rather than Greco-Roman and Cynic); and how to use the criteria of authenticity (positively, not negatively). Evans then determines that the healing of the centurion's servant stands a good chance of being authentic, notes the difference among the versions in Matthew, Luke, and John, but observes that all have Jesus foreshadowing ministry beyond conventional Jewish contexts. Of all the essays, this one clearly says the least about Matthew.

Bruce Malina offers a succinct history of social-scientific approaches to the NT, notes some issues crucial for Matthew, and then zeroes in on three areas crucial for the reading of the miracle story at hand—Jesus as a first-century holy man, the centurion and the military institution, and the ancient Mediterranean healing system. Whatever actually happened medically, Jesus *did* restore people's perception of their wholeness. Implausibly, however, Malina believes this centurion would have been Jewish, so that he finds none of Evans's (and most commentators') emphasis on crossing ethnic boundaries present in the narrative.

Fernando Segovia, finally, turns to postcolonial criticism, giving a remarkably thorough history for a movement he deems to have begun only in 1996, followed by theoretical foundations and methodological configurations. Overall, he isolates three crucial tasks: the analysis of the biblical texts in the context of their imperial-colonial formations, the analysis of subsequent biblical interpreters in the same light, and the analysis of our current world given similar realities today. Like Wainwright, he then surveys applications of his method to Matthew in general and to his passage in particular, again concluding against readings that see Matthew as either completely imperializing or counter-imperializing. Instead, elements of each lead to labeling Matthew as “conflicted” in the postcolonial realm.

This book forms an odd anthology. All the main authors, except perhaps for Wainwright, are “superstars” in their discipline, and each essay is well worth reading in its own right. Yet joined together, these six specific essays do not add up to a very cohesive volume overall. Some attempt to survey the history of their discipline, however briefly; others do not. Some survey others’ uses of their discipline with the Gospel of Matthew; some do not. There are curious and unnecessary overlaps among authors, and there are unresolved contradictions. Historical Jesus studies is not really a “method” like the other five are, and at least half of Evans’s chapter is about what not to do and where not to look for information on his topic without correspondingly positive counterparts.

Given that other volumes in this series are about methods in *other* biblical books, one must assume that each anthology intends to do more than just form a primer on methods, but actually to teach something substantial about the books to which their methods are applied. If the volumes’ primary audiences are theological students, presumably they are intended as supplementary texts for classes on those specific books. A course in criticism or exegesis would naturally choose from among a number of excellent volumes that introduce *all* the major methods and apply them to those portions of the Bible (or the NT) where they best fit, not trying to match them with one specific, previously assigned text. However, this is precisely where *Methods in Matthew* proves weakest. We learn very little about Matthew overall from its chapters, a fair amount about two fairly small selections of his Gospel, but even then only from three of many possible perspectives each. We gain a reasonably good impression of what the six methods do in general, but why have these six been chosen and not others that might equally or more fruitfully fit a study of Matthew, either as a whole or for one or both of the two focal passages?

There are a few humorous and/or baffling mistakes. In the list of contributors and their credentials, Auckland is assigned to Australia (p. xvi), rather than to New Zealand where it actually exists. Several occurrences of first-century dates have had 19s prefixed to them, so that NT events occurred in the 1940s, 1950s, or 1960s (pp. 4, 152)! Powell drastically overstates what may be concluded from narrative criticism when he declares that “The church of Jesus Christ is founded by women, but it may also include men—if the women follow Christ’s direction to include men and if the men are willing to accept their inclusion on precisely those terms” (p. 76). Wainwright, on the other hand, presents her overview of feminism without a hint of awareness of the large international body of biblical or evangelical feminists. Four of Malina’s subheadings are punctuated with question marks even though none of them, grammatically, forms a question (pp. 165–69). Also, Malina flatly misstates the “literal” translation of Matt 8:10 by claiming it reads, “among no one else have I found such faith in Israel” (p. 189), when nothing in Greek even remotely corresponds to “else.” Indeed, he goes on to impugn the NRSV for translating “in no one in Israel,” despite that being exactly what the Greek text says (παρ’ οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εὑρον)!

Craig L. Blomberg
Denver Seminary, Littleton, CO

A Comparative Handbook to the Gospel of Mark: Comparisons with Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran Scrolls, and Rabbinic Literature. Edited by Bruce Chilton, Darrell Bock, Daniel Gurtner, Jacob Neusner, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Daniel Oden. The New Testament Gospels in Their Judaic Contexts 1. Leiden: Brill, 2010, xii + 596 pp., \$247.00.

This helpful reference work situates the Gospel of Mark within the context of Jewish literature by providing for each passage in Mark a series of comparative quotations from a variety of sources: the pseudepigrapha, the writings of Philo and Josephus, texts related to Qumran, and Rabbinic literature including the Targumim. The handbook works through Mark's Gospel passage by passage, beginning each section with a fresh translation of Mark's text (with Codex Vaticanus serving as the underlying Greek text), followed by extended quotations from Jewish literature (often with quotations from Qumran literature predominating), followed by brief comments on the place of Mark's Gospel within a Jewish context. The purpose for these comments is somewhat limited; the intention is not to analyze or provide a commentary on Mark's Gospel but to suggest possible comparisons between Mark and various Judaic environments. Often included in the comments are Aramaic retroversions of Jesus' sayings, translating the Greek text of Mark's Gospel back to an underlying Aramaic saying, all for the sake of better comparing Jesus' words with the Jewish context. The volume as a whole begins with an introduction to Jewish literature (pp. 1–60) and ends with a series of appendices (pp. 529–72), covering "Rabbinic Rules of Interpretation," "(The) Son of (the) Man, and Jesus," "Rabbi as a Title of Jesus," and "Synagogues."

The preface sorts out four different types of possible analogies between the Gospels and Judaic literature: simple, topical, interpretive, and close (pp. viii–xii). A simple analogy points to a similar pattern of thought. So, for example, the idea that a fresh experience of God brings with it new requirements of response appears both in the Gospels (e.g. Matt 13:17) and the Targumim (e.g. Tg. Isa. 48:6a). The similar use of a word or phrase produces a topical analogy. As an example, Jesus was not alone in teaching about the kingdom of God (e.g. the Targumim use the form "the kingdom of the Lord"; see p. ix for a list of references). An interpretive analogy does not point to a parallel that involves exact wording, but rather it presupposes a comparable understanding of the same biblical text. Other Second Temple Jewish texts present the nation and land of Israel as God's vineyard based on the metaphor of Isa 5:1–7, and they do so in ways that are comparable to Jesus' use of the metaphor in his parable of the vineyard in Mark 12:1–12. A close analogy shows a similarity in both wording and thought. Jesus' teaching on Gehenna (e.g. Mark 9:48) is closely similar to statements found in pseudepigraphic texts (e.g. 1 Enoch 27:2; 54:1–6; Syb. Or. 2:283–312) and in Rabbinic literature (e.g. Tg. Isa. 66:24b; m. Eduy. 2.10). The editors kept all four types of analogies in mind as they chose comparative quotations from Jewish literature, but no attempt was made to assign quotations to a particular category of analogy. The comments included on each passage in Mark's Gospel are therefore somewhat limited. They are "deliberately minimal" (p. xii). The comments suggest possible interpretations based on comparisons between Mark's Gospel and quotations from Jewish literature. However, there is no attempt to provide a full commentary on Mark based on these quotations. Instead, this handbook treats the reader as a commentator, providing comparative material to serve the reader in the task of commentary writing on Mark's Gospel or in the task of interpretation more generally.

The limited nature of the comments has the potential to create some lack of clarity. At times not enough explanation is offered to evaluate the statements made in the comments. For example, on a number of occasions throughout the handbook, references are made to possible sources for the traditions in Mark's Gospel. The story of Jesus'

baptism comes from Peter and his circle (p. 76). It was also Peter and his companions who crafted the account of Jesus' death and resurrection (p. 476). The description of the exorcism at the synagogue in Capernaum emanates from Mary Magdalene and her circle (p. 89). Stories related to purity and ritual, such as those appearing in the second chapter of Mark, find their source in Barnabas and his circle (pp. 101, 114, 131). The probable source for Jesus' teaching concerning his parables in Mark 4:10–12 is James, the brother of Jesus, and the circle around him in Jerusalem (p. 166). However, insufficient evidence is offered to evaluate such claims, and little guidance is given to make sense of why these comments serve to clarify the relationship between Mark's Gospel and comparative Jewish literature. In other words, the comments included for each passage in Mark's Gospel are more suggestive than comprehensive in nature.

Another limitation is the lack of any obvious system for cross-references. Particular selections from Jewish literature may be relevant to more than one passage in Mark's Gospel. Yet quotations normally appear in conjunction with just one passage (or maybe two) in Mark. For example, the Aramaic Apocalypse found at Qumran is significant for understanding early Jewish messianic beliefs and the use of "Son of God" as a title. Therefore the reference in Aramaic Apocalypse ii 1 to a person called the Son of God and the Son of the Most High is important for a number of passages in Mark's Gospel. Yet this quotation from the Aramaic Apocalypse only appears in the handbook in connection with Jesus' silencing of the unclean spirits in Mark 3:7–12 when they call him the Son of God. Another example involves the quotation from Florilegium 1–2i 21:10–13, which looks ahead to God's fulfillment of his promises to the offspring of David who will arise to save Israel. This quotation serves to illustrate Bartimaeus's cry to Jesus as the Son of David (Mark 10:46–52) and the cry of the crowd at Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem concerning the coming kingdom of David (11:1–10) but not Jesus' question about the Son of David in Mark 12:35–37. The opposite occurs with regard to the reference to the Branch of David in the War Rule 7:2–5 and the reference to the Son of David in the Ps. Sol. 17:21–43. These appear in conjunction with Mark 12:35–37 but not 10:46–52 or 11:1–10. As a result, users of the handbook must be careful to check the sections for multiple passages in Mark's Gospel when studying any topic that appears in several places in Mark.

Overall, the handbook is an achievement, and certain limitations should not detract from its success. The editors provide hundreds of pages of extensive quotations drawn from Jewish literature that have the potential to shed light on every passage in Mark's Gospel. The comments for each section begin the comparative work and point to possible avenues for further study. As such, the handbook serves as an important resource for commentators and other interpreters of Mark's Gospel.

Joel F. Williams
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

Mark's Jesus: Characterization as Narrative Christology. By Elizabeth Struthers Malbon. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009, xiv + 286 pp., \$39.95.

To narrative critics in general and to those who study characterization in Mark's Gospel more specifically, Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, longtime Professor in the Department of Religion and Culture at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, is a well-recognized leader in the field. *Mark's Jesus* is the culmination of Malbon's research into Mark's characterization that dates back to the 1980s (see her collected

essays on the topic: *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark's Gospel* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000]). Malbon is specifically and uniquely qualified for her task in *Mark's Jesus* to examine Mark's Christology through his characterization of Jesus, a task that she accomplishes with acuity and literary grace.

In examining Mark's Jesus, Malbon is less interested in imposing on Mark a Christological construct from without (e.g. via Christological titles), but from within by way of a methodology she labels as "Narrative Christology," a phrase borrowed from Robert Tannehill ("The Gospel of Mark as Narrative Christology," *Semeia* 16 [1979] 57–95). In other words, Malbon's focus on Markan Christology centers on *how* Mark characterizes Jesus and not on *what* Mark's Christology is (pp. 13–14). Such an exploration, Malbon states, "focus[es] on the emergence of meaning in the experience of reading itself, guided by multiple dimensions of the narrative and producing no concept or idea precipitated out as separate from its narrative manifestation" (p. 14). For Malbon, then, Mark's Christology emerges from how he unveils his main character through the telling of his story.

Malbon approaches this task through a methodology that is as much groundbreaking as it is clear and helpful. In essence, Malbon is interested in Mark's characterization of Jesus by exploring within Mark's narrative world (1) what Jesus does; (2) what other characters and the narrator say to and about Jesus; (3) what Jesus says in response to other characters; (4) what Jesus says instead of what other characters and the narrator say; and (5) what other characters do that mirrors what Jesus says and does. These five explorations, which for Malbon represent Mark's narrative Christology, correspond with the five chapters that make up her work.

In chapter 1, Malbon explores what Jesus does in Mark's narrative; she calls this "Enacted Christology." Malbon does not revisit the familiar ground of certain well-known actions of Jesus such as his preaching, teaching, exorcisms, and healings; rather, she explores Jesus' more complex actions at the plot and discourse level of the narrative. Malbon, in essence, investigates *how* the narrator presents what Jesus does and *why* he does it (p. 22). She does this by exploring the types of activities that Jesus does and when he does them (diachronic) and what Jesus does in relation to whom (synchronic). She concludes that Mark's Jesus, beyond being a teacher, preacher, exorcist, and healer, participates in the inbreaking of God's rule as one who restores health to the powerless and serves the least in society, teaching others to do the same, even at the risk of losing one's life.

After establishing what Jesus does in relation to whom ("Enacted Christology"), in chapter 2 Malbon explores what others say about Jesus ("Projected Christology"), taking her readers through an intriguing discussion that seeks to "decenter [the] more traditional way of studying Markan Christology by abstracting 'titles' . . . from the narrative and discussing their meaning outside their narrative contexts" (pp. 124–25; contrast with Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983]). To accomplish this, she explores what the narrator, John the Baptizer, God's voice, unclean spirits, demons, suppliants, the crowds, the disciples, the Jewish authorities, and the Roman authorities say about Jesus. Malbon concludes that the unclean spirits and the demons testify to Jesus' cosmic struggle between God and Satan, the suppliants experience and praise Jesus' success in this struggle, and John the Baptizer prepares the way for Jesus. The crowds and the disciples voice Jesus' success and demonstrate the difficulty in following him. The Jewish and Roman authorities display the difficulties on a societal level of dealing with Jesus' challenges to the status quo.

In chapter 3, Malbon explores what Jesus says in response to what others say about him ("Deflected Christology"). Jesus' response to the array of Markan characters is summed up as the consistent "deflect[ing] [of the] honor or attention offered him

toward God" (p. 129). In light of this deflection, Malbon, advancing Markan scholarship in a new way, notes that there is an intentional Christological tension between the narrator's point of view and Jesus' point of view. The narrator constantly wants to talk about Jesus (e.g. as the Christ and the Son of God), while Jesus constantly wants to talk about God (pp. 190–94). Malbon fleshes out this tension in the next chapter.

Aside from deflecting honor to God, Jesus also "bends" the Christologies of the narrator and of other characters. Malbon, in chapter 4, calls this "Refracted Christology." Specifically, "Refracted Christology" explores what the "Markan Jesus says instead of what the narrator and other characters say" (p. 196). In other words, within the Markan narrative, there is an intentional and creative Christological tension between the narrator and his characters (both creations of the implied author) and Jesus. Christologically, the narrator and the Markan characters attach to Jesus Christological titles (e.g. "Son of God" and "Messiah"; cf. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* and Jacob Chacko Naluparayil, *The Identity of Jesus in Mark* [Jerusalem: Franciscan, 2000]) that Jesus "refracts" by more complexly turning answers into questions and by serving others instead of being served (pp. 209–10). The implied author, Malbon concludes, "sets up this tension to draw in the implied audience—not to resolve the tension but to see the story of Jesus in its full spectral colors of commitment to God and God's rule, to hear of the story of Jesus in its full complexity and mystery" (p. 210).

In Malbon's final examination of Mark's characterization as narrative Christology, she explores in Chapter 5 what others do that reflects what the Markan Jesus says and does ("Reflected Christology"). Although ultimately reflecting what Jesus says and does incompletely, the blind man from Bethsaida, Bartimaeus, the anointing woman, the exceptional scribe, and Joseph of Arimathea "mirror how Jesus relates to God and thus to others" (p. 230).

Malbon concludes with an unexpected, and quite complex, glance at the intersection of narrative criticism and historical Jesus research, a juncture ignored by most narrative critics. Although Malbon is not completely clear about the implications of her work on historical Jesus research, she seems to argue for a more interdisciplinary approach to both methodologies.

Some readers might take issue with Malbon's statements about Mark's "blessed fallibility" (p. 256), her suggestion that Mark's Gospel at times does not necessarily reflect accurate history (p. 255), and/or her contention that Mark's Jesus "is not God" (p. 202). Others might contest her argument that, for Mark, Jesus is not the "Son of David"—a title that, Malbon argues, represents within Mark's narrative logic a misunderstanding of Jesus' true identity (pp. 87–92, 159–69; contrast with Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll, *The Psalms of Lament in Mark's Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007] 137–67). Nevertheless, Malbon, in a broader methodological sense, contributes an insightful paradigm for studying the Christology (and characterization) of Mark and other Gospel narratives—a methodology that cautions against a piecemeal approach to the Christology of the Gospels in favor of, as Malbon's title appropriately notes, a "Narrative Christology."

Apart from her methodological contribution, Malbon's conclusion regarding the different narrational perspectives between Mark's narrator (who focuses on Jesus) and Mark's Jesus (who focuses on God) is most intriguing. This conclusion, aside from presenting a richer Markan Christology that begs further inquiry, increases the modern reader's respect for the narrative creativity of the Second Gospel—a narrative respect that, until the onset of literary criticism, was largely lost with Dibelius and Schmidt.

Although too specialized for a primary classroom text, I recommend *Mark's Jesus* as supplementary reading for both advanced undergraduate and general graduate courses on Mark's Gospel, especially for class sections that address Markan Christology.

Additionally, *Mark's Jesus*, because of its methodological contributions, would be a helpful required text for more general courses on Christology.

D. Keith Campbell
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC

The Use of Scripture in the Markan Passion Narrative. By Kelli S. O'Brien. Library of New Testament Studies 384. London: T & T Clark, 2010, xiii + 328 pp., \$150.00.

Kelli O'Brien is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Regis University (Denver, CO). The work in question is "a much revised and enlarged version" of the author's dissertation at the University of Notre Dame under the auspices of Mary Rose D'Angelo and James VanderKam (p. xiii). The target audience of the LNTS series is "scholars, teachers in the field of New Testament studies, postgraduate students and advanced undergraduates" (back cover). The work in question is a technical yet accessible monograph that fits this intended readership.

The author points out that, while scholars have proposed numerous allusions to Scripture in the Markan passion narrative, disagreement exists as to which proposals are actually present, embedded in the text, and which are due to scholarly imagination. She also observes that the actual meaning-effects of most of the proposed allusions in their new contexts remain largely unexplored. In light of this situation, the author's stated goal for the study is to "examine the use of Scripture in the Markan passion narrative, beginning with the plot to arrest Jesus and ending with the burial (Mark 14–15) . . . and establish, with more precision and argument than has often been the case, just which allusions do exist and what those allusions contribute to the meaning of the narrative" (p. 1).

The book consists of an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion, and three appendices. The study "proceeds in three stages" (p. 18). First, the author takes up methodology in chapters 1–2, in which "strategies for locating and interpreting allusions" are discussed (p. 18). Chapter 3 then applies the strategies for locating an allusion, hammered out in chapter 1, to Mark 14–15. Finally, chapters 4–5 apply the strategies for understanding the interpretive impact of an allusion in the new context, developed in chapter 2, to Mark 14–15. A brief conclusion discusses "the cumulative impact of the allusions" upon the Markan passion narrative as a whole (p. 18).

The three hefty appendices comprise virtually a third of the book. Appendix A offers a text-form analysis of every quotation or near quotation of OT Scripture in Mark (pp. 203–14). Appendices B and C offer an investigation and textual analysis of every one of approximately 270 suggested allusions in a verse-by-verse format of Mark 14 (Appendix B; pp. 215–64) and of Mark 15 (Appendix C; pp. 265–89). The suggested references are set beside the Göttingen LXX (or Rahlfs, if the book in question is unavailable) to facilitate comparison. The Masoretic Hebrew text is only displayed when the proposed Markan reference appears to correspond to it and not to the LXX. The monograph is rounded out by a bibliography, an index of ancient sources, and a general index.

In chapter 3, upon careful analysis of the 270 references suggested by the major recent scholarly works on Mark and/or its passion narrative, O'Brien concludes that only sixteen of these have "sufficient verbal and thematic correspondence to signal an allusion" (p. 112). These include the "after two days" phrase of Hos 6:2 in Mark 14:1; the "blood of the covenant" of Exod 24:8 in 14:24; the formal quotation of Zech 13:7 in 14:27 ("Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered"); the "my soul is grieved" of Pss 42:6, 12; 43:5 in 14:34; the "seeking to put him to death" of Ps 37:32 in 14:55;

the ninth commandment of "bearing false witness" in 14:56–57; the "they were silent and did not answer" of Isa 36:21 in Mark 14:61; the "spitting" upon and "striking" of the "face" of Isa 50:6 in Mark 14:65; the darkness over the land at noon of Amos 8:9 in 15:33; the vinegary wine to drink of Ps 69:22 in 15:36; three references from Ps 22 (vv. 2, 7–9, 19) in Mark 15:24, 29–30, 34; the "you are my son" of Ps 2:7 in 14:61; the "sit at my right hand" of Ps 110:1 in 14:62; and the "one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven" of Dan 7:13 in 14:62.

In chapters 4–5, the author proceeds to walk each of the above-mentioned proposals through a three-step analysis, analyzing the OT text's "early Jewish interpretation," "other early Christian uses," and finally its "Markan use" or significance in its new context. The first two of these help to determine how the Markan usage fits within the text's trajectory of ancient biblical interpretation.

In chapter 1, O'Brien defines allusion as "a reference made by the author to a previous work that is indicated by verbal correspondence and that has interpretive value" (p. 22). She argues that an allusion must have three elements to be a true literary allusion. First, an allusion is an intentional act on the part of an author, "a signal to the reader," in the hope that the original audience will "recognize the allusion and somehow use the allusion to interpret the alluding text" (p. 24). Second, there must be sufficient verbal correspondence between the referent and the referring text. Granted that it is difficult in certain cases to know exactly how much correspondence is sufficient, a proposal cannot be an allusion "if there is no verbal correspondence between the passages" (p. 30). Third, a proposed allusion must affect the meaning of the new context. In dependence upon Hollander and Hays, O'Brien labels this last characteristic of allusion *metalepsis*, defined as "a mutual participation in meaning between the evoked text and the evoking text" (p. 48).

Problems arise, however, when the author employs "allusion" in two ways in the study. The author writes that "echoes, covert allusions, quotations, and citations are not hard and fast divisions, but references with differing degrees of clarity. In all degrees, the author includes in the text verbal clues to point the reader to another passage" (p. 28). Note that the word "allusion" in this statement refers to a member of a literary hierarchy, albeit one upon a continuum. "Allusion" here is greater than an echo, but less than a quotation or citation, and this understanding accords with its typical usage in the field. The author, however, then proceeds to label *all* of these "differing degrees" within the literary hierarchy by the term allusion: "For these reasons, the word *allusion* will be used without regard to the degree of clarity. Here, allusions are all references, whether overt or covert, that call on the reader to interpret the passage by considering the two texts together" (p. 28, *italics hers*). "Echoes," upon this proposed continuum of allusion, are references that share "two or three words in common, in no particular order," while "quotations" or "citations" on the continuum of allusion would typically share many words in an exact or nearly exact word order (p. 30). Thus "allusion" is used in two ways. Therefore, on any given usage in the study, does the term refer to a reference stronger than an echo but less explicit than a quotation (as seen in the literary hierarchy above), or does it describe an intentional reference of *any* sort upon the continuum, whether faint (an echo) or strong (a quotation)? The author is certainly right to emphasize that intentionality and *metalepsis* are basic to the nature of allusion, and she advances further than many when she offers a crisp definition for the term. In a discipline plagued by lack of discussion of method and terminology, this is most welcome. When, however, she then expands "allusion" to refer to the whole continuum of intentional reference—including within its scope her narrower hierarchic "allusion"—the outcome is occasional confusion (e.g. see pp. 124–25). This second, expanded usage is not how most scholars working in the field employ "allusion"; the divergence necessitates justification, although little is offered.

Because of the disagreement within the field over method and terminology, the best one can hope for at present is that scholars will apply their own decisions consistently within their studies. How does O'Brien fare in this regard? Keeping in mind the above criticism concerning her use of "allusion," O'Brien is to be commended for methodological consistency throughout the study. Of her sixteen proposals, I found that two were unconvincing due to the lack of any truly significant verbal (or thematic) correspondence (Hos 6:2 in 14:1; Isa 36:21 in 14:61). Moreover, several proposals, in my estimation, are mere echoes where she asserts significant allusions (what from the original context must be brought forward into the new for the latter to be understood fully?). That said, fourteen of her proposals do appear to hold up under scrutiny, and she has rightly called her reader's attention to them. She also performs a service in aiding her reader to imagine possible metaleptic connections created in the new context by the scriptural text in most of the individual cases.

Finally, it will come as a surprise to not a few that O'Brien denies any allusion to the fourth Servant Song of Isa 52:13–53:12 in the narrative, because many scholars have claimed to observe allusions to the pericope scattered at various points within. She concludes that "the Servant [of Isaiah 53] is not the pattern by which the Gospel of Mark portrays Jesus' passion" (p. 87). Scholars of a different opinion must come to terms with her formidable argument (pp. 76–87).

O'Brien's monograph now stands as the benchmark for the use of Scripture in the Markan passion narrative, and all who execute studies of this sort here will have to reckon with her conclusions. Arguably, the study's most significant overall contribution is how it has cut clear through the scholarly tangle of 270 suggested scriptural proposals and demonstrated, one-by-one, how only fourteen or so have any real basis as probable references. Those who object must come to terms with her comprehensive and telling chart on pp. 68–74 and appendices B and C.

Christopher A. Beetham

Evangelical Theological College, Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology. By John Ronning. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010, xx + 315 pp., \$29.95 paper.

This work is further evidence of the ongoing interest in Targumic studies and the dialogue concerning their potential contribution to NT studies. Ronning's plan for the book grew out of the possibility that John's theological conception of the Logos ("the Word") was derived from the Targums and that understanding the concept of the divine word in the Targums is "a vital key to understanding John's Gospel" (p. xi). That "John's decision to call Jesus 'the Word,' the Logos (ὁ λόγος), was influenced by the Targums" is evident from the fact that "in hundreds of cases in these Targums, where the MT refers to God, the corresponding Targum passage refers to the divine *Word*" (p. 1). Hence, "calling Jesus 'the Word' is a way of identifying him with/as the God of Israel" (p. 1).

Chapter 1 consists of Ronning's summary of the three common views on John's usage of Logos for Jesus: (1) that "the Word" refers to the OT "word of the Lord" as expressing God's revelation of himself; (2) that the concept developed from the idea of wisdom personified in the OT; and (3) that the term was adapted from the Greek philosophical concept of the Logos as found in Philo (p. 1). Ronning then presents a case for concluding that John's Logos theology was derived from the Targums. He as-

serts that terms used in the Targums as substitutes for the Tetragrammaton (*Memra/Dibbera*) are conceptually parallel to those found in John's Gospel, utilizing the Logos as a metonym for the Son of God in the same way that the Targums do when they use *Memra/Dibbera* for God (p. 42). Ronning suggests that John's motives for doing so are Christological in that "Logos" explicitly, yet subtly, identifies Jesus as both God and man (pp. 42–44).

Chapter 2 reinforces chapter 1 with additional Targumic and Johannine texts set in parallel, specifically focusing on John 1:14–18 and the Word becoming flesh that dwelt among us and displayed God's glory (pp. 46–47). Ronning concludes that "Logos" is a divine title functioning for John the same way it does in the Targums, as a term expressing the manifestation of God's presence. This, he argues, is evident from the OT background of John 1:14–18 linked as it is with Exodus 33–34 and the manifestation of the glory of God to Moses (pp. 68–69).

Chapter 3 examines the overall mission of Jesus as expressed in John 17 and its significance in light of the Targums. Ronning explains that Jesus' mission was to reveal the name of the Father and subsequently explores how Jesus fulfilled this mission (p. 70). That "name" given to Jesus, which was to be revealed, was the divine name of YHWH. He notes that "John shows us a comprehensive continuation of the divine person and work from the old covenant" (p. 80).

In chapter 4 the focus is on Jesus' "descent" language with respect to his mission as being not only to reveal the divine person but to continue the divine action of intervention in human affairs by judging, redeeming, and dwelling among human beings (p. 115). Ronning points out that Jesus adapted the nomenclature of "Son of Man," which he considers to be a catchall term that identifies Jesus as the last Adam and Messiah (p. 107). The last portion of this chapter addresses extra-Johannine texts (Gal 3:16; Heb 2:5–10) in connection with this.

Chapter 5 explores the Targumic background for themes found in John's Gospel that relate to Jesus' fulfillment of various OT divine roles. The first is that of the divine warrior, which, according to Ronning, is expressed by John in support of his interpretation of John 1:14 as "YHWH became flesh." Ronning also argues that John 12:31–32 alludes to "the Lord's deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib" and John 14:1–4 alludes to Jesus' "three day journey and return," both of which prefigure Christ's victory over the devil on the cross (p. 142).

Chapter 6 continues Ronning's exploration of Johannine themes that relate to Jesus' fulfillment of divine roles. Thus, the second is the role of the divine bridegroom, which correlates with Israel as the bride of the Lord (p. 143). He concludes that "the Word became flesh" in order to facilitate Israel's deliverance. Jesus consecrated himself for his bride so that she might be holy and faithful to him as she awaits his return.

Continuing his thematic analysis in chapter 7, Ronning notes that the third divine role is that of lawgiver. As the divine lawgiver, Jesus was again the voice of God in the form of the "Word become flesh" (p. 156). The lawgiver motif parallels the OT in "both divine (YHWH) and human (Moses)" presentations (p. 173).

Ronning explores John's language about trusting Jesus in chapter 8, asserting that this, too, is in keeping with John's theme that "the Word became flesh" (p. 174). The argument is that in his performance as divine warrior, bridegroom, and lawgiver Jesus was revealing the name of God and that Jesus' work was consistent with the works of God in the OT. Ronning points out that the purpose of this revelation was to prompt the response of faith. He concludes that this desired response for faith in the NT is, likewise, consistent with the response of believing in YHWH expressed in the OT.

Chapter 9 addresses divine-presence idioms in parallel with Jesus' "I am" sayings in John's Gospel. John, Ronning asserts, employs the same idiomatic terminology to

designate and reinforce Jesus' self-disclosure as the incarnate Son of God and purposed object of man's faith. Thus, Jesus' divinity is not limited to John's Gospel and the Logos terminology but is complimented by Jesus' "I am he" sayings, which, in turn, are sympathetic with the Synoptic Gospels' presentation of Jesus' divinity (pp. 194–95).

Ronning discusses Johannine interest in unwitting prophecies (like Caiaphas's seemingly hostile comment regarding Jesus' death in John 11:51) that appear to be based on unwitting prophecies found in the Targums and the credibility that is given to them in John and the Targums. Ronning concludes that unwitting prophecies have an apologetically legitimate purpose in John's Gospel because they testify and warn Jew and Gentile alike of what will happen to those who do not believe in him and deal with him falsely (pp. 234–35).

Ronning sheds light on Johannine Christology by presenting themes commonly found among other NT authors. Particular to this are biblical passages that support the message of Christ's humanity and/or deity. His findings support the universality and consistency among NT authors with regard to the identity of Jesus Christ as the God-man. John's way of expressing this identity may be unique but his Christological affirmations are not (p. 251).

In chapter 12 Ronning addresses conceptual commonalities between his view that the Targums provide the background for John's Logos theology and the other proposed views, demonstrating why the Targumic view is to be preferred. He also discusses what he considers to be methodological problems among those who hold to opposing views. He asserts that other views citing other sources for the background of John's Logos theology miss the mark and, in the end, are no better than the Targum view he espouses (p. 261).

Ronning concludes the book with a discussion of the implications of his approach, noting that the Targumic model not only reinforces the unity of authorship of Johannine literature (p. 272) but also highlights John's Christological and apologetic motives for writing his Gospel.

Ronning's work must be recognized for its value to Targumic studies and is a "must have" for those engaged in that field of study, even if Ronning's interpretations, comparisons of the NT and Targumic texts, or conclusions differ. In addition, unlike other works in this field of study, this book is an easy read.

Martin McNamara's work provides the basis for Ronning's analysis and is dependent on earlier works that take the trajectory that the NT was heavily influenced by the Targums (C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1922]; Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament* [Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972]; idem, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* [2d ed.; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978]). Martin McNamara saw the NT and the Targums as related linguistically and thematically and concluded that the Palestinian Targums existed prior to the composition to the NT. Ronning assumes this and goes one step further, claiming that John was directly influenced by the Targums. This exposes the fundamental weakness to this approach. Like McNamara, Ronning does not sufficiently provide evidence for an early date of the Targums. There is no doubt that Aramaic was firmly established in Palestine in the first century AD as the common language while Hebrew continued as the scholarly and sacred tongue. There is also little doubt that by the first century AD it was customary to read from both the Law and Prophets in synagogues. However, the Mishnah (*m. Meg.* iv. 4–6, 10) indicates that these readings were accompanied with a translation into Aramaic no earlier than the second century AD. The question remains as to the dating of the Targums and when they would have been incorporated into a tradition sufficient to have influenced John's theology. Until a strong argument for the early dating of the Targums as a whole can be critically ascertained independent of the NT, the probative value of individual texts remains greatly im-

paired. Perhaps there was a Targumic influence on John or John may simply be bearing witness to common Palestinian thought about such things at that time.

Michael D. Fiorello
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

The Acts of the Apostles. By David G. Peterson. PNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, lv + 790 pp., \$65.00.

When I taught my first elective in Acts in the early 1970s, commentaries on the book were slim pickings. Several classic older volumes were available in reprint, such as Rackham's and Cadbury and Lake's commentary in *The Beginnings of Christianity*. Brief contributions were available, such as Foakes-Jackson in the Moffatt series and Williams in Harper's. The most thorough and up-to-date commentary was that of Haenchen. The situation is quite different now. With the many recent commentary series have come a number of excellent volumes on Acts, including Barrett's two volumes, Bock, Dunn, Fernando, Fitzmyer, Gaventa, Johnson, Larkin, Marshall, Neil, Parsons, and Spenser. Excellent independent volumes are the 1990 enlarged commentary by Bruce, Tannehill's two-volume narrative treatment of Luke-Acts, and Witherington's "Socio-Rhetorical" commentary. An important contribution is Jervell's volume as Haenchen's successor in the *Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar*, which is as yet unavailable in English. Peterson shows no awareness of this commentary or of Conzelmann's, which is available in English. Also neglected is Fitzmyer's Anchor Bible contribution. Except for a few holes such as these, however, he does reflect a thorough acquaintance with his predecessors as reflected in this comprehensive and highly useful treatment of Acts.

Peterson is well qualified to write an Acts commentary. He has participated in the multi-volume series *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting* from its beginning, having contributed an article in the first volume entitled "The Motif of Fulfillment and the Purpose of Luke-Acts." He also served as co-editor with I. H. Marshall of the sixth volume, which deals with the theology of Acts. Indeed, perhaps the greatest contribution of this new commentary is its extensive treatment of the theology of the book.

The introduction to the commentary treats such standard matters as authorship and date, but also matters more specific to Acts. Particularly useful are the sections dealing with genre and literary features. Some standard issues are treated rather briefly, such as the speeches in Acts. These speeches comprise nearly a third of the entire text of the book and are the primary source for its theology, and one might expect a more thorough discussion. This brevity, however, is compensated by Peterson's thorough treatment of the speeches in the commentary proper. The same applies to his introductory comments on the text of Acts. He gives only scant attention to the Western text of Acts, which is 8% longer than the Alexandrian and Byzantine texts. On the other hand, he makes frequent allusions to the distinctive Western readings in the commentary and footnotes. The most valuable portion of the introductory matters is a 44-page discussion of the theology of Acts. In addition to considering such standard features as the theology of God, Jesus, the Spirit, salvation, the church, atonement (or the seeming lack thereof), he also examines less discussed topics like elements of the magical and demonic in Acts. The emphasis on theology is continued throughout the commentary, and the introductory sections are regularly cross-referenced in the commentary proper where applicable. In addition to the approximately 100 pages of introductory matters, the book

concludes with 64 pages of indices, covering subjects, authors, Scripture references, and extrabiblical references.

The organization of the commentary is based on the theme of the progress of the Word of God, which is reminiscent of previous treatments, such as Haenchen's emphasis on "the triumph of the Word." The emphasis on the Word is combined with a standard geographical outline, which is obviously supported by the narrative flow of Acts. Peterson develops his outline around multiple divisions and subdivisions that set forth the text in brief sections. Every division and subdivision is provided with a summary introduction that makes the narrative easy to follow for the reader. Sections usually end with a brief but useful application to the contemporary setting of the church. Interspersed throughout the commentary are a few brief notes on topics that require extra attention, including one on the problem of OT references in Stephen's speech and one on contemporary application of lessons learned from the Jerusalem Conference.

Peterson's methodology is eclectic, not being confined to any one approach. Overall, he sets forth the meaning of the text with sound exegesis. He often cites the Greek text in transliterated form, placing it in parentheses beside the English translation. This is done in an unobtrusive way that will clarify the translation for those with Greek facility without being distracting for those with none. The commentary series is based on the TNIV translation. Being a more-or-less "dynamic" and not a literal rendering, it will sometimes "close the door" on other possible renderings. Peterson does not hesitate to challenge the TNIV when he considers the best translation to be otherwise but always gives his justification for so doing.

Peterson also uses a narrative-critical approach, discussing the development of the narrative without using the technical language characteristic of so many works that use this methodology. For example, he discusses such things as "narrative asides" and "narrative time" by noting these features in the text but without using the jargon. He also notes rhetorical features in the text, but this is confined primarily to the trial scenes, where the influence of rhetoric is obvious. He does not force rhetorical categories on non-rhetorical contexts.

Peterson's commentary provides a balanced discussion of alternative interpretations to those advanced in the commentary, either in the text itself or in the footnotes. He does not ride particular denominational horses. He writes in a clear, easily understood style that is generally free of technical language. The commentary will serve one well as a general work on the text of Acts that reflects the best in contemporary scholarship. It will prove useful to the pastor preparing a sermon on a particular passage, to a teacher preparing on a limited text or the whole book, and as a textbook for students. Its treatment of the narrative flow will also make it an excellent guide for anyone wishing to work through the entire text of Acts.

John B. Polhill

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke's View of the Church. By Graham H. Twelftree. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009, xvii + 269 pp., \$24.99 paper.

Graham H. Twelftree, Distinguished Professor of New Testament at the School of Divinity at Regent University, Virginia has crafted a thought-provoking work of relevant research in *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke's View of the Church*. His object is to describe Luke's view of the church and to establish the most prolific writer

in the NT as a conversation partner with present-day theologians and leaders. In the process, readers of all stripes will have many of their assumptions challenged, not least of which include: a church born in Luke 5 rather than Acts 2, Pentecost as a Lukan embellishment, the life and ministry of the church rooted in the synagogue (p. 52), doubts about the Lord's Supper being observed in early church meetings (pp. 130–32) and about worship being practiced in early church meetings (pp. 138–39), Scripture as interpretive and subservient to experience (p. 152), a “deacon-less” polity consisting of a plurality of elders often led by a traveling missionary (p. 176), and social action directed solely toward believers (p. 215).

In chapters 2–5, Twelftree outlines the origin, nature, and purpose of the church according to Luke. According to Twelftree, Luke marks the birth of the church in Jesus' calling of the twelve, unaided apostles. The church is sacramental in nature, “being a visible form of the now invisible activity of God in Jesus” (p. 29). The purpose of the church is to continue the word-and-deed ministry of Jesus. This is vitally important to Twelftree and merits his repetition throughout. The church does not exorcize, heal, and preach to parallel, mirror, or maintain what Jesus did. In the Spirit, the church “receives, embodies and expresses the same kingdom, Spirit or powerful presence of God that Jesus embodied and expressed in his activities” (p. 29). The church's activities *are* God's activities (p. 36). By promoting Barnabas and Paul to apostleship, Luke hopes to show the church there is no distinction in ages and ministries between themselves and the apostles.

In chapters 6 and 7, Twelftree describes and seeks to make sense of the Spirit's coming. Pentecost is Luke's invention. In two paragraphs and with no scholarly interaction, Twelftree presents the followers of Jesus, temple location, crowds, and Pentecost date as Luke's enhancement (pp. 65–66). Luke's purpose in highlighting one of many comings of the Spirit, according to Twelftree, is to allow the Spirit's coming to overshadow Jesus' resurrection (p. 81). After surveying sample material on the Spirit, tongues, and baptism in chapter 7, Twelftree surmises that Luke places particular importance on belief, water baptism as a symbol of repentance and integration into the church, the Spirit's coming, and “speaking in tongues or obvious response” (p. 96). Tongues are not essential but the Spirit's coming “was unavoidably obvious to bystanders, and this evidence involved ecstatic or supernatural manifestations, sometimes including tongues” (p. 99).

In chapters 8–13, Twelftree pursues Luke's portrait of church life in light of the Spirit's coming. Luke is careful to provide a balanced view of the early church—all was not healings and conversions. As discussed in chapter 8, the problems faced by the church included persecution, the imperative of community, the Jew/Gentile issue, difficulties related to economic and social status, dishonesty and selfishness, the Hebrew/Hellenist issue, and the role of women. For example, though Jesus and the church both faced persecution and suffering, there is more: “For Luke there is a symbiotic relationship between suffering and mission success, between death and the spread of the gospel” (p. 105).

In chapter 9, Twelftree discusses worship in the early church and suggests this worship was tied closely to worship in Judaism; thus the Jerusalem temple, the synagogue, and the home were focal points. Twelftree departs from broader Lukan interpretations here in asserting that early Christians continued to hold closely to the pattern of temple and synagogue worship and actually formed their own functioning synagogues. He also believes that Luke does not portray the early Christians as celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Chapters 10 and 11 contrast the role of Scripture in the early church with the role of experience. Twelftree maintains that experience trumped Scripture in that the

latter was used primarily (exclusively?) to explain the former. To support his point that the first Christians were not primarily “people of the book,” Twelftree examines only Luke’s use of OT quotations in Acts. However, while it is true these quotations are used primarily to explain or interpret what was happening around them, they are not the only use of Scripture by the early church. Was not Scripture used to teach, edify, encourage? What about the “apostles’ teaching,” the “ministry of the Word,” and the numerous references to the preaching and teaching and encouragement by Peter, Paul, and others? Chapter 11 provides a helpful look at various experiences of the early believers, including the Spirit’s empowering and guidance, dreams and visions, and prophecy. That such experiences were part of the lives of these first Christians cannot be denied. That they were “first and essentially people of the Spirit” and not “people of the book” is not as certain. Could they not have been both?

In chapter 12, referring to Luke on authority and leadership, Twelftree states that, while Jerusalem is the source for the “self-propagating radiation” of early Christianity, Luke is not trying to establish “an ecclesiastical system with Jerusalem as the headquarters” (p. 175). Twelftree sees a twofold leadership: apostles and elders (no “deacons”). This plays out in terms of a local body of believers led by a Spirit-filled group of leaders, with one person functioning as first among equals.

In chapter 13, Twelftree attempts to bring Luke’s writings to bear on the entrenched contemporary mission debate between prioritism and holism. He boldly insists that whereas the church today preaches the gospel to its members on Sunday and provides social work to its community throughout the week, Luke teaches the reverse. Social action belongs inside the church alone. However, his logic is deeply disappointing and goes something like this: Jesus restricted his ministry to “insiders,” that is Jews and Samaritans, to clarify “his view of the place of the ethical material in his Gospel” (p. 188). This is a curious conclusion on numerous levels. First, Twelftree mixes categories, using “insider” to mean Jews and Samaritans in general and then later to mean the church. Second, Luke clearly views certain Jews and Samaritans as outsiders. Third, Twelftree will want to draw the exact opposite conclusion about Jesus’ proclamation ministry. Even though it was done exclusively among “insiders” in the Gospel, it is for everyone in Acts. By establishing *a priori* that all Luke’s ethical material belongs inside the church, it is not surprising that the six passages Twelftree mentions fit the mold made for them. For instance, the parable of the Good Samaritan is an in-house affair, a lesson on how to treat “legitimate members of the people of God who are not at peace with each other” (p. 190). True, a careful exegete would be hard pressed to construct a mission of social action from Luke’s two volumes. Yet to dismiss simple acts of charity between believers and nonbelievers is untenable.

Twelftree concludes *People of the Spirit* with a chapter entitled “Listening to Luke” in which he seeks to apply what he has garnered from his thorough look at Luke’s writings. These applications relate to two broad areas: “Luke’s emphasis on the miraculous and the outward, focused mission of the Church” (p. 204). Regarding the miraculous, the church should manifest the same “powerful presence of God” (e.g. healings, exorcisms) apparent in Jesus’ ministry; while faith and baptism are necessary for joining the people of God, the coming of the Spirit is the focus and that coming is obvious, involving ecstatic and supernatural evidence; worship includes “dramatic encounters with God” (and not necessarily the Lord’s Supper); the locus of revelation has moved from Scripture to “events or experiences” in which Christians now find their identity and guidance. Regarding outward, focused mission, the purpose of the church involves being sent on mission as Jesus also was. Jesus is a missionary, and so is the church. The church continues the mission of Jesus, and that mission is primarily about salvation, and a salvation that is “the realization of the powerful presence of God in an individual’s present as well as future experience” (p. 215).

Throughout his work Twelftree encourages readers to listen to other voices as we seek to understand the church, but there is barely a whisper from other Lukan scholars in his book. His remarkably thorough treatment of Luke's writings (including a multitude of cross-references in the footnotes, as well as the helpful bibliographies provided for each chapter) would be enhanced by interaction with other scholars, in particular on his less traditional points of interpretation. For example, Twelftree maintains that the expression "breaking of bread" does not refer to the Lord's Supper, though for Witherington, Barrett, Bock, Larkin, Fitzmyer, Schnabel, and Bruce the Lord's Supper is at least included. Another weakness is that Twelftree appears to overstate the evidence along the way. For example, "Luke's key characters are, time and again, not only commanded to perform miracles or signs and wonders, but are described as doing so" (p. 174). Where is the "command" to perform signs and wonders in Acts?

By way of summary, Twelftree's *People of the Spirit* is a practical, extremely thorough study directed to the church. Its chief benefit is that it challenges many assumptions and forces readers to wrestle with significant Lukan issues.

David Gentino and Kevin McWilliams
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies. Edited by Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009, xix + 350 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Few exegetical debates are more theologically loaded than the recent academic discussion of the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ. Whether the genitive Χριστοῦ is objective, resulting in the translation "faith in Christ," or subjective, resulting in "the faithfulness of Christ," has been discussed from multiple angles in the last twenty years. While much debate has gone into both the grammar and the theological implications of the phrase, until quite recently it was difficult to find a single volume that the student could turn to for a summary of the discussion. That lacuna has been admirably filled by this recent volume edited by Michael Bird and Preston Sprinkle.

At the outset, the editors make it clear that the book does not take any particular slant on the debate. Rather, they want to give a fair hearing to both the translation and theological issues that the phrase raises. The book begins with a foreword from James Dunn, who, while advocating for a certain level of tolerance on both sides, continues to support the objective reading. After an introductory essay from Bird that summarizes what is to come, the first section contains two chapters on the background of the debate. The first is a survey of twentieth-century discussions on πίστις Χριστοῦ by Debbie Hunn. After noting that the phrase was almost exclusively understood as an objective genitive construction until the twentieth century, Hunn provides a helpful survey, noting how theology and exegesis are particularly difficult to separate in this discussion. Following this, Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts discuss the lexical and grammatical issues surrounding πίστις with a genitive modifier. They conclude that, while grammar is not decisive, a careful grammatical analysis favors the objective reading more than most realize.

The second section of the book treats specific Pauline texts that use the phrase. Douglas A. Campbell begins this section with a chapter on Rom 3:22, arguing that a proper interpretation of Rom 1:17 sets up an understanding of faith from Hab 2:4 that inevitably leads to a subjective reading. Next, Barry Matlock argues the opposite case. He contends that Phil 3:9, Rom 3:22, Gal 3:22, and Gal 2:16 support an objective

reading. An attractive part of Matlock's case is an emphasis on the parallel between πίστις Χριστοῦ and ἔργων νόμου in Galatians 2. In the third chapter in this section, Paul Foster considers Phil 3:9 and Eph 3:12, concluding that a cumulative case built on "lexical, grammatical, and exegetical considerations" favors the subjective reading (p. 108). In the final chapter, Richard Bell reaches a different conclusion in his discussion of Philippians and Ephesians. Bell argues that exegetical considerations, coupled with Paul's emphasis on human faith, make the objective reading more likely.

In the third section of this volume, four authors treat the intersection of exegesis, hermeneutics, and theology with respect to πίστις Χριστοῦ. In the first essay, Mark Seifrid presents a case for what he calls a third option, that is, "Christ as the author and source of faith" (p. 129). Seifrid makes an attractive argument for retaining the human belief aspect of the equation without neglecting the necessity of beginning and ending with Christ. Next, Francis Watson, like Campbell, sees Paul's reading of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17 as determinative for the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate. For Watson, the phrase "by faith" in Rom 1:17 modifies "righteous" rather than "will live." Therefore, the emphasis is on righteousness through belief. Consequently, unlike Campbell, Watson prefers an objective reading. In the third chapter of this section, Preston Sprinkle argues for another "third option," contending that the phrase is a somewhat-difficult-to-translate reference to the eschatological event that God accomplished through Christ (i.e. the gospel). In the fourth essay here, Ardel Caneday argues for a subjective reading, but he contends that the faithfulness of Christ must be read as an answer to the inability of the Torah. Thus, his argument is in part an attempt to bolster the subjective reading with a new layer of theological support.

The πίστις Χριστοῦ discussion is usually focused on the Pauline epistles, and rightly so. However, the fourth section of this volume is a helpful attempt, if we can borrow G. B. Caird's imagery, to bring some other voices from the "apostolic conference" to this discussion. First, Peter Bolt discusses the contribution of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. He contends, in large part on the basis of the Isaianic servant image, that a strong theological case can be made for the subjective reading in these books. Next, in his discussion of the Fourth Gospel, Willis Salier also makes a case for the theological concept of Christ's faithfulness. The next chapter contains a third "third option." Bruce Lowe contends that a rhetorical analysis of the key word "glory" in James 2:1 leads to the conclusion that the faith of Christ is a reference to eschatological confidence in the midst of suffering. Finally, David deSilva examines the use of adjectives and nouns in the πίστις word group in Revelation. He concludes, "Revelation never uses the language of πίστις or πιστεύω to speak about believing in Jesus or even trusting in Jesus. . . . Rather, this word group is used primarily to express the value of loyalty, dependability, trustworthiness" (pp. 273–74).

The final section of the book is devoted to historical and theological reflections. First, in a summary discussion of πίστις Χριστοῦ in church history, Mark W. Elliott concludes that the recent emphasis on Jesus' faithfulness is linked to an emphasis on recapturing Jesus' humanity. This section—and the book—concludes with Benjamin Myers's essay on Karl Barth's contribution to the debate. In short, Barth's emphasis was on God's faithfulness revealed in Christ and human faith as participation in Christ's faith.

It is always a challenge to summarize a collection of essays. Given the diverse viewpoints and the volume of data to consider, evaluating this collection is particularly challenging. As noted in the introduction, the book is an ideal source for any student (or scholar for that matter) who wants to gain a better understanding of the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate. While it is certainly not decisive, the observation made by Hunn and others about the *lack* of debate surrounding this issue for so much of church history should probably be given more consideration by advocates of the subjective reading.

On the other hand, advocates of the objective reading—especially those who argue for the lexical or exegetical improbability of the subjective interpretation—should probably pay more attention to the theological arguments behind the subjective reading. Furthermore, some of the rhetoric on both sides of the issue should probably be toned down a bit. For example, Campbell's characterization of the objective view as "anthropocentric" (presumably opposed to the subjective "theocentric" view) probably improperly stacks the deck.

While supporters of both the objective and subjective positions will find much to cheer for in this volume, those who advocate one of several "third options" might also find particular hope in Seifrid's and Sprinkle's essays. Seifrid's interpretation in particular may offer the best of both worlds from a *theological* perspective. With Christ as the source of faith, any anthropocentric notions of the phrase are overturned. Unlike an emphasis solely on the faithfulness of Christ, however, he manages to retain the importance of human faith in the phrase itself. The question of whether it is exegetically supportable, however, is one that I am not yet prepared to answer.

Lexicography, exegesis, theology, and history all contribute to the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate. Even if Porter and Pitts are correct in seeing the grammatical evidence favoring the objective view, this is not finally decisive (as they themselves admit). Other issues could push the debate the other way. With so many contributing factors in the discussion, it is difficult to determine what should be the decisive argument for any interpretation. Moreover, while lines of interpretation can be somewhat blurry, if one were keeping score, the final tally for interpretive points would be seven votes for the subjective, six votes for the objective, and three votes for a "third option." If we add Dunn's vote from the foreword, we find ourselves with an even seven-to-seven tie for the two major options. For these reasons, this book is unlikely to persuade a hardened advocate of either the objective or subjective interpretation to change sides. However, for those who are still wrestling through the issue, several of the exegetical and theological essays might lead to new insights and perhaps even some measure of clarity on this difficult issue. The only problem is, such a result might lead to a whole new generation of scholars who will debate the construction.

Christopher R. Bruno
Wheaton, IL

Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters.
By Philip B. Payne. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, 511 pp., \$29.99 paper.

After thirty-six years of research (pp. 29, 463), NT scholar Philip Payne, founder and president of Linguist's Software, has released his exhaustive study of Paul's writings on women. His goal is to "bring about a consensus on the primary exegetical issues that have divided the church on women's equal status and freedom to minister . . . that one day soon the church with substantial unanimity will affirm that woman and man are not separate in status or privilege from one another in the Lord, but are, indeed, one in Christ" (p. 463). Payne's study is distinguished by his detailed work. He begins with three introductory chapters (pp. 31–76). Chapter 1 surveys the ancient Hellenistic and Judaistic backgrounds. Chapter 2 summarizes Paul's female leaders and colleagues in ministry. Chapter 3 summarizes twelve theological axioms that are the framework for Paul's teachings on men and women. After this three-chapter overview, Payne moves to detailed exegesis of individual passages. Chapter 4 is a microcosm of the whole book

in structure and content. He defends his thesis and exemplifies the structure he will follow for the subsequent chapters: Payne first gives a brief overview of his theological findings and then continues with a more technical verse-by-verse exegesis. Chapter 4 expounds on Gal 3:28, clarifying that the main title of the book comes from this passage: "You are all *one in Christ Jesus*," including "male and female." This chapter's conclusion serves well as a summary of the conclusion for the entire book: "The barriers that separate male and female in society do not exist in the new reality of their relations *in Christ*" (p. 92); therefore, biological, racial, social, economic, and ethnic distinctions are no excuse to deny "privileges or status in the church" (p. 85).

Man and Woman, One in Christ then continues with twenty chapters of further detailed exegesis of 1 Corinthians 7, 1 Corinthians 11 (eight chapters), 1 Corinthians 14, Ephesians 5, and 1 Timothy 2 and 3 (nine chapters) presented in chronological order (having begun with Galatians 3). A conclusion follows as well as a bibliography and indexes (47 pp.). In his study, Payne fits well with Evangelical Theological Society membership qualifications. For Payne, the Scriptures are inerrant, fully reliable, and internally consistent (if properly understood in their original context; p. 28), and Paul authored the Pastoral Letters. Payne shows how the Pastorals are completely consistent with Paul's writings elsewhere, even though he posits that Luke is Paul's amanuensis or secretary (pp. 291–95, 376, 429).

Payne's analysis of 1 Corinthians 7 supports mutual submission in marriage (p. 107). His extensive exposition of 1 Corinthians 11 supports the view that "men's effeminate hair attracted homosexual liaisons, and women's hair let down loose symbolized sexual freedom in the Dionysiac cult" (p. 211). As Livy explains, women in the cult of Dionysus performed rites "with dishevelled hair" (pp. 162–63). Payne concludes that in Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures, outside of specific exceptions such as mourning, female loosed hair symbolized "undisciplined sexuality" (p. 165).

Thus, the exegesis of the letters in both part 1 (Gal 3:28; 1 Corinthians 7; 11:2–16; 14:34–35) and part 2 (Eph 5:21–33; Col 3:18–19; 1 Tim 2:18–3:13; Titus 1:5–9) exhibit much detailed analyzing of the text (e.g. pp. 116–17). Part 1 includes a thorough and definitive study of *kephalē* (pp. 117–37), as well as meticulous and thorough scholarly criticism of the theory of subordinationism in the Trinity (pp. 131–34). Payne always responds to those who differ with his interpretation. He shows extensive awareness of primary and secondary literature, including ancient and early church Greek, Roman, and Jewish references. His writing style is pithy, clear, and easy to understand. The summary lists are helpful for the reader (e.g. 197–98). His primary work both supports the views of others but as well includes his own nuggets of insights. For example, he shows how Rabban Gamaliel I, Paul's teacher, affirmed women (pp. 36–37). He provides a helpful summary of how Genesis 1–3 depicts equality between men and women (pp. 52–54) and demonstrates how God repeatedly overrode primogeniture in Israel (p. 101). He highlights the uniqueness of the Christian message for its times (e.g. pp. 195–96).

Part 2 continues with meticulous exegesis, especially of 1 Tim 2:8–15. Payne concludes that, in 1 Timothy, Paul gives Timothy instructions on how to conduct himself in his leadership position among God's people in Ephesus (p. 309). Because women were being targeted by false teachers and attracted by their false teaching, Paul was not permitting the women at Ephesus to teach or to assume authority that had not been delegated to them over men (pp. 393, 410). He concludes that 1 Tim 2:15 "is not simply a call to a role; it is a call to the Savior" (p. 440). The false teaching may have exalted myths about Eve (p. 405). He particularly contributes original scholarship on the relationship of 1 Tim 2:8–15 to its context (e.g. women learning vs. being deceived [pp. 316–17]), on why the prohibition of 1 Tim 2:12 is not universal (pp. 323–24) and

is a single prohibition (pp. 353–59), in his study of the article (“the Childbirth”) used substantively in the Pastorals as individualizing (pp. 429–30), and his study of the “seed” (pp. 434–36), as well as his noting how the words used of an overseer were also used of women (p. 450). Moreover, he verifies the conclusions of others. For example, he reports he wrote John Werner to clarify his exegesis and traveled to the Vatican to confirm his own study of Codex Vaticanus (pp. 241, 365–70).

Man and Woman has some minor points that could be improved. Payne mentions how originally he believed a wife should submit to her husband’s leadership (p. 29). The only remnant of this view is shown in a slight bias against “feminism,” that should be bolstered by a few specific examples of feminists who say God put women in authority over men (p. 43). Most feminists simply argue for equality between men and women. Although it may not be the author’s intention, his analogy appears to assume that all feminists would support the Dionysiac cult (p. 169). Today, those who would agree with aspects of the Dionysiac cult would fit in more with Wiccan or feministic pagan spirituality (see *The Goddess Revival*). Thus, Payne’s massive knowledge of secondary literature should expand in the future to encompass the diversity in feminism. Otherwise, he could simply omit these few random references without damaging the scope of the present study.

Understandably, Zondervan would want Payne to use the NIV in Scripture citations. However, at points the TNIV would have been a better choice. Payne’s overwhelming support for women in ministry (following in his father’s steps [pp. 29, 412]) is undermined at times by the use of “man” for the generic (e.g. “in Christ [slaves] are free men” [pp. 91, 93, 95]). Hopefully, as the translation team revises the NIV, “man” and “men” will be used to refer to males only and “humans” or “people” to men and women.

These are only minor points in a book of exhaustive scholarship. *Man and Woman, One in Christ* is a mammoth achievement, and it is understandable why Payne took thirty-six years to complete his masterpiece. The same attention to detail that inspired him to create 2000 new language fonts for Linguist’s Software was used to interpret Paul’s writings on women. No exegetical area is left without extensive study of its grammatical and historical component elements and its relationship to the whole structure. To my surprise, the result is also theological because we are left with an understanding of Paul’s theology of freedom for women and men. The book will serve as an authoritative reference for many years to come.

Aída Besançon Spencer

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA

Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul’s Letters.
By Philip B. Payne. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, 511 pp., \$29.99 paper.

Israel never had female priests. Jesus did not name any females as apostles. Peter instructed wives to submit to their husbands, as did Paul (repeatedly), and Paul expressly forbade women teaching or exercising authority over men. The history of the people of God has largely reflected the Bible’s clear teaching on this point. Male leadership is a given in the OT, and with few exceptions, the Christian church of all denominations has been led by males. Has the church been wrong about this for the whole of its history? Both Israel and the church have failed spectacularly at points—is this one of them? Put simply: no. Male leadership in the home and the church is taught in the Bible. Even a brilliant use of the evidence and an airtight logical argument

would fail to stop the rising of the sun, but unfortunately Philip Payne mishandles the evidence and multiplies logical and rhetorical fallacies.

Payne begins with chapters on the backgrounds of Paul's teaching, the women Paul names (begging questions by calling these women "ministry leaders"), and theological axioms Payne takes to imply his definition of equality. Payne then breaks Paul's statements on women into two parts: "earlier" and "later" letters. Beginning with a chapter on Gal 3:28, Payne follows with a chapter on 1 Corinthians 7, then eight chapters on 1 Cor 11:2–16, a chapter on 1 Cor 14:34–35, another on Eph 5:21–33 and Col 3:18–19, eight on 1 Tim 2:8–15, another on 1 Tim 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5–9, and then concludes with "Paul Consistently Champions the Equality of Man and Woman in Christ." Several reviews of this book have already appeared; therefore, because of space limitations, I will focus on Payne's campaign against 1 Cor 14:34–35. Perhaps this focus will suffice as an example of the type of argumentation found in Payne's book.

Payne makes a desperate attempt to show that 1 Cor 14:34–35 should be relegated to the theological dustbin as a non-canonical interpolation. He claims that "its suppression of a weak social group" counts as "evidence that 14:34–35 is an interpolation" (p. 262), and he explains that "[m]ale chauvinist editorial patterns evident in the Western text demonstrate that these attitudes pervaded the church as well as society in general" (p. 264). Countering these injustices, Payne goes to war to prove that the text deserves no standing in Scripture. He writes, "If 1 Cor 14:34–35 is a non-Pauline interpolation, it does not carry apostolic authority and should not be used as such to restrict the speaking ministries of women, nor should it influence the exegesis of other NT passages" (p. 267). What, however, if it is *not* a "non-Pauline interpolation" and thus does "carry apostolic authority"? Should Payne continue to regard it as "restrictive"? Is there a way to view 1 Cor 14:34–35 as something other than an expression of male chauvinist suppression of a weak social group? Obviously complementarians are convinced that there is. Payne needs an unassailable case if he is going to evict 1 Cor 14:34–35 from its scriptural stronghold. He needs real evidence and convincing argumentation, and he has neither.

We have no manuscript that lacks this passage—not one. Payne so badly needs a text that lacks 1 Cor 14:34–35 that he invents several and then uses these imaginary witnesses to testify on his behalf. Payne has a long discussion (pp. 232–46) of the "distigmai" in Codex Vaticanus. These distigmai are "two horizontally aligned dots in the margin at mid-character height, by the last line of 1 Cor 14:33" (pp. 232–33). Payne's view is that "the distigme by the last line of 14:33 is positioned appropriately to mark the absence of verses 34–35" (p. 233). Payne's interpretation of this evidence has been analyzed and rejected by both Curt Niccum and Peter Head. I simply observe here that this interpretation of unexplained features of a manuscript is very tenuous evidence, and if it is to help Payne's case, he needs everything to go his way. If the scribe did not put the distigmai there *to mark an interpolation*, as Payne believes, these distigmai do not support his edifice. What if the scribe put the distigmai there, not because the text was lacking from a manuscript in his possession, but because he was aware of several variants of the *existing text*? In addition, if it was not "the original scribe of the Vaticanus NT" who put them there, as Payne holds (p. 245), but someone after AD 1400 who added them, as Niccum and Head think, Payne's claims collapse. So in order for the distigmai of Vaticanus to support Payne's view, we must add the hypothesis of the date of the distigmai to the hypothetical reason the scribe put them there, and thus we arrive at the sum total of a hypothetical conclusion that these verses originated as an interpolation. This gives us one manuscript that hypothetically attests to the omission of these verses. Meanwhile, 1 Cor 14:34–35 remains clearly inked on the leaf of the manuscript in question. The verses are comfortably in the text of Codex Vaticanus, not as a hypothetical explanation of mysterious little dots but as a clearly written, universally attested reality.

Undaunted, Payne layers on more theoretical possibilities in his discussion of Codex Fuldensis. This manuscript is a sixth-century copy of the Vulgate that, like every other surviving manuscript, contains the text in question, 1 Cor 14:34–35. In Fuldensis verses 34–35 follow verse 33, neither dislocated nor in the margin but in the body of the actual text. In the lower margin, however, verses 36–40 have been re-copied. On this basis, Payne posits that “St. Victor, Bishop of Capua, ordered the text of 1 Cor 14:34–40 rewritten and corrected in the bottom margin of Codex Fuldensis with verses 34–35 omitted” (p. 246). Payne’s explanation is possible, but verses 34–35 are still in the body of the text of Codex Fuldensis, and the recopied portion begins with verse 36 and goes through verse 40 rather than beginning with verse 33, skipping to verse 36 and continuing to verse 40. Payne thinks that “the most natural explanation” is that Victor saw “a manuscript that did not contain 14:34–35,” then ordered the scribe to rewrite verses 36–40 in the lower margin. If Victor had checked any other manuscripts, however, the evidence indicates that he might not have concluded that verses 34–35 are an interpolation, since all the manuscripts in our possession have the verses—as did, evidently, the exemplar from which the body of Fuldensis was copied. Payne nevertheless makes an astonishing claim: “FuldensisVictor mg. thus fulfills the criterion C. K. Barrett posed, ‘If any significant MS omitted the verses altogether it would probably be right to follow [the view that] . . . verses 34f . . . were added later as a marginal note’” (p. 248, bracketed note and ellipses Payne’s). Yet Barrett’s criterion has not been fulfilled: Fuldensis is a sixth-century Latin manuscript that hardly registers as a “significant manuscript,” and in its case verses 34–35 are not “a marginal note” but are in the body of the text. The only manuscript that omits the verses altogether is the one that exists in Payne’s mind, which he thinks Victor saw. Payne also thinks that the twelfth-century manuscript 88 was copied from a text that did not have verses 34–35. The fact that we do not possess that manuscript does not diminish Payne’s confidence in his hypothetical reconstruction (pp. 249–50).

In light of the manuscript evidence, Payne’s argument against 1 Cor 14:34–35 fails. It simply will not do to excise evidence that goes against our conclusions. The removal of this passage is not even an acceptable “working hypothesis” for those who would regulate their conduct by Paul’s teaching. Those who desire to understand and embrace *everything* Paul taught will need to look elsewhere for an explanation of all he wrote. I do not have space to discuss Payne’s interpretations of the other Pauline texts, but in my view they are no more successful than his attempt to show that 1 Cor 14:34–35 is an interpolation. Payne lacks evidence for his conclusions and marshals arguments riddled with fallacies to advance them.

Payne holds that “the biblical evidence” for his position “is as strong as an avalanche” and that “the totality of the avalanche is inescapable” (p. 462). It is fitting that Payne chose the metaphor of an avalanche, which is a destructive disaster. Indeed, the adoption of Payne’s conclusions would cause a moving away from safe paths and solid ground toward calamitous consequences.

James M. Hamilton Jr.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

James. By Dan G. McCartney. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009, xxi + 335 pp., \$39.99.

Dan McCartney’s admirable new commentary on James meets the goals set him by his editors and serves as a trustworthy guide to the theology of the epistle. The one does not necessarily guarantee the other, and we are in his debt that he has managed to

accomplish both. The aim of the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament is "to provide, within the framework of informed evangelical thought, commentaries that blend scholarly depth with readability, exegetical detail with sensitivity to the whole, and attention to critical problems with theological awareness" (p. ix). McCartney treats the text as if the goal of exegetical labor is to make clear authorial intent (see pp. 62–63). Not all commentaries seem to understand this. The writing is lucid if not universally vigorous, and McCartney treats the critical problems apposite to James with enviable effortlessness without sacrificing depth. Now and then a brilliant insight appears (Jesus' use of "my father" in the footnotes on p. 109 and the discussion involving "claims to have faith" on p. 155 are two examples), but in general the text is solid if not coruscating. While fully aware of the trends in scholarship, he is not seduced by them. Thorough and responsible in his evaluation of, for example, recent rhetorical analyses of James, McCartney also offers this sage observation: "simply trying out classical rhetorical structures and making James . . . fit one of them offers us no help in recognizing the structure of the letter." Then he asks the impolite but obvious question: "Does this truly help us better understand James?" (p. 61).

The book of James has long been something of a misfit within the family of NT documents. There are few references to it in early Christian literature. Those who hope to find a developed theology or linear structure will be chagrined. In Protestant circles, the book suffers the double indignity of Luther's dismissive judgment and the reputation for being hopelessly at odds with Paul on the crucial matter of faith and works. On the other hand, the book is almost certainly early, and its Christology, although rudimentary, is undeniably high. In addition, at several points it appears to be in touch with the authentic Jesus tradition at an earlier phase than the adherents of literary dependence ascribe to Matthew or even Mark.

The text begins with an introductory essay that at seventy pages is substantial. McCartney treats the usual matters and without unnecessarily sundering one from another. He wisely ties the questions of authorship and date and is not afraid to devote more than ten pages to matters such as the reception of the letter by the church or indications of Palestinian origin. His conclusions are fair and at times happily thought-provoking:

- The practical nature of the letter ties it to earliest Christianity. Doctrine is important and we find it in Paul and the Gospels, but James is about practical expression of the faith.
- James is multi-thematic without a discernible linear structure.
- The author was almost certainly James the brother of Jesus.
- While Semitic in character (it presses into service imagery and vocabulary that are rare if unknown outside of Jewish circles, for example), the book is nonetheless marked by good and even polished Greek and betrays an awareness of Hellenistic literary images and devices.

The two-thirds of a page he expends on a discussion of the Greek text and the relevant textual variants (p. 39) are illustrative of his approach as well. He covers all of the scholarly bases just enough to satisfy the pastor with antiquarian sympathies, but not at a depth to prompt allergic reaction from those uninterested. More could be said, but more need not be said.

An enviable feature of this book is the fashion in which McCartney treats the matter of faith and works. He artfully places it at center stage without allowing the traditional features of the discussion to bully his treatment. He rightly recognizes the practical orientation of James that he describes as an interest in true godly wisdom and notes "James's insistence on works is precisely because faith is important" (p. 1). He then

writes, "Far from minimizing faith, the author of James regards faith as supremely important, and it is for this very reason that it is crucial that a person's faith be genuine. People often deceive themselves, and it is quite possible for people to think that they have faith when in fact they are hypocrites" (p. 2). This is a refreshing combination of pastoral insight, theological acumen, and exegetical sensitivity.

The relationship of the book of James to Jesus is an important issue for McCartney. In spite of the fact that there are few references to James in early Christian literature (he notes that the letter is not included in the Muratorian canon and that Origen is the first Church father to refer to it), McCartney is persuaded by the evidence that the composition of James is quite early. He understands the letter as a recasting of the kingdom of God teaching of Jesus into a partially Hellenized framework. He points out that the manner in which James discusses markers of Jewish identity bears close correspondence to the Gospel witness to Jesus' teaching: "As with Jesus . . . James exhibits no interest whatsoever in the specific markers of Jewish ethnicity: circumcision, food laws, Sabbath; his interest is in knowing and doing 'the good' (4:17)" (p. 71).

His treatment of the relationship of James to Paul is measured and sapient. This clear and persuasive approach is one of the sterling features of McCartney's book. "The 'works' that James is concerned with, the 'works' that people who profess faith must have, are things such as showing no favoritism, showing mercy, and caring for the poor. James makes no mention at all of circumcision, Sabbath observance, and purity laws. Now, if one reads the Gospels, one can find plenty of cases where Jesus berates his fellow Jews precisely for failing to do the kinds of works that are most important to God, focusing instead on Sabbath observance and food laws" (p. 55). This is an artfully trenchant observation. For McCartney, the contradiction between James and Paul is no contradiction at all, since by "works" the two intend different referents.

While McCartney is a trustworthy guide, he is not able to avoid occasional somnolence. Like many NT scholars, he is not keenly aware of the dynamics of Roman social relations in the first century, and so his conclusions are re-workings of the material in the letter itself (e.g. his observation that there are those in the community who are wealthy as well as those who are in dire need). Some reflection on the nature of first-century, socio-economic dynamics in the Roman provinces would have been welcome. Without it we are left to operate as if James were written in an unidentified corner of contemporary North America. He has an admirable grasp of the secondary literature, and this opens new and promising vistas for McCartney, of which he is not always able to take full advantage. He devotes half a page to the matter of James's communal orientation (p. 38), reflecting on the work of Hartin, which suggested that James is a book about socialization to a communal ethic and not about an individual ethic. McCartney wisely points out that this can hardly be the central purpose of the book, but he largely misses the point that Christianity represented something quite new on the Roman social landscape. There is in paganism no such thing as conversion. To adopt the worship of a new god does not demand the repudiation of the old, but rather merely making a bit more room on the bookshelf. Also, the gods of Roman paganism largely functioned to help individuals negotiate their lives according to their own interests. James, however, represents a faith that says, literally, God is king and this demands a radical re-socialization and the acceptance of an ethic of community responsibility. While Hartin's thesis is too narrowly framed to swallow whole, an opportunity here was missed to shed fresh light on the world to which James was writing. Similarly, he discusses recent rhetorical analyses and points out that "James tries to convert his readers not to a new opinion but to an appropriate life" (p. 40). This is wise. Yet why does McCartney not link this to the earlier discussion of James's supposed communal interest? While there are exceptions, the book is curiously averse to application and perhaps

this is due to the editorial framing of the enterprise. In the discussion of chapter 1 of James there is a missed opportunity to draw not only upon broader biblical reflections on suffering but also upon the rich history of Christian devotional literature that relates to this topic. Those who suffer need comfort. What is offered here is a discussion that is rich and insightful in terms of grammar but somewhat distant in terms of pastoral application. Similarly, in the discussion of 1:9–12 there is little or no reflection on the biblical theology of poverty.

These few imperfections, however, pale in significance to the character and quality of the work overall. This is a good book and ought to find its place among the upper tier of commentaries on James. McCartney is able to capture the blending of theological reflection and pastoral sensitivity that marks the epistle itself. Particularly striking is this lovely and simple statement of the central theme: “genuine faith in God must be evident in life . . . and that if one wishes to avoid false faith . . . the ‘faith said’ must correspond to the ‘faith led’” (p. 57). What more needs to be said?

David P. Nystrom
Biola University, La Mirada, CA

The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture's Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity. By Andreas J. Köstenberger and Michael J. Kruger. Wheaton: Crossway, 2010, 250 pp., \$17.99 paper.

In an effort to provide a thoroughgoing rebuttal to what they term the Bauer-Ehrman thesis, Köstenberger and Kruger offer a text that covers a great deal of ground. Part 1 (chaps. 1–3) addresses plurality of doctrine in the early church. Part 2 (chaps. 4–6) covers the origin and development of the NT canon. Part 3 (chaps. 7–8) discusses manuscripts, scribal habits, and the transmission of the text of the NT. A foreword by Howard Marshall, introduction, and “Concluding Appeal” frame the main body of a handsome text nicely packaged and presented by Crossway.

The first chapter explains “origins and influence”; rather than starting with contemporary scholarship, Köstenberger and Kruger revisit Walter Bauer’s work from the early 20th century. According to Bauer, diversity preceded orthodoxy; notions of orthodoxy and canonical unity were a late-breaking development in earliest Christianity. They rightly note that, although Bauer is quite easily challenged on some primary points, he has nonetheless proved enormously influential in 20th- and 21st-century scholarship. Bauer’s thesis has crucial weaknesses, including his failure to address the NT evidence and the fact that many planks in this thesis have been roundly repudiated—a point generally admitted even by those who use his thesis. Yet Bauer remains a driving force among highly critical scholars, particularly Bart Ehrman and others who argue against an original orthodoxy.

The second chapter puts the thesis to the test. First, Bauer’s argument that heresy preceded orthodoxy in a number of geographic locations is shown to be unwarranted by the evidence. (In Bauer’s own words, his arguments were sometimes built on nothing more than conjecture.) Köstenberger and Kruger admit that the evidence shows a number of different parties at work but argue that it seems as likely to be the result of a group diverging from, and operating in response to, original orthodoxy.

In the third chapter, Köstenberger and Kruger investigate heresy/orthodoxy and unity/diversity in the NT documents. They address typical assertions (e.g. pitting Jesus vs. Paul and John vs. Synoptics) and conclude that there is “legitimate diversity” in the NT. However, key unifying factors for orthodoxy provide a mechanism for assess-

ing the fidelity of others and a stable base for unity. Orthodox boundaries included a uniformly high Christology (within monotheism) and agreement on soteriological essentials, especially the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Barriers to illegitimate diversity included Christological confessions ("Jesus is Lord"), creedal statements, and the esteem in which apostolic witness was held. "[T]here was diversity in earliest Christianity; this is not seriously in dispute." However, Köstenberger and Kruger rightly point out that the instructional, literary, and liturgical mechanisms of the earliest church successfully imprinted its central doctrines in such a way that believers were able to establish clear boundaries between fidelity and heresy (p. 75, n. 8).

Köstenberger and Kruger appeal to divine causation (p. 100), a move indicative of the lack of commonality they share with Ehrman. There is no significant focus on early orthodox ethical unity in areas such as sexual ethics and generosity and in the rejection of extreme required asceticism. Both antinomian permissiveness and extreme asceticism are found in early heresies rejected by the earliest church as unorthodox. The rejection of such practices was not the product of later ecclesial debates but the result of the authoritative teachings of the earliest orthodox Christians.

The authors turn to the canon in chapter 4, summarized well by its title, "Starting in the Right Place." Köstenberger and Kruger rightly note that terms like canon require careful definition: for these authors it "denotes 'a collection of scriptural books,' whether or not that collection is formally closed" (p. 108, n. 11). Relying in part on Meredith Kline, in an illuminating move they tie canon to the covenantal and bookish nature of Judaism and Christianity, insisting on examining the pre-history of canon rather than exclusively focusing on events after the writing of the NT texts. The NT texts are also "a collection of apostolic writings"—not writings by apostles necessarily, "but writings that bear the authoritative message of the apostles and derive from the foundational apostolic era" (p. 117). These documents were already authoritative and the tradition they represented of gospel truth was "received" and "recognized." Neither they nor their authority were created *ex nihilo* or selected from a buffet of early church options. The apostolic message they contained gave the church its shape rather than vice versa. Again in this chapter there is some appeal to the supernatural, in the work of the Holy Spirit.

The fifth chapter examines the canon in earliest Christianity. Against the surprisingly common overreaching claims that (say) Irenaeus created the canon in the second century or that Marcion's rebellion led to the canon, Köstenberger and Kruger examine the origins of the canon before mid-second century. Admitting that the outer boundaries were not concrete until a later date, they are able to cite data in support of a "theological category for a New Testament canon" (p. 127, italics theirs), or a collection of scriptural books. Key observations include NT references and NT-era practices such as the reading of texts as authoritative in public worship. Evidence of the reception of NT documents from *1 Clement*, the *Didache*, Polycarp, *Barnabas*, Papias, and Ignatius also supports the notion that the canonical texts were already authoritative texts. Such early evidence makes sense as a foundation for later clearer summary statements, such as the late second-century Muratorian Fragment.

"Establishing the Boundaries: Apocryphal Books and the Limits of the Canon" (chap. 6) concludes part 2 by examining the developing canonical boundaries and the apocryphal books alleged to support the notion that the "chosen" 27 NT documents do not necessarily represent authentic Christianity. Summarizing such arguments, Köstenberger and Kruger neatly point out the assumptions of Bauer's heirs. They encourage the readers to examine the real differences between canonical texts and pretenders. An extant authoritative body of texts and tradition, the OT and apostolic tradition, respectively, dictated what *could* be canonical at a later date. Thus the wholesale abandonment of the authority of the OT and its major doctrines renders

Gnostic texts unfit for canonical status—to say nothing of their departure from apostolic Christian beliefs. Marcion became something other than an orthodox Christian simply by rejecting the OT; he was not merely neutral until he was branded a heretic by some powerful, ruthless Christian ecclesial authorities. Additionally, Köstenberger and Kruger conclude that the canon was in one sense closed by the second century: debates occurred, but the church was never “‘open’ to more books, but instead engaged in discussions about which books God had *already given*” (p. 171, italics theirs).

In the final two chapters (chap. 7: “Keepers of the Text,” and chap. 8: “Tampering with the Text”), the latest scholarship is unimpeachably on their side against facets of the Bauer thesis. Köstenberger and Kruger canvas the sociological and theological significance of the literary capacity of the earliest Christians and early literary practices such as *nomina sacra* and the use of codices. They evaluate the textual changes in the many NT manuscripts for educated lay readers; their conclusions will not surprise scholars familiar with text criticism. They particularly highlight the way in which Ehrman stacks the deck by requiring impossible evidence and by using evidence different ways in different texts. Köstenberger and Kruger summarize the tension this creates for Ehrman: “On the one hand, in *Misquoting Jesus* he wants the ‘original’ text of the New Testament to remain inaccessible and obscure” (p. 223). Ehrman ridicules the very idea of inspiration and argues that we cannot know the original text of the NT documents, because we do not have them and cannot be certain they were never changed. Köstenberger and Kruger rightly note this does not warrant radical skepticism for the NT, just as it does not warrant skepticism for any other text, particularly when the NT is so much better attested than any other ancient text. “On the other hand, in *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* he needs to argue that text-critical methodologies are reliable and can show you what was original and what was not; otherwise he would not be able to demonstrate that changes have been made for theological reasons” (p. 223). They conclude with Moisés Silva’s comment: “There is hardly a page [in *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*] where Ehrman does not employ the concept of an original text. Indeed, without such a concept, and without the confidence that we can identify what the original text is, Ehrman’s book is almost unimaginable, for every one of his examples depends on his ability to identify a particular reading as a scribal corruption” (p. 223).

In conclusion, two major takeaways are worth highlighting. In general, present trends in scholarship, most of which are cited in this volume at least briefly in footnotes and sometimes quite fully in the text, are damaging to the sharper challenges Bauer’s heirs are putting forward, to say nothing of the worthlessness of most of Bauer’s “classic” assessments. Recent decades have seen scholarship increasingly support high Christology and late dates for, say, many Gnostic texts (p. 174). Studies of ancient manuscripts and scribal practices buttress more orthodox approaches to canon and text.

Because of the layers of issues involved, Köstenberger and Kruger are obviously not at liberty to dig as deeply as some might like. For instance, they do not mention the different possible definitions (so Epp and other text critics) of “original text” in text criticism. Such definitions do not change their position that we have sufficient confidence even if we cannot have absolute certainty (particularly with respect to every other ancient text).

Secondly, Köstenberger and Kruger conclude with an exhortation to faithfulness that restates the Bauer-Ehrman issue as a secondary issue in the book, one that was addressed solely to get behind the apparent issue to the real problem: the passion for diversity and postmodern chaos so prominent in contemporary culture and scholarship alike.

Again and again in this text, issues of presuppositions and worldview come into play for Köstenberger and Kruger (appeals to supernatural) and for their opponents

(pp. 101, 128, 154–55, 209–10, 213, 217, 229). Presuppositions—dispositions of the mind and the heart—control how we look at evidence. Familiarity with their role is all the more necessary given the difficult nature of the historical and literary topics addressed in this text, which require judgments and hypotheses, probability and sufficiency. Sustained, careful interaction with this phenomenon must be a characteristic of future scholarship and lay training.

Jason B. Hood
Christ United Methodist Church, Memphis, TN

After Enlightenment: The Post-Secular Vision of J. G. Hamann. By John R. Betz. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, xv + 355 pp., \$104.95.

In this well-balanced study, John R. Betz treats the enigmatic and influential eighteenth-century Prussian scholar Johann Georg Hamann (1730–88). Beginning with *Socratic Memorabilia* (1759) Hamann sought dialogue with *Aufklärers* concerning faith, reason, language, Scripture, history, and other matters surrounding the Enlightenment. He played mentor to Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, and prophet to Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Jean Paul, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. While he arranged for the publication of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Hamann became the first and perhaps best-known critic of his fellow townsman. Furthermore, Hamann's work with language and reason marks the first linguistic turn and the initiation of post-Kantian philosophy. Years later Søren Kierkegaard opined that Hamann and Socrates were the "most brilliant minds of all time" (p. 3).

Despite Hamann's pervasive influence the "Magus of the North" has not received due attention from English-speaking scholars in the same way he has from their German peers. Hamannian scholarship in English-speaking academia has gone through a constant up-and-down struggle since the "Hamann Renaissance" of the 1950s and 1960s. Betz attributes this lacuna to at least three factors. First, Hamann does not conveniently fall into any one classification as "a philosopher, a theologian, a prophet, a humorist, an eccentric genius, a man of letters, a literary critic, or perhaps all of these at once" (p. 15). Second, Hamann's writings were never intended for a wide audience but served rather as occasional pieces for the benefit of a few. Third, Hamann's style is often cryptic, filled with allusions and parodies that test even the most skilled poly-historians.

Betz attempts to look past these difficulties to present a study of Hamann that builds upon previous scholars such as Gwen Griffith Dickson and Oswald Bayer, while also serving as a reworking of Hamann's contributions for the twenty-first century. He seeks to examine the life and writing of Hamann within the eighteenth-century context and apply Hamann's thought to today's context. By studying Hamann within an eighteenth and twenty-first century framework, Betz presents him as the founder of a "distinctly postmodern, post-secular theology" (p. 19).

The formatting of the work begins with Hamann's conversion and systematically develops his thought through a chronological examination of his works. Betz concludes the work with a discussion relating Hamann to issues of our postmodernity. Specifically, Betz contrasts Hamann's thought with Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida.

After Enlightenment has much to offer those who are familiar with Hamann as well as those who are not. The way Betz handles Hamann's difficult writings and

communicates his thought in a clear and precise manner is praiseworthy. Of particular mention is Betz's chapter dealing with the *Hederschriften* and the issue of the origin of language. He wades masterfully through the intricate differences between Hamann's understanding of language and that of his disciple Herder. As Betz writes, "For if reason is constituted by language, but language itself is a purely natural 'invention,' then reason itself can likewise be understood in purely naturalistic and therefore purely secular terms" (p. 144).

A second admirable feature is that Betz does not deviate from the centrality of Hamann's personal faith but constantly relates what is most important to Hamann to Hamann's most important ideas. For example, Betz first addresses Hamann's understanding of a Trinitarian condescension in his chapter on the "London Writings," but throughout the book Betz continues to relate Hamann's other writings and ideas to this foundational principle that God condescends to man through nature, the incarnation, and Scripture.

A third point of commendation is the manner in which Betz discusses the importance of Hamann in our contemporary setting. This book does not merely introduce Hamann to English-speaking readers in an accessible fashion but extends Hamann's thought into our own world. It is truly exciting to see the progression of Hamannian scholarship and the many possibilities that follow. To give but one example, Hamann's notion of divine condescension links well to the issue of accommodation in Scripture, an issue that is often raised in contemporary debates over biblical inerrancy and the role of historical criticism.

An unfortunate aspect of the work is the tendency to depict Hamann as against the *Aufklärung*. Rather than understanding the Enlightenment as a wide movement of thought that would include Hamann as an *Aufklärer*, Betz advances an understanding that would exclude Hamann. It is clear that Hamann was against a hyper-rationalism present in many advocates of the Enlightenment. However, these proponents did not even agree among themselves concerning the central issue of reason. Hamann's critique should not segregate him from other *Aufklärers* but should be recognized as a voice contributing to the Enlightenment.

Nonetheless, *After Enlightenment* should be welcomed by both well-versed Hamannian scholars and the newly initiated alike. Betz incorporates difficult texts into an orderly presentation accurate to Hamann's thought and historical setting. The comprehensiveness of the study is enhanced by the ease of Betz's prose, offering a tremendous tool for understanding the enigmatic yet fruitful "Magus of the North."

Hoon J. Lee

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Heil und Geschichte: Die Geschichtsbezogenheit des Heils und das Problem der Heilsgeschichte in der biblischen Tradition und in der theologischen Deutung. Edited by Jörg Frey, Stefan Krauter, and Hermann Lichtenberger. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, xxiii + 834 pp., € 199.

The 36 essays that appear in this volume were presented April 12–15, 2007 at a symposium honoring the late Martin Hengel († July 2, 2009) on the occasion of his eightieth birthday (December 14, 2006). The theme of the symposium (which Hengel himself articulates in his opening essay), "salvation *and* history," represents the fundamental concern of Hengel's life work. As the editors indicate, Hengel's opening essay

on "salvation history" might well be regarded as an intellectual bequest from Hengel: "although he is dead, he still speaks."

The essays by Hengel's friends and former students display the remarkable range of his interests and learning. More than once, Hengel spoke of the necessity of a certain "hegemony" on the part of NT scholars, by which he meant that we should develop competence in areas beyond biblical studies, especially ancient history, early Judaism, and historical theology (see his essay, "Aufgaben der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft," in *Theologische, historische und biographische Skizzen: Kleine Schriften VII* [ed. Claus-Jürgen Thornton; WUNT 253; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010] 242–78). Hengel exemplified this competence, of course, one that was fundamental to his challenge to the historical claims of Bultmann's program. It is no surprise, then, that the volume honoring Hengel covers such a wide field of interest. Following Hengel's introductory essay on "salvation history," the volume is divided into the following sections: II. Old Testament and Ancient Judaism; III. Greco-Roman Perspectives; IV. New Testament; V. Patristics and Reformation; VI. a "literary appendix," which includes a sermon by Ulrich Heckel, given in a service of worship that took place during the course of the symposium, and an imaginative conversation with Philo on the question of providence by Folker Siegert.

No single line of thought emerges from the volume. One could hardly expect a new program from such a wide range and number of participants, not least because the very category of "salvation history" is so very broad. One is almost tempted to say that it is like Matthew's *logia* "in the Hebrew dialect"; each one interprets it as they are able. Competing estimations of the nature and value of "salvation-historical" interpretation find their place in the volume. As I have noted, Hengel himself suggested that instead of using the expression "salvation history," we should speak instead of "salvation and history." I shall take up some of his reflections shortly.

At the risk of oversimplification, I might say that the essays in this volume may be located in reference to two historical poles and two theological poles, which cannot be fully disentangled from one another, much like the very categories of history and salvation with which they are concerned. The work of Johann Christian von Hofmann and that of Rudolf Bultmann mark the two historical boundaries. The former represents the most well-known attempt of a conservative Christian theologian to come to terms with nineteenth-century historicism, and to provide a well-grounded universal history based on the Scriptures themselves. The latter, with Bultmann's existentialist response to the "crisis of historicism" (Troeltsch), might be described as a negative pole that attracted the various responses that dotted the theological landscape of Hengel's generation and continue to exercise some measure of influence today. One of the more prominent responses among NT scholars was provided by Oscar Cullmann, who attempted to answer Bultmann with a conception of linear history drawn from Scripture. Cullmann receives discussion at various points in the volume, although there is no essay devoted to his work. Hengel's own work provides not merely a supplement to Cullmann's biblical-theological response to Bultmann, but a significant alternative grounded in the detailed investigation of the historical context of earliest Christianity. In contrast to Cullmann's appeal to an overarching linearity, Hengel appears to the particularities of God's saving work in history to show that this work cannot be reduced to a mere point of existential encounter with God. Salvation is irreducibly historical. It need not be and cannot not be saved from "history," as Bultmann imagined. In varying ways, this concern of Hengel runs through the entire volume.

The difference between the work of Cullmann and Hengel brings into view the theological polarities that run through the essays in this volume. The former, with his biblical-theological approach and appeal to a linear conception of history, reflects, at

least in a limited measure, a concern to provide an overarching, universal history of revelation that stands over against the historical conceptions of his time, just as *mutatis mutandis* Hofmann did before him. Fundamental theological questions concerning historical method, the validity of a *hermeneutica sacra*, and especially the relationship between the historical narratives of the Scriptures and critical historical investigation arise here, and they receive varying answers throughout the volume.

The other theological pole that provides orientation to a number of the essays is internal to Scripture. Not many interpreters would be willing to follow Hofmann's appeal to the *Tatbestand* of personal faith that provides the basis for the interpretation and integration of history in his program. Even though Hofmann may be exculpated of the charge of subjectivism, his thought remains colored by Hegel, Schelling and, perhaps, Schleiermacher in ways that block an appropriation of his program without considerable modification. The question therefore arises: "Do the Scriptures provide the means by which a single, overarching narrative of saving-history can be constructed by exegetical, theological, and historical investigation?" Hengel himself flatly denies that such is the case, and he has some harsh words for what he calls "apologetic-fundamentalistic biblicism" that seeks to overrun this variety (p. 32). Even if one cannot follow him entirely in this judgment, his reserve is warranted. One of Hengel's points is worth repeating here. In various ways, the Scriptures make clear that prior to the eschaton, we deal not only with God as he has revealed himself savingly, but God in the ambivalence of his hiddenness works all things, death and life, salvation and disaster. As Hengel notes, when the prologue to John's Gospel speaks of Jesus making the glory of God visible, it is clear that this revelation takes place *absconditus sub contrario*, hiddenly, under the appearance of the opposite (pp. 27–28). Until we reach the light of glory, the reality of evil places a seamless narrative of God's saving work in the world beyond our grasp. Christian theology is called to walk by faith, not by sight, and thus to chart a course between postmodern skepticism and modernist overconfidence. It is worth remembering that the writings of Scripture are not organized into a single, continuous narrative. Indeed, their overlapping accounts provide historical conundrums for interpreters. It is significant that the early church recognized four Gospels, with all the questions that this multiplicity raises, and did not adopt Tatian's *Diatessaron*. Our attempts at describing a metanarrative remain mere attempts. God is his own interpreter.

There will be only a few who attempt to read this volume cover to cover. Unfortunate as that may be, there is much to be gained by selective reading of individual essays, which are of remarkable quality. Simply for bibliography on the debates surrounding "salvation history," the volume is a treasure trove. Without any intent to slight other contributions to the volume, several essays might be mentioned here. Beyond the opening, seminal essay by Hengel, to which I have referred, Bernd Janowski's critique of von Rad's work, in which he shows how a linear conception of time is bound up with the cyclical course of creation in which God's work is visible, is worth further theological reflection (pp. 37–61). The same is true of Joachim Schaper's significant critique of von Rad's program on the basis of the book of Deuteronomy: the Law is not subordinated to (saving-) history, but conversely, history is subordinated to the Law (pp. 63–73). Although it was in the least their intention, the essays by Anna Maria Schwemer ("Divine Rule according to Josephus"; pp. 75–101) and Beate Ego ("History within the Horizon of Divine Care: Reflections on the Relation of Salvation and History in Rabbinic Judaism"; pp. 155–73) undermine the now popular claim of N. T. Wright that Israel saw itself in an unending exile in Jesus' day. Reinhard Feldmeier offers rich reflections on God's self-communication to the human being in Christ, in whose temporality the divine eternity is given to the human being ("God and Time"; pp. 287–305). The essays

by Friedrich Avemarie, James Dunn, Roland Deines, Hermut Löhr, and Jörg Frey on Paul, the book of Acts, Hebrews, and the Gospel of John, are well worth reading (pp. 357–510). Roland Deines's essay on Matthew deserves special attention because of the well-considered challenge he presents to historical-critical interpretation to be conscious of its limits (pp. 403–40). Christoph Marksches work on correction, "myth" in Gnosticism, especially its variation and production, is fascinating (pp. 513–34), as is the discussion of salvation history's relation to universal history in early Christianity in correction of von Campenhausen by Winrich Löhr (pp. 535–58). Oswald Bayer's treatment of Immanuel Kant and Johann Georg Hamann is of enduring hermeneutical significance for post-Enlightenment interpretation of Scripture (pp. 611–32). Johannes Wischmeyer contributes a brief but well-grounded essay on Hofmann ("Salvation-History in the Age of Historicism"; pp. 633–46). Fritz Herrenbrück introduces the relatively unknown yet important work of Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy (see especially, *The Christian Future*), with which the much better-known work of Karl Löwith (*Meaning in History*) is in debate (pp. 647–92). This is a lead worth following. No proponent of any form of salvation history should criticize Bultmann's theology without reading the penetrating essay by Klaus W. Müller (pp. 693–723). Last but not least, Christoph Schwöbel offers a remarkable defense of salvation-historical interpretation from the perspective of creation, in the face of existential interpretation (pp. 745–57).

This volume is not the kind that will sit on all shelves. It does belong, however, in every decent theological library. Nor is it the kind of book that an American publisher is going to go to the expense of translating into English. That is a pity. It will remain a book for graduate students and faculty, who will be responsible for assimilating and communicating that which is valuable in it, of which there is a great deal. As I often remind graduate students, there are good reasons for learning to read German. This volume provides one of them.

Mark A. Seifrid

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

Politics according to the Bible: A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture. By Wayne Grudem. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010, 619 pp., \$39.99.

It is an irony of both personal conversation and public discourse that the two most interesting topics known to man, politics and religion, are also the most divisive. Wayne Grudem courageously has entered the fray with a significant new book, *Politics according to the Bible*. Grudem, a professor of theology at Phoenix Seminary, gives us 619 pages of systematic analysis of the nature, purpose, and implications of Christian engagement in politics and public policy.

Grudem is no stranger to systematization. His *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, updated ed. 2000) is a splendid consolidation of evangelical theology, brought together in a volume that dwarfs his latest offering.

Politics according to the Bible is so extraordinarily ambitious in scope that it disin-vites a truncated review. It really is several books in one: a proposal for understanding the nature of government as prescribed and described in Scripture; an exhortation to the evangelical church to engage politically; and a politically conservative evaluation of a host of policy and legal issues.

Grudem acknowledges in his introduction the political conservatism demonstrable throughout his work, yet also argues that it follows from his study of Scripture: "My conclusions about the Bible's teaching on the role of government and a biblical worldview . . . (flow) out of the Bible's teachings rather than positions that I hold prior to, or independently of, those biblical teachings" (p. 13). This is an important and valid distinction, one resonant with many readers of *JETS*, including me. That one's understanding of the Bible animates and informs his grasp of any sphere of endeavor, and thus leads to conclusions consistent with a particular and recognizable public philosophy, is commensurate with Paul's command to make every thought captive to Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Not all of us make our thoughts captive in the same way, but Grudem's is a noble and honest effort to fulfill this charge.

Helpfully, Grudem notes that he does "not hold with equal confidence every position I support in this book." He distinguishes between "clear, direct, and decisive" biblical teaching; "arguments from broader principles" (e.g. that democracy is preferable to other forms of government); and "an appeal to facts in the world," including such things as his view of tax policy (pp. 18–19). With regard to the latter, he explains, "I am certainly *not* claiming that the Bible also supports all the *facts* I cite about the world today. Readers are free to evaluate and search out evidence about those factual questions themselves. What I am doing in each chapter, however, is to say that if my understanding of these facts is correct, then the teachings of the Bible seem to me to lead to one conclusion or another" (p. 19).

At the same time, Grudem admits that "I have not distinguished these three types of argument in the pages that follow" (p. 19). When I asked him about this approach, Grudem answered in a gracious note: "I wanted readers to have some categories that they could themselves consider when thinking about various issues. Second, I wanted at the outset to give readers 'permission' to differ with me on some specifics while agreeing with the book in general. I thought that might help make political discussions less contentious—'well, I guess we just differ on that issue, but I'm still glad that we can talk together about it and that we live in a country where we have the freedom to disagree like this.' Something of that attitude. . . . And I might change my mind upon hearing a presentation of new data, or learning an alternative explanation of a Bible passage." He continued, "In addition, the scale of varying confidence in a position is not the same as the measurement of what kind of information it is based on. For example, my view that lower taxes promote economic growth is quite strongly held (based on empirical data and common sense), but my view on the applicability of some Bible passage to an issue might be less strongly held. It's complex and many factors are involved. I just wanted to give people some categories to use in thinking about these issues" (email message to R. Schwarzwald, Dec. 20, 2010). Unlike the sometimes stentorian insistence on "being right" that characterizes such works as *Politics according to the Bible*, Grudem's is the humble response of an honorable Christian scholar. May his tribe increase.

Politics begins with careful considerations of what Grudem calls "Five Wrong Views about Christians and Government" and how Christians can and should influence government itself. These first two chapters alone constitute 53 densely-written pages in which Grudem attempts to comprehend all the major arguments about Christian political engagement. He eschews "angry, belligerent, intolerant, judgmental, red-faced, and hate-filled influence," and instead calls for wedding grace and truth in evangelical public discourse. Good: per the opening line of this review, it is precisely the intensity of emotion provoked by political conversation that makes it socially impolitic, and Grudem's efforts to avoid it are commendable and evident also as he discusses some heat-producing issues during the course of the book.

He also challenges Christians with a basic question: Does not the Word of God have something to say about such matters as war, abortion, poverty, and other "po-

litical issues that . . . have significant moral components to them?" And, he asks, "If pastors and church members say, 'I'll let somebody else speak about that,' where will a nation's moral standards come from?" (pp. 68–69). Grudem challenges critics of Christian participation in politics at length, with courtesy but thoroughness. His comments are particularly welcome at a time when other evangelical leaders (e.g. James Davison Hunter and Gabe Lyons) seem to be calling for retreat from public engagement. Such a call reflects an ill-formed understanding of political action. Certainly, triumphalism is an idol. The notion that through political action government and culture can permanently and comprehensively be transformed is a myth. It was tried once before, at the Tower of Babel. Simply put, we cannot build God's kingdom without the King himself. But this view is only one alternative.

Grudem offers a better alternative. What we can do is plant the seeds of transformation in every sphere of life, make partial if incomplete and impermanent change, do good to many people, and bear witness to the gospel and the righteousness and justice of our Lord. As Grudem says, "If we (and I include myself here) ever begin to think that *good laws alone* will solve a nation's problems or bring about a righteous and just society, we will have made a huge mistake. . . . Good government and good laws can prevent much evil behavior, and they can teach people what society approves, but they cannot by themselves produce good people" (p. 54). I concur. Politics is a means by which God works in society to accomplish good and prevent evil. Politics is not salvific. Electing the "right" candidate will never usher in the millennial kingdom or the new heaven and new earth. It can, however, save lives, both those of the born and the unborn; protect the weak; advance justice; and restrain wrongdoing. And, as good government advances, the liberty to share the gospel itself will be strengthened.

In an especially perceptive section, Grudem argues that "governments significantly influence people's moral convictions and behavior and the moral fabric of a nation." This is a neglected truth. As Grudem writes, "laws have a teaching function" (pp. 97–98). A nation that allows open homosexuality in the warrior culture of the military is sending a message—that homosexual conduct is, at worst, morally neutral, and thus acceptable in all facets of society. The implications of homosexuality in the Armed Forces are profound in themselves, but government approbation of same-gender sexual attraction teaches the nation's citizens that the federal government shrugs its shoulders when it comes to same-gender sexual intimacy. This stance is dangerous in its implications for the institutions not just of the military but also of the family and marriage.

Grudem is to be applauded for addressing the "Evangelical Left," something few commentators have had the courage (or intellectual rigor) to do. In repeated citations, he tackles the arguments of such persons as Jim Wallis, whose frequently clichéd evasions about the "weightier issues of the law" (e.g. the sanctity of preborn life, the dignity of marriage) are given widespread coinage in the popular prints. For example, Grudem offers: "Wallis' phrase 'a consistent ethic of life' is a misleading slogan that attempts to make people think that his pacifist views on capital punishment and war, his support for government redistribution of wealth, and his own solutions to racial discrimination are the truly 'pro-life' positions. This confuses the argument about the biblical teaching against abortion by changing the subject to many other disputed issues. This sleight-of-hand argument should not blind us to the plain fact that every vote for every Democratic candidate for President or Congress undeniably has the effect of continuing to protect 1,000,000 abortions per year in the United States" (p. 177).

As someone who had the privilege of receiving a presidential appointment in the administration of George W. Bush and who has served as chief of staff to two Republican members of Congress (all of whom stood for the basic human dignity of the unborn), I find myself eager to cheer Grudem's comments. This eagerness is driven by the fact that Jim Wallis and others on the Evangelical Left conflate and confuse the salient

moral issues and thereby muddy the political waters sufficiently to mislead many in their understanding of the most urgent moral issue facing our country: the defense of preborn life against widespread destruction and commoditization.

Moreover, it is hard not to conclude with Grudem that the Democratic Party's strident allegiance to abortion-on-demand as some sort of political *sine qua non* makes support for it near untenable for thinking evangelicals. Commentator Ramesh Ponnuru has written a book about the Democratic Party entitled simply *The Party of Death*, and President Obama's rhetorical sleight-of-hand about "reducing the need for abortion" should deceive no one. Other than those extraordinarily rare instances where the mother's life is physically jeopardized, there is never a "need" for abortion. Furthermore, the myth of the slogan "I vote for the candidate, not the party" needs to be debunked. Even the most pro-life Democrat (a dying breed, at least on the national stage) votes for either Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House or Harry Reid as Senate Majority Leader—and both of them (whose allegiance to abortion is firm) will work for legislation in support of abortion and appoint congressional committee leaders who share that priority.

Still, if a "pro-choice" Republican ran against a strongly "pro-life" Democrat, could not a moral argument be made that a vote for the Democrat would be more acceptable than a vote for his/her GOP opponent? Alternatively, would Grudem suggest that a voter in this hypothetical race vote for no one—and perhaps thereby help the pro-abortion rights candidate succeed? These are matters of conscience, Grudem concedes freely, and as such might merit reconsideration. It is sufficient to note that his unabashed commitment to preborn life at all its stages is refreshing, especially given the artful evasions of the Evangelical Left, and should brace fellow believers to further advance the cause of life in a society where personhood is diminished with regularity.

The issue of abortion is only one of many salient issues facing the nation, and Grudem addresses many of them: marriage, the family, economics, the environment, national defense, foreign policy, the freedoms of speech and religion, and specific issues like affirmative action and tariffs. Readers will not uniformly agree with all of Grudem's policy prescriptions with respect to these issues. However, in raising many issues on which few other Christian authors ever even comment, he is compelling readers to form their own thoughts and pursue additional information.

The book ends with just the right note: "No matter what happens, at the end of our days . . . it is important for us to continue to pray and act in faith, trusting in God's power for any success that might come" (p. 601). This is not dissimilar to the charge of George Washington reputedly gave to his colleagues at the Constitutional Convention: "Let us raise a standard [plant a flag] to which the wise and honest may repair [rally-around]. The event [outcome] is in the hand of God." Wayne Grudem has been used by God greatly to shape the minds of many theologians, pastors, and serious believers in many spheres of life. He has expanded this ministry now with a noteworthy contribution to the literature on politics, policy, and the Christian faith. The church in America is indebted to this faithful and unashamed workman.

Robert Schwarzwalder
The Family Research Council, Washington, DC

Christ the Key. By Kathryn Tanner. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, xii + 310 pp., \$29.99 paper.

With this volume Kathryn Tanner contributes the next installment to her growing body of work engaging some of the most critical issues in contemporary theology.

Currently Dorothy Grant Maclear Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago's Divinity School, this book is a sequel to her brief systematic theology, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity* (Fortress, 2001), sharing its same theological vision—that “God wants to give us the fullness of God’s own life through the closest possible relationship with us as that comes to completion in Christ” (p. vii). By taking the first book’s primary substance, the Christ-centered theological vision, this follow-up attempts to take her robust Christology and run it through “otherwise tired theological topics” in order to unlock theological discussions said to be frozen in impasse” (p. vii). In a self-consciously less systematic fashion than the earlier book, an aim hardly maintained throughout the book, Tanner offers an erudite theological exposé on significant features of a distinctly Trinitarian—i.e. Christ-centered—theology.

Chapter 1 begins the exploration with a multifarious exposition of human nature. After establishing that the second person of the Trinity, God’s Word or Wisdom, is the image of God discussed in Gen 1:27 and 5:1, Tanner addresses the divine image bearers: human beings are declared to be capable of imaging this prior image in “secondary” fashion (p. 5). As the cosmic divine image, the Word imaged its own incomprehensibility through the anhypostatic uniting of Jesus Christ’s humanity to itself in the incarnation, by the Word being exhibited in human form. More than a paradigm for imaging the divine image, however, Jesus Christ, the true and perfect divine image, is the means by which humans might be re-formed and remolded through Christ by attaching themselves to the divine. Here, Tanner develops an anthropology that is “unlimited” in its unusually expansive openness to external influences. This highly impressionable, exaggerated “plasticity” of human beings, shaped by affect-laden concerns or things to which humans attach themselves, enables them to undergo radical transformation, even having “the capacity in some strong sense to become other things” (p. 40). This yields Tanner’s development of the participation theme, which then coordinates with strong and weak human imaging of the divine image.

This strong imaging of God happened particularly with the humanity of Christ in the incarnation, where he “gives to his humanity what he has by nature insofar as he is God” (p. 35). By participating in what he was not, the Word became the most perfect possible and strongest form of a human imaging God because of his participation in the triune life. And yet, this participation and full orientation of worship and service to God still only yielded a “dim analogue of divinity,” because it was still mere human participation (p. 17). And yet, beyond Christ and through him, other humans have the ability to participate in something that they, by nature, are not. Specifically, the Holy Spirit powerfully “comes to us through the glorified humanity of Christ in order to attach us to him, make us one with him, in all the intensity of faith, hope, and love,” drawing us into the very life of the divine image to which redeemed humans cling (pp. 14–15). Thus, through attachment (i.e. the closest possible association) to him who has attached himself to them, humans become in the strongest sense incomprehensible themselves by the visible incomprehensibility of a new manner or living that reflects the incomprehensible beauty of the one who became incarnate for them.

Grace, the topic of the next two chapters, unfolding as two parts, is the strong sense in which humans participate, sharing in what they are not. In Chapter 2, Tanner establishes the difference between images of God by nature and by grace. The former are divine; the latter, human. Hence, the main problem standing in the way of humans strongly imaging God, which grace remedies, “primarily has to do with human nature and not sin.” Therefore, “the grace of God in Christ becomes the highest way of addressing the impediment to God’s design posed by creation, irrespective of any problem of sin.” Accordingly, grace builds on what human nature lacks—God (pp. 60–61). Contrary to Protestant and Catholic notions, Tanner believes that sin does not attack essential human capacities like free will, but damages the presence of the divine power that was

once present for humans, making it now inaccessible. Accordingly, as sin has become knit into the fabric of humanity, at issue is a shift in circumstances and not in fundamental human nature. Tanner continues to blaze a trail between traditional views of human nature as her treatment on participation in God gives way to her exposition of justification and sanctification. Her Christ-centered account of justification (hoping to satisfy Protestants) is that it is, "in short, a matter of incarnation, and of the divine powers possessed by the humanity of Christ in virtue of that unity with the Word." On the other hand, "Sanctification refers to what happens to the humanity of Christ on that basis over the course of his life and death" (pp. 98–99). All the benefits that surely have been accomplished and achieved in Christ in a way that cannot be broken are received blessings unable to be considered apart from Christ; therefore his humanity becomes the goal for reformed human lives.

The second chapter on grace (Chapter 3) continues with the account that, while "humans are created to operate with the gift of God's grace," their very nature "requires the grace of God for the excellent operation of its own powers and general well-being" (p. 108). Taking the usual Catholic view to task, she sees humans (1) as created with grace and not simply having a desire for grace's benefits; and also (2) as needing grace (i.e. a strong form of participation in God) for the excellent exercise of ordinary human functions, and not simply for achieving distinctly supernatural ends. Tanner continues her grace-centered account of the creature, starting from the bottom-up with the creature's character, apart from any consideration of grace, and only then asks about the grace to come. Rejecting apparent problems of human nature being supposed to order itself, Tanner unmasks the Aristotelian notion that considers human desires and what might fulfill them as an incipient naturalism that hampers the gratuity of grace. Rather than flowing from human nature, "desire for God results from the presence of God that forms an essential ingredient of our constitution as the prerequisite of human well-being" (p. 126). What has to change in salvation, then, is the character of human relationships to God through Christ, because their nature "as originally created is already perfectly suited to that new relationship." That relationship would bring with it the same human nature that humans had to begin with, with its proper nobility, although unable to "properly exist without the grace of God's very presence to them" (p. 139).

Chapter 4 sets out to interpret the New Testament story of Jesus' life in "trinitarian terms," by which Tanner means to give "an account of the basic shape of the relationships that the persons of the trinity have with one another" (p. 147). While establishing the basis for understanding what the trinitarian inter-relationships are like, she supposes that looking at these relationships also yields "new organizing principles of human living" (p. 140). In addition, Tanner hopes to offer clarifications for contentions remaining between East and West. Beginning with fairly standard trinitarian affirmations, she employs a robust pneumatology as a significant feature of the life of Christ and salvation. The Spirit is already active in Christ's life, because the Spirit was always united with the Word. The Spirit was sent from the Father by Christ to humans from the very creation of humans. The Spirit also established Jesus' Sonship, giving him the ability to carry out his mission on earth. Still, this filling up of Jesus' humanity by the Spirit is said to have been a process that took time. By receiving the Spirit, believers are united to Christ and become like Christ in his relations with the Father, making it possible "to enter into the trinitarian movements and follow along their own circuit of descent and ascent" (pp. 197–206). The Spirit is said to always make its appearance in the form of the Son, who is "the shape that such power takes" (p. 169). Thus, it is the Spirit received from Christ that "binds us to him and enters within us to make our lives into a human image of the second person of the trinity in much the same way Jesus' own humanity was" (p. 172). Furthermore, humans are being "made over into

[Christ] by the power of the Holy Spirit we have from him" (p. 199). Throughout, Tanner corrects both Eastern and Western trinitarian dogma. And with the whole book, divine simplicity is explicitly upheld, each trinitarian person bringing about the very presence and action of the others in salvation.

"Politics" is the title of Chapter 5, dealing primarily with attempts by recent theologians to use patterns of trinitarian relationships for the establishment of more properly run societies, in huge contradistinction from Tanner's argument in the previous chapter. Moltmann, Zizioulas, Boff, and Volf are key players considered here, whose "inflated claims" about using the Trinity for socio-political purposes are thoroughly taken to task. Tanner finds unconvincing the novel idea that trinitarian persons are found to be equally origins of one another in perfectly reciprocal relations, and opts for the usual, traditional manner of identifying persons as distinct from one another by the unity of substance and fixed ordered positions of the persons, because this view identifies more closely with the biblical economy. Even Volf, who maintains the distinctions of persons, does nothing to explain how or why trinitarian persons come to be different from each other. Whereas Tanner takes many points under consideration in the works of the mentioned social trinitarians, her main argument against their position follows three lines of thought: (1) the differences between God and humans suggest that we do not understand very well what is meant when using ordinary language to speak of the Trinity; (2) much of what is said about the Trinity is not directly applicable to humans, especially because of their finitude; and (3) human finitude entails that humans give of themselves so that others may gain in ways that often bring loss to themselves.

Tanner continues her assault on social trinitarianism with its inability for the Trinity to tell humans something other than what they already know, because everything good that social trinitarians offer for socio-political ends are good things that people in well-functioning societies ought to know already. Tanner's own strategy for closing the gap between human and divine, and discerning how the Trinity applies to human life, is to look at what the Trinity does for humans—"what is happening in the life of Christ, in short" (p. 234). Building on the previous chapter, she adds: "In Christ . . . humans are showed what the trinity looks like when it includes the human, and what humanity looks like when it is taken up into the trinity's own relationships." These trinitarian relationships in which humanity now participates have implications for human relationships, which in turn "are being worked out in and through Jesus' own human life as it takes trinitarian shape" (p. 235). Accordingly, in the inauguration of a new kingdom, Jesus' relations to Father and Spirit are what human relations to the triune God are to look like—"relations of worship and service to the trinity's mission for the world—relations that subordinate humans in a perfectly appropriate way" (p. 243). Humans then imitate the character of the triune life by following Jesus' model, doing so for the sake of and the means to something more—the transcendent base of "life-giving relations of perfectly mutual flourishing that the divine persons themselves enjoy" (p. 246).

Chapter 6 explores the concept of "Death and Sacrifice," or atonement, considering a variety of models that have been set forth in various Christian traditions. Tanner identifies the humanity Jesus assumed as "adversely affected by the consequences of sin and in that sense fallen." Thus the cross exemplifies in "paradigmatic fashion" the character of human life that the Word became incarnate to reverse by making it his own (p. 260). In this sense, and developing an earlier theme, Tanner sees salvation as a temporal, historical process that takes time. The Word's humanity is "an historical humanity, one that alters and grows," struggling with the forces of sin and death, and the other changes that typify any human life (pp. 259–60). As expected, Tanner is sensitive to critiques against traditional atonement theories made by womanist and feminist theologies. While not unwilling to critique weaknesses in their models, she attempts

to supplement womanist and feminist work with T. F. Torrance's incarnational model of the atonement. Her model seriously reinterprets and revises a number of issues related to atonement theology (e.g. obedience language, contractual images, and Jesus' substitutionary role), although she focuses greatest attention on images of sacrifice, seemingly because this is what her feminist and womanist colleagues are most worried about. Ultimately, Tanner sees Jesus' sacrifice on the cross as a rite performed by God, because "God is sacrificing there for us and our salvation;" therefore, the sacrifice is not directed to God but from God to humans—"God is giving to us." Thus, "The whole act is God's" (p. 268). Moreover, while Jesus' death occurs on the cross, the sanctifying of the cross work does not identify especially with death but life, because it is life that is brought to Jesus on the cross, as the resurrection makes clear. Accordingly, "Death itself (along with sin, rejection, and conflict) is instead what is being transferred to God by way of the already given fact of God's assumption of mortal flesh" (pp. 269–70). On this model of atonement, "The whole of Jesus' life—before, as after his death—is such a life-giving sacrifice for us to feed on, for our nourishment" (p. 272).

The book's final chapter considers again, in more concentrated manner, the work of the Holy Spirit, working between the bifurcated understanding of the Spirit's activity in contemporary Christian thought and practice. Some assert that the Spirit works in direct, immediate, unmediated ways with individuals, whereas others view the Spirit's work as a more gradual, ordinary, human process with no final resolution but ultimately accomplishing God's purposes. Both of these views can lead to dogmatism and fanaticism while claiming divine sanction. As no surprise, Tanner asserts that Christ is the key to the Spirit's working because the Spirit works "in much the way God works in Christ" (p. 296). It is this necessary working of the Spirit in human beings, fulfilling them by God's intimate relationship with them in Christ, that enables humanity to be "more fully itself in being thoroughly reworked by divine power." Refashioned by this power, humans become "more fully human in knowing the truth and choosing the good they were meant to." Therefore, by this participation in divinity—"in powers that are not our own by nature" (pp. 296–97)—human beings, while nevertheless remaining themselves, are elevated to enjoy eternal life. The Spirit's working in no wise bypasses the problematic features of human lives in order to guide them, just as Jesus was given over to the mess, conflict, and loss of human life. His immersion in these things formed a step in the process by which good and healing comes. The culmination of the Spirit's work will happen one day in some "disturbed, unpredictably non-linear process comparable to the effects of sin on Jesus' own life—what looks like final defeat, simple loss under sin's crushing weight, is not." In this manner, the Spirit's present working is much like the divinity was in the life of Christ—invisible, and with no fanfare, even while the divine hand works through inadequate human efforts that will bring about the unheard of and unexpected good by the Spirit's own power.

Having attempted to accurately reflect Tanner's overall and sequential argument, I turn to the many features that deserve critique. From the outset, and aside from asking whether or not Tanner has provided the best or even most considerably adequate solutions to problems addressed in the book, I find it difficult to discern whether or not her diagnosis of "otherwise tired" theological topics is valid (p. vii). None of them actually seems "tired" when adequately understood. And it almost goes without saying that the task of the constructive theologian is to make sense of all reality in the most helpful ways, especially with what have been very important matters of theological discussion throughout church history. So I am not sure why the need to suggest her work as moving a number of the "otherwise tired" puzzle pieces (or in her mind, the whole landscape?) forward. I do not see any of the issues fatigued at all, unless it might be argued that certain issues raised have been abused and inadequately expounded by recent scholars.

I also wonder whether or not Tanner has adequately employed the best tools of theology that are at her disposal. She has modeled a brilliant, creative employment of patristic sources but leaves the contemporary reader wondering just how much anachronism she allows by giving so little historical context for her plethora of patristic and other sources. Tanner is aware of this, though she still seems to commit this cardinal *faux pas*, which is particularly unhelpful in serious trinitarian theology, especially in view of the scope of sources Tanner uses. The task of constructing new forms of theology, where Tanner is really on cue, needs to more honestly build on conversations from the past, honoring them by giving their voices closer, more attentive readings. In short, Tanner's sources have contexts, and it would have been nice to know about them.

This book also provides relatively meager engagement with *imago Dei* theology. Perhaps this is for good reason, because the terrain is so vast. But this has left Tanner somewhat devoid of some potentially helpful conversation partners in the world of systematic theology or the growing school of self-consciously theological interpreters of Scripture. In addition, her work has less than adequately engaged Scripture itself. While not afraid to utilize it on corrective grounds, and somewhat doing theological interpretation of Scripture herself, the significance of scriptural exegesis on her overall work is minimal, which will be a concern especially for evangelicals.

Of more serious concern, particularly for evangelicals, are a number of views she takes: that human nature was prone to fall; that human nature has no inherent dignity and worth (though Tanner would want to nuance this point further within her own framework); and that with her Christ-centered view of justification and sanctification, there seems to be a manner of personally appropriating salvation in him, perhaps yielding a creative form of universalism. Other matters for clarification might concern how much dependence she lends to the work of Harry G. Frankfurt (p. 46, n. 116), and how far this human plasticity might go in completely changing into other things. It works for her view of the incarnation and believers' participation in the triune life, but how far in the negative direction does this go? The ethical implications of such a view are enormous. She offers no discussion of humanity as distinctly male and female, in accordance with the biblical text, which is a negligent dodge of a number of major issues in the contemporary culture. Finally, the book's format occasionally makes Tanner's often elongated argument tedious to follow, with its tightly woven, running format.

Criticisms aside, this is one of the most thoughtful contributions to the recent world of theology. The volume has many strengths, offering an eloquent, fresh, constructive theology that surpasses so much available. In beautiful language Tanner makes incalculable wonderful points about a traditional doctrine of God. She has offered a bold, penetrating employment of patristic sources, as well as those from the medieval and Reformation period. Attempting to break the supposed impasse in current theological conversations, she has creatively engaged with the best theologians in church history, who, despite many recent attempts to remedy this, are still employed far too little in contemporary theology, especially in such a formidable manner as Tanner has done. She has thus provided a new way of appropriating a Christ-centered, trinitarian theology. Evangelicals should take this work seriously, as it offers a number of groundbreaking positions that will need to be reckoned with for subsequent work in trinitarian theology and Christology.

Jason S. Sexton
St Mary's College, The University of St Andrews, Scotland

The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything. By Fred Sanders. Wheaton: Crossway, 2010, 256 pp., \$17.99 paper.

Immanuel Kant insisted that the doctrine of the Trinity has no practical relevance. Kant was wrong—but not for the reason that many contemporary theologians seem to assume. The relevance of this doctrine is frequently construed in terms of its ability to provide a divine blueprint for structuring human relations in the home, church, and society. In *The Deep Things of God*, Fred Sanders points readers in a better direction for understanding the relevance of the Trinity. His core thesis is that the Trinity is inextricably linked to the gospel (and vice versa). His secondary thesis is that evangelicals have a rich trinitarian heritage and that evangelical practices such as witnessing, Bible reading, prayer, and worship are rooted in trinitarian faith.

In chapter one, Sanders argues that the first step in developing vibrant trinitarian faith is not persuading Christians of the cogency of “Trinitarian theory” but helping them discover that their lives already “are immersed in the Trinitarian reality” (p. 34). Here Sanders calls his first witness: Nicky Cruz. Cruz represents an evangelical who moved from merely “believing” in the Trinity to discovering that his life was immersed in the Trinity. Ironically, many contemporary evangelicals have made the same mistake as Schleiermacher: they have lost sight of the vital connection that exists between the Trinity and the gospel. The doctrine becomes reduced to a verbal affirmation “remote from any possible direct experience or relevance” (p. 43). Everyone who comes to authentic faith in Christ *knows* the Trinity, but not everyone who has this experience *recognizes* that they know the Trinity. Sanders suggests we appeal to people’s “tacit knowledge” of the Trinity (Michael Polanyi) by helping them discover the “tacit trinitarian dimension” in practices such as gospel proclamation, personal experience of salvation, Bible reading, preaching, and worship. Although some view a high-church sacramental context as the only soil in which trinitarian faith can flourish, Sanders argues that the “low-church evangelicalism that is spreading so rapidly around the world in our era contains deep resources for effective Trinitarian theology” (p. 37).

To think rightly about the relevance of the Trinity, we must remember that God does not exist as Trinity for our benefit. God would be Trinity even if nothing had ever been created. In chapter two, Sanders calls another important witness: Susanna Wesley, who represents a “well-balanced evangelical Trinitarianism” that maintains a proper sense of proportion between “who God is and what God does” (p. 69). Sanders explores our relationship with the Trinity from epistemological and ontological perspectives. In the process of coming to know God as Trinity (epistemological perspective), we move from an awareness of being saved by Jesus (conversion) to considering how Jesus did this (atonement) to considering who Jesus must be to accomplish this (fully human and fully divine) to the question of who God must be in light of this (Trinity). To get the “map” right, however, we must reverse the order. Ontologically, it is the reality of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that grounds our experience in salvation. Behind the “salvation-history Trinity” (economic Trinity), God is Trinity from all eternity (immanent Trinity). Once we acknowledge that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are eternally Trinity, we must take one additional step “that makes the best sense of the biblical revelation of the Trinity” and is “recommended by the classic tradition of Christian doctrine”—namely, affirming “relations of origin in the life of the Trinity” (p. 91). Sanders provides an insightful and accessible discussion of the eternal generation of the Son and eternal procession of the Holy Spirit.

In chapters three to five, Sanders develops the central thesis of *The Deep Things of God*—namely, that the “Trinity is the gospel” and “the gospel is trinitarian.” In this context, he explores the “size” of the gospel (chapter 3), the “shape” of the gospel (chapter

4), and the “access point” to the gospel (chapter 5). Commenting on its “size” (chapter 3), Sanders explains the gospel is as “immense as God himself” (p. 99). Nowhere can this theme be seen more clearly than in Eph 1:3–14. By way of contrast, many contemporary evangelicals have a small understanding of the gospel. Sanders calls Henry Scougal as an evangelical witness to a holistic understanding of salvation as God’s gift of himself: “The gospel is God-sized, because God puts himself into it” (p. 117). Hence, in the gospel “we are not dealing with the outer fringes of God’s ways but with the very core and center of who God is” (p. 122). In addition, Thomas Goodwin teaches us that the gospel touches the “deep things of God” (p. 122)—a phrase that inspired the title to this book.

In chapter four, Sanders persuasively argues that the gospel has a trinitarian “shape.” He begins by offering his readers a very accessible introduction to the biblical concept of the “economy of salvation.” The latter is not merely a historical record of salvific events; through it God also teaches us about himself. The economy of salvation (constituted by the sending of the Son and Spirit) is given shape by the “two hands” of the Father. Sanders explores the distinctive roles of the Son and Holy Spirit within a single economy of salvation and marshals a number of evangelical witnesses to underscore the trinitarian shape of the gospel, including John Wesley, John Owen, J. I. Packer, and John Flavel. Returning to his earlier point that the economy is designed to teach us about God, Sanders explains that when the Son and Holy Spirit appear, they behave as they truly are: “their eternal personalities, we might say, are exhibited here in time” (p. 151). Behind the temporal missions of the Son and Spirit stand their eternal processions (generation and spiration). The “eternal Trinity” (immanent Trinity) is present in and revealed through the “gospel Trinity” (economic Trinity). Sanders provides several diagrams to help readers comprehend these points. Although language of “mission” and “procession” may seem new to our generation, Sanders explains that recovering the trinitarian roots of the gospel helps us appreciate the importance of these classical elements of trinitarian faith.

In chapter five, Sanders examines our point of entry into the life of the Trinity. A “trinitarian” gospel should not be seen as an alternative to the gospel of personal salvation through faith in Christ which evangelicals have historically proclaimed. On the contrary, the more “trinitarian” we are, the more “Christ-centered” we will be (and vice versa). Sometimes we are tempted to think about salvation in non-trinitarian terms. For example, we might talk about “Jesus living in our heart” apart from what Scripture says about the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Is it possible to speak about “receiving Christ” in a properly trinitarian way? Here Sanders calls upon John Flavel as an example of an evangelical who understood and articulated “the message of Jesus knocking on the door of a sinner’s heart” as a “recognizably Trinitarian gospel” (p. 171). Union with Christ is central to a trinitarian understanding of redemption. All the blessings of salvation become ours through union with Christ which is brought about by the Holy Spirit. Francis Schaeffer represents an evangelical who had a rich trinitarian understanding of salvation. For Schaeffer, “accepting Christ as Savior” meant being brought into communion with the entire Trinity. In the final section of the chapter, Sanders shows how assurance of salvation finds its proper home in the doctrine of the Trinity and cites Benjamin Morgan Palmer as witness to a trinitarian understanding of assurance.

Although evangelicals may not be known for their trinitarian commitments, they certainly are famous for their “biblicism.” In chapter six, Sanders argues that an evangelical commitment to a high view of Scripture is rooted in an “understated trinitarianism” that recognizes Scripture both as ancient revelation and present reality through which God speaks. The belief that we hear God’s voice in Scripture (and that current readers can discern that voice) is predicted on the reality that Scripture is “a divine

speech act with a Trinitarian cadence" (p. 194). Identifying the trinitarian commitments that underlie this view of Scripture provides an alternative explanation for how evangelicals came to be committed to verbal inspiration: it was "not for sub-Trinitarian reasons of bare formless authority but for reasons of corresponding to the form of Scripture as the words of the Father articulated in the Son and carried by the Holy Spirit" (p. 194). Sanders identifies three evangelical witnesses who embody a "tacitly trinitarian" approach to Scripture as the Word of God: Adolph Saphir, Philip Mauro, and G. Campbell Morgan. Saphir speaks of the Scriptures as the means by which we draw near to God, and he underscores the trinitarian effect of the Bible. Mauro, contributor to *The Fundamentals*, organizes his doctrine of Scripture around the category of "life" and accounts for the "divinity of Scripture by appeal to the Son and Spirit in salvation" (p. 201). Morgan, who collected hymns about the Bible, makes it clear that evangelicals singing about Scripture are really singing about God.

In chapter seven, Sanders explores the trinitarian basis for Christian prayer. Whether we recognize it or not, it is "because of God's triunity that we have communion with God in prayer" (p. 211). We are invited to pray to the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph 2:18). Like wood, prayer has a kind of "grain." That grain is trinitarian moving "from the Spirit through the Son to the Father" (p. 212). By praying with this trinitarian grain, our prayer life can be enhanced. Moreover, pressure is removed as we recognize that our prayer life is undergirded by the "two hands" of the Father (the Son and the Holy Spirit) who intercede for us (Rom 8:26–27, 34). Evangelical witnesses to praying with a trinitarian grain include Andrew Murray, William Tyndale, John Bunyan, and C. S. Lewis. Lewis's discussion of the Trinity in *Mere Christianity* is also shown to reflect the core themes developed throughout the book.

The Deep Things of God is well written, enjoyable to read, and offers a profound reflection on the doctrine of the Trinity that is distinctively evangelical. Whereas a number of non-evangelical theologians have made important contributions to the contemporary trinitarian revival, Sanders helps readers envision what a robust evangelical "recovery" of this doctrine might look like. Specifically, Sanders makes at least five contributions through this book. First, he offers profound pastoral advice: the first step in helping Christians become more trinitarian is helping them discover that their lives are already compassed about by the Trinity. He also offers an insightful diagnosis of why evangelicals are weak on the Trinity; namely, because they have lost sight of relationship between the Trinity and the gospel. Second, Sanders offers a rich discussion of the key facets of this doctrine. Particularly helpful are his discussions of the relationship between the immanent and the economic Trinity (the subject of Sanders's doctoral dissertation); the eternal relations among the divine persons (including his explanations of the eternal generation of the Son and procession of the Holy Spirit); and the missions of the Son and Spirit in the economy of salvation. Third, Sanders does a masterful job communicating complex trinitarian concepts to a popular audience and helps evangelical readers understand the importance of classical trinitarian concepts. His diagrams alone are worth the price of book. Fourth, he succeeds brilliantly in demonstrating that an inseparable link exists between the Trinity and the gospel. In my judgment, this represents one of the most important contributions of this book. (Evangelicals who dismiss the eternal generation of the Son on the grounds that this doctrine is speculative and non-biblical will want to take note of the constitutive role this doctrine plays in properly articulating the gospel.) Fourth, Sanders makes a strong case that earlier evangelicals understood the "trinitarian shape" of the gospel, and he calls an impressive array of witnesses to substantiate this claim. Fifth and finally, he succeeds in demonstrating that core evangelical distinctive—such as personal appropriation of salvation, assurance of salvation, and submission to biblical authority—are rooted in trinitarian faith.

The limitations of this book are quite minor. Discussion of one additional evangelical practice would have nicely rounded out his discussion of links between the Trinity and the Christian life—namely, evangelism, in which believers participate in the continuing missions of the Son and Spirit (John 20:21–23). Excluding discussion of this practice might give readers the mistaken impression that trinitarian faith is merely an internal affair. Moreover, because Sanders does a masterful job showing how a high view of Scripture has trinitarian roots, it would have been helpful to hear more about how the doctrine of the Trinity makes a difference for the daily practice of reading Scripture. Finally, central to classical trinitarian faith is the assumption that the external works of the Trinity are undivided although the order and distinction of persons are preserved. Although Sanders clearly affirms the undivided action of divine persons (p. 245, n. 15), most of the accent in his discussion is placed on the order and distinction of persons (the latter being crucial to his discussion of the “trinitarian shape” of the gospel). Additional attention to the undivided action of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit might further strengthen Sanders’s case for the constitutive link between the Trinity and the gospel. For example, one of the recurring criticisms of penal substitution is that this doctrine is sub-trinitarian because it involves a wrathful father condemning his loving son to death. Although some popular gospel presentations may veer dangerously close to this misunderstanding (which suggests a division of purpose in the triune life), a proper understanding of the Trinity reminds us that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share one will and act with one purpose. In this context, we must affirm (with Scripture) that the Son *willed* his death along with the Father and was not merely a victim of cosmic child abuse. Moreover, the love that prompted the cross was the *undivided* love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The undivided action of the divine persons is crucial in securing these points.

The genius of *The Deep Things of God* is the way Sanders presents evangelical trinitarian faith in a clear and engaging way to a popular audience. Not only does it offer a great introduction to the doctrine of the Trinity for lay people, but this book could also serve as a useful text in a variety of undergraduate and graduate theological courses.

Keith E. Johnson
Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando, FL

The Nearness of God: His Presence with his People. Explorations in Biblical Theology. By Lanier Burns. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2009, xi + 254 pp., \$17.99 paper.

From the excellent Explorations in Biblical Theology series edited by Robert Peterson comes the third installment entitled *The Nearness of God: His Presence with His People*. Written by Lanier Burns, a seasoned scholar and missionary with much theological and practical wisdom to impart, this work targets the very important, yet much neglected, theme of the presence of God. In it, Burns contends that the Lord not only exists but that he exists in such a way that he is relational and, as the title suggests, near to his people. As Burns observes, “[This book] is about the biblical God, who is personally with us in our joys and sorrows, our wants and needs, our successes and failures” (p. 2). Later, he adds that *The Nearness of God* is “about God’s revelation of his presence and his desire for relationship” (p. 4). At the very foundation of this book, then, is the supposition that God’s nearness is not solely an experience recorded in Scripture but something that can and should be enjoyed by believers today. Based on this conviction,

Burns's work is dually focused: first on the revelation of God's presence in Scripture, then on the personal and contemporary application of this biblically-based experience.

To demonstrate the significance of God's presence, Burns begins his work with John's prologue (John 1:1–18). The decision to start at the climax of redemptive history demonstrates Burns's theological commitment to the centrality of the person of Christ and, more specifically, his understanding of Christ as the revelation of the very presence of God in history. Burns uses this first chapter to show that Jesus is the Word of God who is the "tabernacle" of the Lord. He incarnates God for the world, providing entrance into the presence of God through salvation as well as an example of how to live in the presence of God here and now. In other words, Jesus Christ is the Word who typifies how believers should relate to God's presence while simultaneously providing the opportunity and grounds for their current and eternal experience of God. Christ as the Word, then, has important implications for, as Burns puts it, the "pilgrimage" of contemporary believers.

With this Christological foundation in place, Burns returns to the beginning of redemptive history to continue his description of God's presence, its place in the biblical storyline, and its significance for the Christian pilgrimage. Chapter 2 initiates the historical progression of the theme of God's presence beginning with Adam, moving to the fall, and continuing through the patriarchs up to the time of Moses. Chapter 3 resumes Burns's analysis of the Torah, addressing Yahweh's manifest work and wonders in the life of Moses along with placing an emphasis on the glories of God's presence at Sinai. Following this general appraisal of the exodus, Burns turns his attention more specifically in chapter 4 to the tabernacle and temple as the sanctuary location of God's presence. In doing so, Burns identifies the presence of God with worship, arguing that worship is the proper outcome of experiencing God in holiness and relationship. Throughout chapters 2–4, Burns also highlights the themes of sin, law, holiness, covenant relationship, and mediation—all of which, he argues, interconnect to influence either the provision or the removal of Israel's personal experience of God's presence.

Next, Burns focuses on the significance of the presence of God in the prophetic writings. Chapter 5 summarizes Israel's decline into idolatry and the God-ordained response of the prophets. Within this framework, the prophets are the representatives of God's faithful and covenantal presence among the unbelieving Israelites. The prophets' role and declarations clarify the need for a new covenant that can only be completed by God, a new covenant that Scripture later reveals is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our Immanuel. So, even in his response to the persistent sins of his people, God evidences his grace again in the plan of a future covenant that will guarantee the return of his presence for the redemption of his people.

Chapter 6, in a sense, is the culmination of the proceeding chapters, for it is here that the author describes the New Testament fulfillment of the new covenant. Burns shows how God completes the OT promises through the provision of forgiveness accomplished by his Son's death on the cross. In this redemptive act, God forges for himself the people of the new covenant who are themselves indwelt by the very Spirit of God and who, as both Jew and Gentile, are united to Jesus so as to be representatives of God's presence in the "body of Christ." Finally, as Burns describes in chapter 7, this people of God hope and live in light of the future promise of the New Jerusalem where the Lord will finally and fully dwell with his people in the glories of the new heaven and new earth.

As this summary shows, this book has much to commend it. To begin, Burns's commitment to the centrality of Christ is laudable and instructive for a strong biblical theological methodology. As Burns makes clear, Christ is the "epicenter" of the biblical story as well as the guide and example for believers who rest in Christ's salvific work

to enter into God's presence eternally. Though a more strict chronological approach and a further examination of Christ's incarnation of God's presence outside John 1:1–18 (e.g. Matt 1:22–23 showing Christ to be Immanuel—God with us, the fulfillment of Isaiah's promise declared in Isa 7:10–23 [cf. Isa 8:8–10]—and the “I am” statements of Christ [John 6:35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12; 9:5; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5]) would also advance Burns's position, his choice to begin with John 1 is appropriate because it reveals Christ to be the pinnacle of God's earthly presence and prepares readers for Christ's fulfillment of the new covenant.

Burns also skillfully uses the truths of God's presence (excavated from the storyline of Scripture) as a springboard into practical application. He works diligently to bring his biblical findings to bear upon the readers' lives and to promote change within them so as to make “application of his presence for our pilgrimage” (p. 39). This overall emphasis places the experiential realities of God's presence within the context of Scripture, thereby connecting the personal, spiritual experience of God's presence with its proper biblical expression and background.

Yet another positive feature of *The Nearness of God* is Burns's consistent ability to understand and explain the implications of God's presence from a global perspective. From the outset, Burns sheds light on the way the nations respond to the reality of God's presence, arguing that “different cultures across space and time represent different identities that experience God's presence with diverse priorities and perspectives” (p. 7). This extensive outlook no doubt stems from his missiological passion and devotion which opens his readers to a more balanced conception of God's presence.

The most important strength of *The Nearness of God*, however, is its overall demonstration of the theological and redemptive historical significance of God's presence. As Burns succeeds in showing, the presence of God is a theme that runs throughout Scripture. Demonstrating in a biblical way how the Lord draws near to his people has major ramifications for the way contemporary Christians experience a relationship with God. Burns's descriptions of God's presence as it unfolds throughout Scripture are quite helpful. He works through the text carefully and offers profitable insights concerning the divine presence and its significance for redemptive history. As Burns explains, “I have tried to let the Bible tell its own story. I want readers to experience the unforgettable beauty of its language as it aligns God's loyal compassion with his desire for our loving obedience” (p. 10). *The Nearness of God* does just this and through it Burns does, in fact, show “with certainty that ‘God's presence’ is a foundational truth of his Word” (p. 221).

For its capable exposition of the importance of this redemptive historical theme, *The Nearness of God* is to be recommended. However, this very strength of the book is also connected to the book's most notable shortcoming, as it stops short of demonstrating *why* the presence of God is so significant for the biblical storyline. As a result, the book is a helpful work of description and personal application that lacks the theological synthesis needed to show not just *that* the presence of God is a key biblical theme but also *why* it is a necessary motif for understanding the storyline of Scripture. In my judgment, *The Nearness of God* is quite beneficial in so far as it goes, but it does not go quite far enough.

Part of this problem stems from the lack of clarity surrounding the thesis of *The Nearness of God*. The book does not move beyond description to present an argument that drives the work as a whole. The closest thing to such an overarching contention is seen in the Introduction, when Burns writes, “[This book] is about God's revelation of his presence and his desire for relationship with his people. It is about how he providentially works in our world to reproduce his loving character in our communities—and churches” (p. 4). To be sure, the book does accomplish this purpose. It retells

and summarizes the unveiling of God's presence and its implications for the lives of believers and churches. As a work of description, then, it succeeds and points to the importance of God's presence as a biblical theme. Yet, in his attempt to validate the presence of God as a substantial motif of Scripture, Burns neglects to answer the broader question of why this theme is such a constant biblical emphasis. In other words, Burns's answer to the question of "where" God's presence is seen in Scripture overshadows the necessary treatment of the question "why" God's presence is crucial to the Bible's own theological framework.

Related to this issue is the absence of a central definition of God's presence. To be sure, defining God's presence is easier said than done; by no means is this struggle isolated to Burns alone. As a whole, most authors interacting with the theme of God's presence bypass defining the concept. Nevertheless, a helpful starting place for a book on the presence of God would be a discussion and clarification of what Scripture declares the presence of God to be. Yet, there is no *one* clear definition of the presence of the Lord given in *The Nearness of God*.

There are times, however, when Burns describes God's presence in a more general sense. For example, he writes, "'Presence' is a biblical term that connotes relationships, human and divine, in all of their facets. Presence means that God is with his creation generally as well as with his people intimately" (p. 2). Another example is found later: "Presence means being there with someone" (p. 32). Again, in his chapter on the Patriarchs, Burns adds, "[God's presence] means that he is with his people, a covenantal and revelational companion on their journeys (p. 39)." The sheer quantity of attempts and variance within such descriptions of God's presence demonstrate that there is little consistency among Burns's explanations of the presence of God. Such descriptions tend to be broad, ambiguous, and, therefore, insufficient. So, for instance, while it is true that God's presence is about relationships, the question remains: what kind of relationship? To be more precise, God's presence, as Scripture argues, is about God's relationship with men *for salvation and for his glory*. God is present in this world not to be merely with or relate to creation, but to be with and relate to creation in order to reconcile the world to enter into the fullness of his presence once again.

Without a strong thesis or a strong foundational definition, readers must use Burns's descriptions—as good as they are—to piece together for themselves what the presence of God is and the reason it is central to the storyline of Scripture. For example, readers are left to synthesize their own definition by gathering the adjectives Burns uses to describe this theme (e.g. "relational," "authoritative," "living," "protective," "immediate," "personal," "enabling," "abiding," "covenantal," "mediating") to formulate a fuller understanding of the presence of God. Having to compile these descriptions can, at times, lead to confusion regarding what is actually meant by the presence of God, and this effort works against the overall goal of highlighting the redemptive-historical prominence of God's presence.

Finally, there is the issue of God and his desire to have a relationship with his creation. This is at the center of God's presence and, rightfully so, at the center of *The Nearness of God*. However, to avoid any misconceptions regarding God's aseity and independence, some type of qualifying statement(s) about God and his relationship to the world would be beneficial. At times, Burns's consistent focus on God's pursuit of humanity may seem to imply that God "needs" a people for his own fulfillment and completion. Burns probably does not intend to convey this sentiment. What would be helpful, however, to avoid possible misconceptions regarding God's character is a simple explanation of the Lord's self-sufficiency. Such a statement would remove any doubts about God's independence. Even more, this clarification would also strengthen the readers' divine conception by demonstrating that the Lord's desire to be near his

people stems not from a deficiency within himself but from the pursuit of his glory through an expression of grace and mercy.

In conclusion, Burns is to be commended for highlighting the presence of God as a central theme in Scripture and its implications for the lives of believers. At the same time, *The Nearness of God* is less thorough when it comes to synthesizing what the presence of God is and the reasons why this theme is so significant for God's redemptive mission. This lack of clarity unfortunately limits the book's ability to reach its greatest potential both practically and theologically. Still, Burns does his readers a great service by contending for the centrality of the presence of God within the storyline of Scripture and providing a strong foundation for further exploration of this theme and the reasons for its biblical theological significance.

Ryan Lister

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

The Sacred Text: Excavating the Texts, Explaining the Interpretations, and Engaging the Theologies of the Christian Scriptures. Edited by Michael Bird and Michael Pahl. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias. 2010, xv + 265 pp., \$114.00.

This book is the seventh in the Gorgias Précis Portfolios, collections of essays in conference or *Festschrift* united around a common theme. Gorgias Press is an independent academic publisher of books and journals covering several areas related to religious studies, the world of ancient western Asia, classics, and Middle Eastern studies. These publications are peer reviewed before acceptance and utilize electronic files in the publication process to ensure that titles will not go out of print. The limited print distribution explains the cost of the volume.

This particular collection of essays is the combined effort of twelve contributors. One of the twelve, Michael Pahl, also served as co-editor with Michael Bird. The book is characterized by careful and competent scholarship. It also has the advantage of a pervasive irenic tone and an apparent conciliatory attitude toward those who may disagree with a particular viewpoint. In pursuing diversity the editors not only selected a wide range of theological topics but also a wide array of scholars, very much representative of the English-speaking world.

The preface places a significant value on Christians discussing "in truly fresh ways about the nature, purposes, and function of Scripture" (p. xii). This preference for "fresh ways" proves to be indicative of some of the more innovative discussions in the book. As a collection, perhaps by design, there is very little continuity or common agreement as to specific terms or definitions. The overall framework as described by the editors seems more artificial than accurate. There is no glossary but a modest index; each chapter includes a helpful list of recommended books for additional research. The work is extensively footnoted.

The Introduction by Michael Bird, lecturer in Systematic Theology at the Bible College of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, states an admirable goal for the book to provide "brief introductions" to complex issues, including the formation of the Christian canon in the context of the ancient church, hermeneutical strategies for interpreting the Christian Scriptures, and the theological status and function of Scriptures in various Christian traditions. In light of ETS's doctrinal base affirming biblical inerrancy, it is illuminating to observe how Bird approaches and applies this concept. While acknowledging the "ancient idea of inerrancy" (p.14), he posits a contrast between inerrancy and

infallibility. Indeed, he invokes a carefully nuanced appeal to the veracity of Scripture that should be acceptable to even the Barthian viewpoint. Furthermore, Bird insists “that the church did create the biblical canon” (p. 9), averring that “God inspires authors to write Scriptures and inspires the church to make a canon” (p. 10). This position is clearly contradicted by Hamilton’s statement (chap. 11) that the church did not make the canon but “*recognized* as inspired” the Protestant canon. This is not hair splitting. Hamilton footnotes his comment with Article I of the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*: “We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source” (p. 218).

Bird appears to reject this denial, maintaining that “there is a closer relationship between ecclesiology and bibliology than is normally underappreciated [*sic*] in Protestant dogmatic” (p. 9). But Bird fails to make a convincing case for any failure of the traditional Protestant view of the relationship between ecclesiology and bibliology. He argues that the Reformers’ call for *sola Scriptura* would be better understood as *suprema Scriptura* and that the traditional Protestant view has been reduced to *nuda Scriptura* (p. 11). It may be observed that while Bird would assent to many of the affirmations of the Chicago Statement, he would not agree with most of its denials. Specifically, his essay seems to agree with the affirmation of Article One—“We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God”—while disagreeing with its corresponding denial, as noted above by Hamilton.

While on this topic, Article XIII of the Chicago Statement affirms “the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.” Several of the contributors to this collection are clearly uncomfortable with the term “inerrancy.” For example, Robert Shillaker quotes, if not with total agreement, then certainly with admiration, scholars who want to move beyond “cheap inerrancy” (p. 157) and “the too-modern-sounding term *inerrancy*” (p. 158). He concludes that somehow the Bible uses “truth” and thus readers should in some manner “expect something similar as Scripture is read” (p. 158). As another example, Jennifer Bird opines that reading “the words of humans that reflect cultural biases can be mistaken for the word of God” (p. 173). She engages 1 Pet 2:18–3:16 and finds the text as written to fall seriously short of egalitarian ideals. She does not question whether egalitarian ideals may possibly be wrong or inadequate, but rather says the text must be liberated from its cultural biases so “the life-stealing aspects” of the Bible would be removed and “the life-giving words [may] speak unencumbered for themselves” (p. 173).

For the rest of this review I will focus on several stellar contributions.

In chapter one, Karen Jobes provides a succinct introduction to the Septuagint. She summarizes its origin and its use in the NT, with specific attention to Isaiah, the Psalms, and the Minor Prophets. She concludes with an evaluation of the proper appreciation of the Masoretic text in relation to the Septuagint. In chapter five, Jamie Grant offers a superb brief history of modern biblical criticism and an essential introduction to the canonical approach of Brevard Childs. Grant offers a warning that “scholars throughout many generations have been guilty of a degree of intellectual arrogance” (p. 116) and encourages all to approach the Scriptures “with an attitude of appropriate humility” (p. 118). George Kalantzis, in chapter ten, provides a clear comparison and contrast of the bibliology of Eastern Orthodoxy with both Roman Catholic and Protestant perspectives. There is no *magisterium* and no communion-formative confessions in Eastern Orthodoxy. He identifies a *synergeia* between orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Even the canon is not considered a closed issue; “it is *firm but not rigid*” (p. 202). This, in part, leads Kalantzis to conclude that “though Orthodox theology formally teaches a high view of Scripture, Orthodox praxis manifests a low use of Scripture” (p. 212). This observation is true of some Catholics and Protestants as well.

In chapter eleven, James Hamilton, writing from the evangelical perspective, states clearly and confidently that the 66 books of the canon are inspired and inerrant. He

deftly presents the witness of the OT to its own canonicity and the NT evidence for the OT canon. He deals with the NT canon, surveying the traditional views and then making the case from Scripture's "self-authentication" (p. 235). Acknowledging the standard objections to the evangelical view, at one point Hamilton gently chides critics with the observation that "a remarkable amount of confidence is necessary to declare the Bible to be in error" (p. 238). He further argues that "the evangelical view of Scriptures is derived from the Bible alone Rather than being a philosophical or theological construct, the evangelical doctrine of Scripture arises inductively from the text of Scripture itself" (pp. 216–17). This view is irreconcilable with the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Barthian, postmodern, and feminist/post-colonial viewpoints espoused elsewhere in this book. It is also at odds with any "middle path" of compromise between Catholicism and Protestantism. In chapter twelve, David Congdon identifies the commonalities of Barth and Bultmann on the Scriptures as potential events that "must become God's Word" (p. 245). He writes with considerable skill, comparing and contrasting the two scholars, and makes the case that their core views of Scripture were not dissimilar. At the same time, his conclusion as to their value for moving beyond that perspective is somewhat overstated.

Overall, this book does not serve well as an introduction precisely because of the disparate viewpoints espoused. It would be more useful if the three issues noted in the alliterative title—excavating, explaining, engaging—were presented from each of the various viewpoints; perhaps a counterpoint or rebuttal format would enhance the book in a utilitarian way. As is, it would be too advanced for most undergraduate students and too elementary for most graduate students, except perhaps as a collateral reading. Unfortunately, the cost will prove impractical as collateral reading in most settings. More seriously, many chapters in this book are less than subtle attacks on the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. To any evangelicals who think this issue was resolved in the last century, this book is a clear challenge to that opinion. In a recent issue of *Southern Seminary Magazine* (Fall 2010), R. Albert Mohler Jr. concluded his essay "Fifty Years' War" with the following comment: "The rejection of biblical inerrancy is bound up with a view of God that is, in the end, fatal for Christian orthodoxy. We are entering a new phase in the battle over the Bible's truthfulness and authority. We should at least be thankful for the undisguised arguments coming from the opponents of biblical inerrancy, even as we ready, once again, to make clear where their arguments lead." Mohler's affirmation echoes the warning in Article Five of the Chicago Statement: "The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church." With the clear exceptions noted previously, much of *The Sacred Text* is a clear effort to reject biblical inerrancy or at least to limit or disregard it. This effort resurrects old views (couched as "fresh ways") of truth "contrary to the Bible's own."

David Pitman

Temple Baptist College, Cincinnati, OH

Christian Thought: A Historical Introduction. By Chad Meister and J. B. Stump. New York: Routledge, 2010, 552 pp., \$39.99.

Chad Meister and J. B. Stump's *Christian Thought* is a relatively brief but nonetheless impressively rich overview of its expansive subject. The authors, both professors of philosophy at Bethel College in Indiana, offer a comprehensive survey of ambitious scope, beginning with elements of Jewish, Greek, and Roman culture that Christianity

inherited and concluding with speculation about the future of the faith. Focusing on both key individuals as well as broader movements, the authors demonstrate a skill for portraying the nuances of Christian thought, its context, and a spectrum of scholarly opinions on various topics in an accessible fashion. The result is a highly useful resource for students and scholars alike.

Christian Thought is divided into five chronologically ordered sections, with chapters in each section covering a certain theme or person in the period. The first section begins with a chapter on Jewish, Greek, and Roman history that establishes the social and political context within which the early church arose. Highlighting the intellectual elements each culture imparted to Christianity, the authors discuss such topics as the Jewish idea of election, Greek rationalism, and Roman law. The authors follow with individual chapters on Jesus and Paul, emphasizing the continuity the respective teachings of these individuals had with segments of Jewish thought. Meister and Stump approach this early period through a close reading of Scripture for details, with biblical criticism playing a secondary but supporting role. This focus is particularly evident, for example, in the portion on Jewish history where the authors follow closely the Old Testament narrative. The final chapter of the section looks at the spread of Christianity and the practical and theological problems this created for the young movement. Dietary restrictions are highlighted and the "Council of Jerusalem" as portrayed in Acts 15 is given central place.

The second and third sections of *Christian Thought* are the longest of the text. Leaving the apostolic period for that of the patristics and the Middle Ages, the usual suspects and subjects are covered. Augustine and Aquinas are given their chapters as well as the trinitarian and Christological controversies. Scholasticism is included as is the development of monasticism, the formation of the canon, and the slow estrangement and eventual break between the Latin and Greek churches. One of Meister and Stump's key aims is to highlight how faith and practice interact. This emphasis is displayed especially well in their discussion of monastic practices and the cultural and liturgical differences that contributed heavily to the East-West schism. Using carefully selected primary sources, they also take care to note in this section the scriptural foundation undergirding the various ideas addressed. This method gives a greater sense of coherence to the story in a way that could be beneficial to an unfamiliar reader.

The final two sections deal with the Reformation and modern periods. Luther, the Reformed tradition, Anabaptism, and the English Reformation receive treatment respectively. Perhaps reflecting Stump's interest in the philosophy of science, the modern section begins with a nicely condensed discussion of scientific and philosophical developments, represented mainly by the careers of Descartes and Galileo, which came to undermine some traditional beliefs. Chapters on Enlightenment religion, evangelicalism, romanticism, and neo-orthodoxy follow. The final chapter of the section examines twentieth-century topics like American fundamentalism, the theology of Paul Tillich, and Vatican II.

Given the breadth of this single volume, Meister and Stump are obviously faced with the difficult task of presenting such a large amount of material in a manner that is neither overwhelming nor cursory. In that regard, the numerous special features of the text are helpful. Each chapter includes timelines of relevant events and figures. The authors also utilize numerous text boxes set apart from the main text that provide definitions or clarification of a particularly important term or idea as well as short excerpts from a primary source under examination. Additionally, numerous maps and dozens of graphs and images help the reader conceptualize a given topic.

Aside from these features, the clarity with which Meister and Stump write on such a variety of subjects is admirable, as is their fair-minded analysis and inclusive approach.

Women are given voice primarily in the acetic traditions of the early church and Middle Ages. Desert mothers such as Amma Syncletica are highlighted, and important figures like Hildegard of Bingen are taken up in a substantial chapter on "Women and Theology in the Middle Ages." The contributions of Islam and Judaism in the medieval period are also discussed, particularly Avicenna and Maimonides's respective impact. The modern section, however, could benefit from expansion. Given their aim of being inclusive, and given that they note the impressive expansion of Pentecostalism in the introduction and conclusion, a chapter on holiness theology and its substantial impact would have contributed greatly to their narrative. This section could have allowed, for example, the inclusion of such modern women as Phoebe Palmer and Hannah Whitall Smith as well as African American voices such as Amanda Smith.

One the whole, however, *Christian Thought* is a well-executed survey. In addition to the features mentioned above, suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter and a glossary at the end of the text make it a potentially valuable resource for the classroom and a good reference source for scholars of many disciplines interested in the Christian tradition.

Daved Anthony Schmidt
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ

John Calvin. By Bruce Gordon. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, 398 pp., \$35.00 cloth.

Bruce Gordon is professor of Reformation history at Yale Divinity School and has authored *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester University Press, 2002). This is a highly anticipated biography from Yale University Press, and Gordon does not fail to provide a thorough, current, academic approach to Calvin's life, even while intending his work to be beneficial for those "who may have little familiarity with either the reformer or the sixteenth century" (p. xi). Gordon begins his preface with strong language that may cause some readers to question his direction: "John Calvin was the greatest Protestant reformer of the sixteenth century, brilliant, visionary, and iconic. . . . He was also ruthless, and an outstanding hater. . . . [H]e dominated others and knew how to manipulate relationships. He intimidated, bullied and humiliated, saving some of his worst conduct for his friends" (p. vii). This opening broadside notwithstanding, the author furnishes his readers with a fair treatment of Calvin's life.

In his overall assessment of Calvin, Gordon writes, "What made Calvin Calvin, and not another sixteenth-century writer, was his brilliance as a thinker and writer, and, above all, his ability to interpret the Bible. His coherent, penetrating and lucid vision of God's abiding love for humanity, expressed in some of the most exquisite prose of his age, has continued down the centuries to instruct and to inspire. Like all great writers he transcends his time" (p. viii). For Gordon, Calvin's intellectual abilities were most clearly seen in his serious approach to theology and Bible exposition, his commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans being a good example of his approach to the text. In this endeavor, "Calvin made no effort to mask his confidence in his ambitious plan to treat Paul's letter verse by verse from start to finish. This was the proper task of the interpreter, to follow the text exactly as it was written in order to elucidate the mind of the author. The commentator should not introduce extraneous themes or topics but concentrate on lucid and brief explanations of the texts. To achieve this requires a high standard of education with competence in biblical languages, history, and the humanist

arts. The commentator should have a mastery not only of biblical sources, but also of profane ones, for they too can shed light on God's Word. To this end, he must understand the ancient world that produced these texts so that they can be properly understood in their historical and literary contexts" (p. 106). It was in the service of biblical exposition and pastoral duties that Calvin immersed himself in the biblical languages, historical theology, and led theological training in the Academy of Geneva. Understanding the priority of the pulpit, Calvin recognized, "every successful Protestant reformation had to deal with the question of preaching" (p. 139). According to Gordon, even the ascension of Calvin's supporters to victory in 1555 is attributed to the success of Calvin's faithful preaching (p. 216).

Gordon develops a number of important themes, preeminent among which is Calvin as an exile. According to the author, exile was Calvin's "defining experience" that "endowed him with his most powerful and resonant message: the Christian is never alone, for the Christian is at home in God" (p. viii). This was seen in Calvin's exile from his native France to cities such as Strasbourg, Basel, and Geneva. In his evaluation of Calvin as an exile, Gordon observes the comfort the Reformer found in God's providence: "Life in this world must be shaped by hope and patience; hope is grounded in the certain promises of God as expressed to all humanity in the Word, while patience is the ability to wait for God to reveal the hidden purpose. The pilgrimage is a struggle against the evils of the world, and suffering is the Christian's lot. Only those who love God more than the world will prevail. But prevail they will, because God will never abandon them while they travail in a hostile land" (p. 335). Furthermore, "Home, for the exile, is not a location, but union with God" (p. 57).

Another theme is Calvin's concern for the unity of the Protestant movement. Gordon underscores that Calvin "was a man of the Church, and its unity was his deepest passion" (p. viii). Specifically, Calvin's care for the unity of the Church is evidenced by his mediating position of the Lord's Supper. He perceived the disagreement between followers of Zwingli and Luther to be impeding further Reformational progress. Calvin sought, therefore, a position for which all parties could agree, thus resulting in unity. His *On the Necessity of Reforming the Church*, *The Defense of the Sound and Orthodox Doctrine of the Sacraments*, *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, and others are premier examples of his efforts to unite Protestantism. According to Gordon, while the "ageing [sic] and increasingly cantankerous Luther" prevented any unity on this doctrine, Calvin persisted in his efforts, and even said of Luther, "Often have I declared that even if he were to call me a devil, I should still nonetheless hold him in such honour that I would acknowledge him as an illustrious servant of God" (p. 168). Although theological unity would have many benefits, one dear to Calvin's heart was the protection of his believing native Frenchmen. As a result, Gordon recognizes Calvin's "two cherished, and related, goals: reconciliation with the Lutherans and the united support of the Protestant churches for their persecuted co-religionists in France" (p. 208). As one of the highlights of this biography, Gordon chronicles Calvin's writings, debates, and extensive travels to the cause of unity, an area which often goes unmentioned in other works on Calvin.

A weakness of Gordon's biography is that some of his conclusions on Calvin seem to be untenable. For example, to claim "Calvin could not . . . abide Bucer's irritating habit of alternating effusive praise with criticism" ignores the fact that Calvin did just this in his debate with Sadoletto (p. 89). It appears that Gordon is inconsistent in concluding that Calvin gave "no suggestion that he was wrong" in his heated debate with Bucer and Sturm; yet, in regard to this matter, the author previously quotes the Reformer as saying, "I sinned grievously" (pp. 90–91). Furthermore, in his discussion of Louis du Tillet, Gordon states that Calvin left Geneva for "some unknown reason" but in the next sentence surmises that the behavior of Calvin "had evidently persuaded him that

the Reformation was a serious mistake" (p. 93). Among other suspect conclusions by the author is his claim that Calvin himself took the initiative to identify Servetus as Michel de Villeneuve, whereas contrary evidence suggests that it was Guillaume de Trie who, through correspondences with relatives in Lyon, identified Servetus as the personal physician to the Archbishop of Vienne. Also, Gordon's definition of Arianism as "an ancient heresy that Jesus Christ as the Son of God was not equal with, but subordinate to, the Father" misses the heresy's most significant belief that Jesus was a created being (p. 73). While Gordon's biography contains a depth of information, readers may wish that the author provided more attention to Calvin's family (father, siblings, and step-children) and a more in-depth theological discussion of the final edition of the *Institutes*. In a work of this magnitude, it would also have been helpful to include a chronology of Calvin's life. The Select Bibliography is a very helpful addition for further research, although the Index omits such references as "Libertines."

Despite its few shortcomings, this book's attention to the events of Calvin's life, his intellectual development, his close associations (particularly Farel, Viret, and Bucer), the culture of the time, the role of France (and the French in Geneva), the inter-workings of Genevan society, and Calvin's impact on the broader European Reformation are expounded with excellence. Also, Gordon's command of primary sources is impressive. Additionally, no attempt is made to whitewash the faults of Calvin, which is helpful in understanding historical situations such as Calvin's expulsion from Geneva in 1538 and the discussion of his temperament. Although *John Calvin* lacks the readability of works such as Herman Selderhuis's *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), it certainly stands as one of the best academic treatments of Calvin's life. Accordingly, this book is required reading for every serious student of Calvin.

Jonathan Moorhead

The Master's Academy International, Samara, Russia

The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway to the Theological Interpretation of Scripture. By J. Todd Billings. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, 235 pp., \$18.00 paper.

J. Todd Billings, who teaches at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI, wants "to introduce readers to the practice of interpreting Scripture in the context of the triune activity of God, the God who uses Scripture to reshape the church into Christ's image by the Spirit's power" (p. xiii). I was gratified to run across this phrase or something like it—that describes the Word of God as an instrument of the Spirit to change lives—over and over again in this work, not something one sees very often in the hermeneutical literature of Christendom. That language is an instrument of the user, employed to achieve something, is well accepted in the circles of language philosophy: authors are *doing* something with what they are *saying*—the domain of the field of pragmatics. In other words, there is more to textual interpretation than simply the analysis of the semantics of the text; one must also attend to the pragmatics of the text. This is especially important for interpretation of the inspired text of Scripture that is intended to culminate in preaching for life change, for unless the homiletician asks, "What is the A/author doing with what is being said?" valid application that is authoritative will never be within reach. Here is Billings again: "For Christians, the Bible is the written word of God, the Spirit's instrument for transforming God's people into Christ's image" (p. 36).

Chapter 1 of *The Word of God for the People of God* addresses what a theological hermeneutic is; chapters 2 and 3 develop a "Trinitarian-shaped" hermeneutic; chapter 4 deals with contextual interpretation of Scripture; chapter 5 mines the utility of a pre-modern exegesis; and chapter 6 provides a synthesis of the book. In all, Billings has sought to integrate "theory and practice, biblical studies and theology, and critical methods and the practices of prayer and worship" (p. xvii). I think he has succeeded well.

A theological hermeneutic recognizes the sovereign hand of God in the reception of his word, as Mark 4:26–29 teaches. Nevertheless, how the reader approaches Scripture is critical to its understanding; that human element is also underscored in Mark 4:23. With echoes of Kevin Vanhoozer, Billings appropriates the metaphor of drama to describe this human element: "When we read Scripture . . . , we enter into what some authors have called a 'drama.' . . . As ones who are in Christ and empowered by the Spirit, we become participants in God's drama and performers of the script of Scripture." I particularly appreciated Billings's suggestion that with, in, and through Scripture, a "new world" is portrayed, though the mixing of metaphors tends to obscure what exactly this *drama* and *world* are, not to mention the rather nebulous "*journey* on the path of Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit" (p. 8; italics added). The picture of a journey is, nevertheless, valuable, particularly for us preachers: we seek to enable our listeners to have sermon encounters with Scripture—a weekly journey of moving towards Christlikeness, in the power of the Spirit.

I was puzzled, though, with Billings's statements such as this one: "The path itself is Jesus Christ: it is in and through Jesus Christ that we interpret all of Scripture" (p. 10). No doubt, Jesus is the way, but how hermeneutics operates "in and through Jesus Christ" needs more explication. Is it simply a stratagem that forces the interpreter to see Jesus Christ in every text, or at least preach him in every sermon? Because, as Billings asserts, the NT authors interpret the OT in the light of Jesus Christ; indeed, "[i]n a sense, the whole of the Old Testament becomes a book of prophecy to New Testament writers" (p. 19). Such an understanding renders the entire scheme of biblical history as merely "promise-fulfillment." To me, at least, that is an inadequate hermeneutic. A more nuanced take would be one that Billings himself refers to, but only tangentially: "I am suggesting that what is central is that we find salvation in Jesus Christ, and that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk the transforming road of life in Christ" (p. 24). Exactly! All of Scripture points to Jesus Christ, that is, it portrays what Christlikeness is. And in the fulfillment of the demands of God in practical sanctification, one approaches that Christlikeness.

How is the interpreter to think of the Bible as God's revelatory *instrument*? According to Billings, while general hermeneutics deals with the interpretation of any text, special hermeneutics deals with the interpretation of *this* text, the Bible, for it is not just any other text. "Apart from a special hermeneutic that sees the biblical canon as God's word fulfilled in Christ, there is no reason to think that the collection of writings in the Bible are truly one book—a book with diversity, but also unity, in its witness to God in Christ" (pp. 32–33). Such a consideration of special hermeneutics does not, however, preclude the employment of general hermeneutics in the interpretation of Scripture, for "God does not speak his word through Scripture in a way that bypasses human creatures, but in a way that works in and through them, In other words, on one level the Bible is a human-produced book like other human-produced books" (p. 33). Therefore, Billings exhorts Christians to encounter the text by "understanding" and "explanation" (p. 44), by which I suppose he means that the reader is to privilege the text in the interpretive endeavor. Privileging the text is key, for the peril in following the critical methodology of general hermeneutics is that one might "fixate on *behind-the-text* issues such as the date of the text's origin and the circumstances that gave rise to it,

as well as issues and problems related to manuscripts, redaction history, the original audience, and so forth" (p. 59; italics added). A related danger is the exclusive focus upon the *events* behind the text. All of this makes the text merely a window *through* which one looks; instead the text is a picture *at* which one gazes. "In the course of these explorations [behind the text], they lose the subject matter of the text itself" (pp. 59–60). Indeed! But what exactly this "subject matter" is, or how one apprehends it from a given pericope, is not detailed, outside of the repeated (and less than clear) exhortation that the interpreter be motivated by "a conviction that all scriptural interpretation is done on the path of Jesus Christ and leads to conformity to Christ by the Spirit" (p. 62).

Billings warns us that often Scripture is read as a series of messages from God "about how to succeed, how to make good decisions, how to have a happy future, and so forth. The error of this approach is not that it sees the Christian faith as having practical outcomes; that is true of a living faith. The problem is that it sees Scripture's witness to God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit as incidental to these outcomes rather than central to how we are changed and who we are called to be. This pragmatic form of Christianity . . . fails to recognize that all true Christian transformation takes place through the power of God, in Jesus Christ, enabled by the Holy Spirit" (p. 87). Guilty as charged—we preachers stand corrected! Instead, Billings promotes a "Trinitarian theology of revelation," "one in which the knowledge of God arises from the initiative of the Spirit, who opens our eyes through Scripture to Jesus Christ, the Word of the Father" (pp. 102–3). Sadly, details are scant and methods lacking; I would appreciate some guidelines for undertaking this "Trinitarian hermeneutic" each Sunday in my preaching.

The author is all for a return to "premodern" biblical interpretation: "a 'spiritual' reading of Scripture—reading an Old Testament text in light of Jesus Christ" (p. 153). Thus, for Billings, premodern exegesis is ultimately about a Christological reading: "The history of God's historical action narrated in the Old Testament takes on meaning that would have been inaccessible to the human writers. What was thought to be history apart from Christ is shown to be what it really is, a 'shadow' waiting fulfillment in Christ" (p. 157). Billings, here, cites Luke 24:44–45; thus, what he seems to be proposing is that the redemptive trajectory of Scripture be imposed on the canon. There is nothing wrong with doing that to obtain a big picture of God's work across time, and across the breadth of the canon. The problem is when it descends to the level of the pericope employed in the weekly sermon to God's people—those who are already saved and seeking to advance in the journey of sanctification. How does one make each pericope of Scripture applicable to these children of God week after week? What does one do with those biblical texts not directly related to the *Heilsgeschichte*? Do we need to turn to Jesus Christ and his atoning work every week, from every text? Billings seems to think so: "there is a sense in which the whole Old Testament—including its varied genres of law, poetry, and historical narrative—becomes a book of prophecy about Christ. . . . the entirety of the Old Testament comes to be applied to the person of Christ" (p. 165). I disagree that *every* text is prophetic about Christ. Forcing those texts to be talking about Christ, rather than about how to be Christlike, is to virtually negate the specificity of those texts in favor of broad theological generalities.

All that being said, I heartily assent to Billings's observation that "[f]or premodern exegetes, discerning the meaning of difficult texts requires more than a good lexicon and a 'Bible-background' commentary. It requires a life of prayer and worship before a holy and mysterious God" (p. 182), for "approaching Scripture with prayerful meditation is not so much an exegetical method as a disposition appropriate to Scripture because Scripture is the instrument of God's communicative fellowship" (p. 216). May there be more of that premodern ilk today!

One gets the feeling in all of this discussion that preaching, for Billings, is merely a rehearsal of history: "Preaching is not the proclamation of a human effort to find God but the proclamation of the revelatory history that we access through Scripture. Preaching proclaims the great drama of creation, fall, and redemption" (p. 218). Thus he is solidly against preaching on solitary texts: "Preaching on atomized, individualized texts does not necessarily lead the hearers to focus on the gospel of Christ and the Spirit's transforming work. In a word, such an approach does not make disciples. . . . Preaching on atomized texts rather than the canon is not preaching the gospel of Christ" (p. 218–19). If "atomized" means preaching pericope by pericope, I could not disagree more. The alternative—preaching the entire canon every week—yields the same sermon each time. Instead, the specificity of individual texts must be respected, rather than using each pericope as a springboard to dive into the vast pool of the canon.

Overall, *The Word of God for the People of God* is a masterful work, worthy of a slow digest, for those interested in hermeneutics and especially for those involved in the communication of the biblical text for life change. It will make you think!

Abraham Kuruvilla
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to "Holy Land" Theology. By Gary M. Burge. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010, xiv + 153 pp., \$21.99 paper.

Gary M. Burge (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen) is professor of New Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School and has written a number of books and articles dealing with Jesus and the world of the Middle East, including *Whose Land? Whose Promise? What Christians Are Not Being Told About Israel and the Palestinians*, *The Bible and the Land*, and *Jesus the Middle Eastern Storyteller*. This latest offering continues his work in this field.

In the introduction to *Jesus and the Land*, Burge discusses the important role of land and a place to call home, focusing especially on Israel. God gave Israel land as a gift, and these same geographical boundaries continue to play an ongoing role in current religious and socio-political events. Burge asks how Christians should understand competing land claims, the relationship between land and theology in the NT, and what Jesus and the NT writers thought about territorial claims in the OT, as well as their view(s) of sacred spaces such as Jerusalem and the Temple. These questions are indeed difficult, but they are further complicated by the connection of land to a multitude of other biblical-theological ideas (such as covenant), so that when one category is examined, others are affected. In the following chapters, Burge sets out to answer these important questions concerning the "holy," or "promised," land.

While each chapter in *Jesus and the Land* has its own argument, and the chapters progressively move through the OT (chap. 1), Diaspora Judaism (chap. 2), and the NT (chaps. 3–7), they are also part of a single larger argument. Therefore, while space does not permit a detailed treatment of each chapter, it is important to summarize the main argument(s) of each chapter as a contribution to the whole.

In the first chapter, "The Biblical Heritage," Burge begins by examining the OT promise of land. While all land is created and given by God, particular importance is given to the "promised land." The promise of land is first given to Abraham (Gen 13:14–17; 15:18–21), which is then repeated to his sons Isaac (Gen 26:2–4) and Jacob (Gen 28:13–15). The land is a "by-product of the covenant, a gift of the covenant. It is

not a possession that can be held independently" (p. 4). An important fact is that God owns the land, not Israel, and they must obey him. But as the storyline unfolds, Israel loses the land through their disobedience and is sent into exile. This loss, however, is not the last word. Prophets such as Ezekiel offer hope, for the renewal of Israel will be paralleled by the renewal of the land. Furthermore, the alien will gain an inheritance alongside Israel and the land will be shared in a way not imagined before. After the exile Ezra and Nehemiah recount Israel's enjoyment of a new beginning, a "second exodus," that presents a new opportunity to live in the land. But this fresh start also presents new threats that will come with the rise of Hellenism. Hence, Diaspora Judaism in the Hellenistic era, though certainly not uniform, raises new questions that only intensify their commitment to the land in the face of cultural threat.

In chapter two, "Diaspora Judaism and the Land," Burge argues that both Christian and Jewish identification with the land were in a formative stage in the first century and experienced considerable redefinition. The dispersal of Jewish life into non-Jewish cities in the Roman Empire raised questions about the integrity of Jewish identity. How would Jewish life and identity remain intact outside of the land? Burge's answer is Israel's commitment to their identity markers (e.g. Sabbath, dietary laws, circumcision, the Temple). In other words, they were ceremonially committed to the land while separated from it. The result was a redefinition of the land, such that for many the reality of life in the land took on eschatological tones. For others such as Philo and Josephus, the land was allegorized or completely neglected. This entire redefinition of land, Burge argues, will deeply influence the formation of Christian thinking in the NT.

In chapters 3–7, Burge moves the reader through the NT corpus and advances his thesis that the NT reinterprets the promise of land. In chapter 3, "Jesus and the Land," Burge argues that Jesus is the "great re-arranger" of the land (pp. 35, 41). For example, Matt 5:5 is laden with language from the OT concerning the land of promise. Whereas the geographical land had a concrete application for most Jews, Jesus and his followers reinterpret the promises that come to those in his kingdom. Hence, the reward is no longer tied to a geographical plot in the Middle East; rather, it is tied to heaven. Likewise, in Luke 12:13–21, Jesus' kingdom will be anchored to heaven and therefore will not be a kingdom that values struggle and conflict. Jewish identity, therefore, that struggles solely to hold onto the land may miss their more important place with God.

In chapter 4, "The Fourth Gospel and the Land," land is subsumed within John's theology of Christological replacement/fulfillment. Jesus himself replaces Jacob in the story of Gen 28:16–17, and as a result Jesus is now the house of God and the recipient of the land. Jesus replaces the Temple so that divine space is no longer located in a place but in a person. And in what Burge calls "the most profound theological relocation of Israel's holy space," John 15 teaches that what Judaism sought from the land is now spiritualized and relocated to Christ. Now, Jesus is the sole source of life and hope and future.

Chapter 5, "The Book of Acts and the Land," argues that the early Christians possessed no territorial theology. Rather, Christians find *in Christ* what Judaism sought in the land. The land of promise is the source of Christianity's legacy but no longer its goal, and the outgrowth of Christianity moves away from the center, Jerusalem, while remembering from where it came. For example, Luke highlights Stephen, Paul, and the importance of the ethnically diverse church in Syrian Antioch to argue that the early church possessed no territorial theology. Rather, the church looked to Christ and his claim on the entire world in its centrifugal, not centripetal, mission.

In chapter 6, "Paul and the Promises to Abraham," Burge argues that Paul's Gentile mission emphasized a connection to Christ by faith rather than a connection to a particular ethnicity or geographical place (e.g. the Jerusalem Temple). Just as Paul

universalized faith in Christ in order to include all people, so also he universalized the promises of Abraham to include all lands (see, e.g., Gen 12:3; Galatians 3–4; Rom 4:13–15) (92). This international scope of blessing progresses across the storyline of Scripture from Adam, to Abraham and his descendants, and ultimately to Christ and the church. Thus, the land in Israel's life was a temporary place that pointed toward someplace greater, which has now come to the whole world through Christ. This shift in focus, however, does not deny the vital role for Israel in salvation history (contra supersessionism), for Paul speaks clearly of a day when Jews will discover their Messiah by faith. But there was no room for the holy land, for "[t]he lens of the incarnation had now refocused things completely. Christian theology had no room for "holy places" outside of the Holy One who is Christ" (p. 94).

In chapter 7, "Developments Beyond Paul," Burge continues his argument that the NT consistently demonstrates neglect for concerns over the land. In Hebrews 11, the land is a foretaste of a more profound dwelling with God. And like Moses, Jesus leads his people to a new and heavenly land, a better country (Heb 11:16). In Revelation, hope is found by looking forward to the time when the new Jerusalem descends to earth and succeeds where the former Jerusalem failed. Indeed, God will dwell with his people in a better country. As a result, Burge likens current religious territorialism to children squabbling over the desserts as the *Titanic* approaches its destiny. God will fulfill his sovereign purposes for the entire world, not merely the promised land.

In the concluding chapter, "Land, Theology, and the Church," Burge describes how territorial theology, which is supported both by Jewish and Christian Zionists, is "out of step" with what the NT teaches (p. 114). Christian Zionism, he argues, progresses in four biblical-theological territorial stages: (1) promise; (2) inheritance; (3) loss and reclamation; and (4) eschatology, which is driven by a "novel" use of the OT (pp. 117–123). Burge then identifies problems with territorial theology, such as the failure to connect the land promise with covenant faithfulness, the diversity of the prophetic message in the OT, the "naïve" application of historic texts to modern Israel, and, most importantly, the NT perspective of land.

So how should Christians think about the land? Burge argues that Christians should not apply the promise of land to themselves, look to the OT to validate their territorial claims, or dismiss the land altogether. Instead, they should look to the incarnate Christ in order to see their place with God. This relocation, however, is not a spiritualization of the land. Rather, the NT relocates the properties of the Holy Land to Christ, who is the new locale where God may be met. Furthermore, because the church is the body of Christ, it is the secondary place given to God's people to do what Christ has done in the world. In this sense, then, the church is appointed to bring the presence of God to the nations, a task which formerly belonged to the land and Temple.

There is much to commend in *Jesus and the Land*. Burge should be applauded for approaching the text as canonical Scripture and exploring a theme through its unity and diversity. Furthermore, throughout his exploration the theme of land is helpfully connected to other theological themes such as covenant, covenant fidelity, and seed. Finally, it is refreshing to see the primary focus of this controversial topic on Scripture rather than current events. With a topic that is often examined through the lens of today's news, Burge navigates through a highly charged area with clarity and deft interpretive insights.

While there is much to appreciate in this book, there are also some significant weaknesses. The first weakness relates to the ambitious scope of *Jesus and the Land*. Burge has attempted, in just over 130 pages, to cover a controversial topic that spans the entire canon and has received a great deal of attention in pulpits and in writing. Some of his exegetical arguments, therefore, are speculative and lack support (e.g. his

treatment of Matt 25:14–30 and Luke 12:13–21). Burge's work would also be helped by giving a summary of and/or interacting with various hermeneutical approaches and theological systems (e.g. various forms of dispensationalism and covenant theology; the NT use of the OT), because they play a significant role in developing a theology of land. The brevity of this work, therefore, leaves something to be desired.

Second, some will discard his NT conclusions because they lack sufficient OT warrant. Conversely, those who agree with his conclusions will likely wish he had spent more time examining how the OT develops the theme of land within itself before jumping to intertestamental literature and the NT. Many will not likely agree with his treatment of the OT (less than eleven pages!), because this is where the OT promises to Israel are given and developed. This lack of exegetical support can be seen in his treatment of Rom 4:13. The promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world finds more support than in Gen 12:3. For example, Gen 26:3–4 has the unique plural "lands" and, when read in conjunction with Gen 22:17–18, makes the connection to Abraham's seed who will possess/inherit the gate of his enemies. Thus, Paul is not spiritualizing texts when he claims that Abraham and his offspring would be heir of the world. In other words, Paul is putting together the parts of the covenant and, as a result, sees Abraham inheriting the world as people, both Jew and Gentile, come to faith in Jesus Christ. This idea is further developed across the OT with the formation of Israel, possession of the land under Joshua, and highlight of Israel's life under David and Solomon (not to mention the theme of rest). Therefore, while the Promised Land was a specific, regional territory, there are sufficient reasons from the OT to conclude that it anticipated something more, which is described with Edenic terms and imagery.

Finally, Burge does not give sufficient attention to eschatology and the biblical motif of the new creation. When popular eschatology is often speculative, sensational, and divorced from good biblical theology, there is a need to discuss the eschatological hope that will come at the end of the age, when the present creation will give way to a (re)new(ed) creation. The theme of land, then, fits nicely into the wider scope of biblical theology and eschatology. More specifically, the land promised to Abraham, which was inhabited and lost throughout Israel's history, is important because it picks up the place of God's people that was lost in Eden, thus serving as a subsequent place in God's unfolding plan. Furthermore, this place anticipates and prepares the way for the coming of Jesus Christ, in whom all of the blessings of the land are found as a result of inaugurating a new era of salvation history. And finally, those united to Christ by faith in this era of salvation history await their final place with God, the new creation, to which the land of promise pointed.

With these weaknesses aside, Burge has provides a helpful resource in understanding how the NT challenges "Holy Land" theology. No one, of course, will agree with all of Burge's conclusions. Still, we can be grateful for a work that takes Scripture on its own terms, puts forth a cohesive message, and applies it to today's world.

Oren R. Martin

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to "Holy Land" Theology. By Gary M. Burge. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010, xiv + 153 pp., \$21.99 paper.

Gary Burge is professor of New Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School. He has been best known for his work on the Fourth Gospel (most notably, *Interpreting*

the Gospel of John [Guides to New Testament Exegesis; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992]; *John* [NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000]; and *John: The Gospel of Life* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008]). For some, though, what is not as well known is that, going all the way back to undergraduate study at the American University in Beirut in the early 1970s, Burge has had a deep passion for the Middle East and the people there, especially those in the Palestinian churches. The present volume plows similar ground to his earlier books on this subject: *Who Are God's People in the Middle East?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993); and *Whose Land? Whose Promise? What Christians are Not Being Told about Israel and the Palestinians* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2003). More on this later in the review.

Several things attracted me to writing this review. First, my own background in relation to the Middle East goes back almost as far as Burge's. My first trip there was during seminary, in 1974. In the process, I was shaken by shelling nearby while in the airport in Beirut. Second, parallel to Burge's experience (see p. 112), I too have eaten lunch at Jerusalem University College, talking with pastors and teachers from across the United States. Third, in our earlier publishing careers, Burge and I often contributed to the same projects (e.g. *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible, Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments, and Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues*). Fourth, a book to which I contributed a chapter (entitled "Israel and the Nations in God's Redemptive Plan" in *Israel, the Land and the People: An Evangelical Affirmation of God's Promises* [ed. H. Wayne House; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998] 283–97) is included in Burge's annotated "Further reading" section (pp. 141–43). More about this also later in the review.

Jesus and the Land contains an introduction and eight concise chapters, followed by endnotes (pp. 132–40), two listings for "Further reading" (pp. 141–45), the latter of which is focused on "The Israel-Palestine Conflict" (pp. 143–45). The last feature of the book is an "Index of biblical and ancient sources" used in the book (pp. 147–53).

In his introduction (pp. ix–xiv), Burge helpfully illustrates how widespread is the emotional tie among humanity to land, setting up the fact that both Jews and those of Arab extraction live in the land that is known geographically as Palestine. He closes by stating that he prefers "the inclusive term, Israel-Palestine" to "Promised Land" or "Holy Land." The rest of the book explains that choice.

Chapter 1, "The Biblical Heritage" (pp. 1–14), is a sketchy overview of the OT view of land, the promise to Abraham, and what happened to the Jews long-term, due to their disobedience to the Lord. From the section "After the Exile" to the end of the chapter (pp. 9–14), Burge primarily discusses the Jewish rabbinical writings rather than Scripture, but it is not clear at this juncture where he is going with that methodology.

In chapter 2, "Diaspora Judaism and the Land" (pp. 15–24), Burge cites nothing but extrabiblical Jewish writings, notably Philo and Josephus, who muted or spiritualized the land promises to Israel. Where Burge is moving in his argument becomes clearer with this statement: "Here we see that Judaism's 'Land Theology' has been entirely redefined" (p. 24).

Since it is also the title of the whole book, I was initially confused that chapter 3 is titled "Jesus and the Land" (pp. 25–42). Yet, as I read on in the book, I began to "get it." In chapter 3, Burge concludes that Jesus "expresses no overt affirmation of first-century territorial theologies. He does not repeat Judaism's call to land ownership" (p. 40; italics his).

Burge clarifies the title to chapter 3 in chapter 4, "The Fourth Gospel and the Land" (pp. 43–57). Here, Burge's long familiarity with the Johannine Literature is on display. The overall point of his discussion here is: "In the Fourth Gospel, the land is subsumed within John's theology of Christological replacement/fulfillment" (p. 57). In other words,

in Burge's view, the Gospel of John teaches that Jesus *replaces* the Temple, the feasts, and any perceived claim the Jews had to the land of Israel.

Frankly, chapter 5, "The Book of Acts and the Land" (pp. 58–72), chapter 6, "Paul and the promises to Abraham" (pp. 73–94), and chapter 7, "Developments beyond Paul" (pp. 95–109) do little to add to Burge's earlier argument—they just "Amen!" it. Simply put, Burge asserts that, since these books, making up the majority of the NT, do not lay out an obvious spotlighted "territorial theology," they must not have one.

Chapter 8, "Land, Theology, and the Church" (pp. 110–31), is hardly a typical concluding chapter. It is as long as any chapter in the book. Undoubtedly, the reason for that is, besides briefly summarizing his conclusions in "Thinking Christianly about the land" (pp. 125–31), Burge invests considerable space in describing and critiquing "Christian Zionism," especially its distinctive "territorial theology" and other troubling features (pp. 112–25).

The perceived strengths of *Jesus and the Land* are several. First, it is well written and highly readable. Second, it makes a powerful cumulative case. Third, it does so in brief compass, which means that the reader is unlikely to "not see the forest for the trees." Fourth, Burge's expertise in both the relevant ancient Jewish sources and the Fourth Gospel are impressive. Fifth, the annotated bibliography is quite helpful, even if not balanced. Sixth, to a significant degree, Burge's description and assessment of "Christian Zionism" is largely on target, even if not specific enough at certain points. Seventh, Burge's view that Jesus replaces the land promise, though the Jews still have a salvific future in God's plan (see his discussion of Romans 9–11 on pp. 87–91), offers a creative *via media* between classic covenantal "replacement theology" (i.e. the church replaces Israel in all aspects) and classic dispensationalism's insistence on the ongoing unconditional land aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Yet, *Jesus and the Land* is not without serious weaknesses. First—and possibly in an attempt to keep the book shorter—Burge employs a frustrating tendency to engage in "front-end-load" exegesis. What I mean by that is he spends more time, and gives more biblical examples, in his discussion of passages in the Gospels, only to repeatedly read earlier conclusions onto his later passages in a "we've seen this before" wave of the hand. Second—and parallel to the first concern—is what amounts to the widespread use of argument from silence. Burge effectively alleges that, because there is not a ringing obvious re-statement of the OT land promises in the NT, they must have been "replaced." However, he offers no satisfying answer to the "forever" wording of the Abrahamic promises, as what Walter Kaiser championed as "antecedent (i.e. existing, and assumed by later writers, biblical) theology." Third, Burge ignores (i.e. absent from his index of scriptural usage), or inadequately treats, numerous relevant biblical passages, the most glaring of which are: (1) Genesis 17, 25 (dealing with the Arab peoples descended from Abraham); (2) Deuteronomy 28–30; (3) Ezekiel 36–37; (4) several passages in Daniel, particularly the phrase "abomination of desolation" said to be "standing in the holy place" (i.e. most naturally understood as "in the Temple") in (5) Matt 24:15, just before the wording (6) "those in Judea" (Matt 24:16) and "at that time there will be great tribulation, the kind that hasn't taken place from the beginning of the world" (Matt 24:21), plus (7) the references to "the beautiful land" (Dan 11:41) and (8) "the beautiful holy mountain" just prior to the "great tribulation" (Dan 12:1) and resurrection at the end of the age (Dan 12:2; see 11:40); (9) Rev 11:8 ("where also their Lord was crucified" [i.e. Jerusalem]); and (10) "the *place* called in Hebrew, Armageddon" (Rev 16:16; italics mine). Fourth, at several points, Burge's citation of Jewish writers, like Philo or Josephus, or rabbinical sources, leaves the impression that they not only reflect the thought of some prominent Jews of the day about "the land," especially in regard to accommodating the Diaspora and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, but

that they were *correct*. However, why does that make any more sense than to conclude that Catholic theologians of the medieval era, who developed the Catholic sacramental and scholastic theological systems, were right because they went almost unchallenged until Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, or that postmillennialism is correct because it was the prevailing eschatological view of earlier great periods of revival? Fifth, Burge—purposely or not—implies that any who defend the “forever” land promises to Israel are at least borderline “Christian Zionists.”

Relatedly, Burge’s annotation in regard to *Israel: The Land and the People*, mentioned above, surprised me. While Burge is correct that “the land promises for modern Israel [are] often used by Christian Zionists to buttress modern political theologies” (p. 142), that wording leaves open highly misleading implications. Using myself as an example, though I do see biblical significance in the modern state of Israel, I am far from a Christian Zionist. Like Burge, I believe Israel should be held responsible for the wrongness and brutality of some of their actions (though the Palestinians, particularly the terrorists among them, should also). Also, because of the secondary conditionality (i.e. the aspect of obedience) seen in the development of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 22:16–18; 26:4–5), as well as several other relevant OT passages, I conclude that Israel could easily be removed from the land again by God (then later restored and kicked out again), as they have been twice before in history, because of their ongoing disobedience and unbelief.

Before closing, though neither a strength nor weakness, it is worth asking, “Why would someone write *three* books on a topic as specialized as this?” After all, it is not like Burge is writing contribution after contribution on John for different series. My sense is that, as noted at the beginning of this review, this issue truly is a passion for Gary Burge, even much more than an academic subject. If that is correct, *Jesus and the Land* should perhaps be read more as an impassioned plea by a scholar than as scholarly argumentation.

In conclusion, despite the problems discussed above, this is a significant volume, the best I have seen of the general anti-Christian Zionist perspective currently available. I would recommend it, but with a caveat: *Expect a compact, attractively-packaged, impassioned presentation of Burge’s “Jesus replaces the land promises to Israel” theology, but not a measured objective treatment*. In saying that, however, I am concerned as to whether many students or laypersons who have not carefully studied the biblical covenants and had an extensive exegetical exposure to broader biblical prophecy will have the discernment to track Burge’s hermeneutical/expositional sleight-of-hand (“now you see it, now you do not”) and selectivity in regard to what scriptural passages he chose to treat (or omit).

A. Boyd Luter

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA
Comal Country Church, Canyon Lake, TX