

BOOK REVIEWS

The Land of Canaan and the Destiny of Israel: Theologies of Territory in the Hebrew Bible. Siphrut 4: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures. By David Frankel. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011, 400 pp., \$49.50.

David Frankel's *Land of Canaan and the Destiny of Israel* speaks to the topic of the place of "the land of Canaan in the biblical conception of Israel" (p. vii) and the perception that "religion promoted by the Hebrew Bible requires that Israel live in communal life in the national homeland" (p. vii). Frankel addresses questions such as whether Israel's religious destiny is irrevocably linked to the land; whether the land can be shared with other people who might take part in Israel's religious destiny or is the land exclusively for Israel (p. vii); how the land compares in importance with "other elements presented as belonging to Israel's ultimate destiny" (p. vii); and to what extent the Lord of Israel can be worshiped outside the land" (p. vii).

Through the application of historical criticism and rabbinic methodology, the author reconstructs the process of the literary growth of the texts in question, uncovering original forms and final transformations so as to compare the "theologies" of territory found in biblical literature. Frankel draws the conclusion that there are divergent and opposing voices that make it "difficult to speak simplistically about *the* biblical conception of territory as if the Hebrew Bible speaks in one voice" (p. vii).

In chapter 1, Frankel notes that Israel's relationship to the land is central to "the overall structure of the narrative of the Hebrew Bible" (p. 1). At first, he points out that some texts indicate that the land is not only prominent in the Hebrew Bible, but central, even essential, to Israel and to the proper practice of Israel's covenant relationship with God (pp. 2–17). However, as he continues, he notes that certain biblical texts qualify or marginalize the land's significance in Israel's national life (pp. 17–41), this being due to "secondary editorializing and reshaping" in order to emphasize "the indispensable character of national life on the land," while other texts were later reworked to narrow intentionally the estimation of the place of the land (pp. 42–63). He concludes that whereas national life on the land reflects the ideal for Israel's religious existence, in the exile a new mode of existence took shape whereby Israel's relationship with God is fractured and incomplete. In Frankel's view, the land is "a necessary though insufficient component of Israel's ideal mode of religious existence" (p. 71). "Biblical literature," he concludes, "exhibits a somewhat ambivalent and dialectical attitude toward the degree of significance according to Israel's life on the land" (p. 71).

Chapter 2 examines the question of whether Israel's identity and allegiance are territorially or theologically oriented (p. 77). This chapter deals with historiography—how the past was represented. Frankel inquires into the Deuteronomic conception of the founding of Israel (pp. 78–96). He also looks to establish that there were many foundation traditions circulating in ancient Israel such as the one found in Joshua 24. He suggests Joshua 24 is an early and independent tradition of the founding of Israel that is in harmony with the tradition found in Judges 2 (pp. 97–111). Frankel then contrasts Joshua 24 and Exodus 19–24, suggesting they both offer alternative (not competing) foundation traditions (pp. 111–33). The chapter concludes with a discussion of how political and theological factors led to the Sinai covenant (Exodus 20) being preserved as the legitimate tradition regarding the founding of Israel while the alternative tradition in the Shechem covenant (Joshua 24) came to near extinction (pp. 133–36).

Chapter 3 explores Yahweh worship and raises the issue of whether or not Yahweh can be accessed outside the land or exclusively in the land. Frankel discusses the perceived territorial confines of worship in a variety of Pentateuchal and historical texts that led to the belief in pre-exilic times that worshipping the Lord outside his land was impossible until this belief was abandoned during the exile, as seen in prophetic literature (pp. 137–44). Frankel also discusses the matter of universalism and particularism in conjunction with territory (chosen people and chosen land). He examines the question of whether Yahweh was a territorially-bound national God or one who was to be worshiped anywhere and by anyone (pp. 148–55). He points out that various non-prophetic texts suggest that “the land of Israel is the territorial setting for the worship of the Lord of the people of Israel,” while “other lands can provide the territorial setting for the worship of the Lord for other people” (p. 177). Other texts accommodate Israelite cultic worship on foreign soil (Joshua 22) while still other texts suggest the Lord can be worshiped inside the land by non-Israelites (2 Kings 17). He concludes that the Bible “attests to the ongoing deliberations and disagreements concerning the relative importance of the categories of people and land” (p. 217).

In chapter 4, Frankel returns to the theme of land in the patriarchal era. He notes that there was a unique relationship between Isaac and the land (pp. 218–29). Frankel identifies three biblical approaches to the matter of the relationship of the patriarchs to the land. Genesis 36:6–8 and 45:27–46:6 reflect the earliest stages of patriarchal tradition in which emigration was unproblematic (pp. 229–56). Genesis 24:5–8 and 26:1–6 reflect a later stage of the patriarchal tradition, expressing the opposite view that emigration from the land was illegitimate (pp. 256–62). Frankel contends that a third view and more moderate approach was inserted by later editors into the Genesis 26 narrative (cf. Gen 10:19; 13:14–17) that reverses the “problematic implications of the original story” (p. 264) to

show that while there was a degree of uneasiness with any excursion from the land of promise, it was not illegitimate. This idea was strengthened by making other lands “an integral part of the land of promise” (p. 262).

In chapter 5, Frankel argues that the book of Genesis “reflects an outlook of religious and social tolerance toward the inhabitants of the land,” distinguishing Genesis from other Pentateuchal books (p. 268). He argues that Genesis supports coexistence and assimilation between Israel and local inhabitants more than most interpreters think. Conquest laws in other Pentateuchal books reject covenantal alliances with local inhabitants and depict a non-Israelite presence in the land as dangerous (pp. 268–76). This contrasts with the religion of the Patriarchs and how there is a remarkable degree of harmonization rather than exclusiveness as might be expected (pp. 277–301). Frankel critiques several scholars’ attempts to harmonize Genesis and the conquest laws, suggesting that the patriarchal promises are inclusive and religiously open in character, showing a posture of pluralism, tolerance, and universalism toward Canaanite religion (pp. 301–37).

In chapter 6, Frankel discusses the exclusion of Ishmael in both priestly and non-priestly sources and in the priestly covenant Yahweh made with Abraham, suggesting this exclusion reflects the later literary growth of the Genesis text. The original form of the priestly covenant with Abraham indicates that Ishmael and other non-Israelite groups as well belonged to the covenant made with Abraham (pp. 338–81).

In his Epilogue, Frankel proposes a contemporary theological and political paradigm for modern Israel as it seeks to live in the land surrounded by diverse ethnic populations and multiple religions (pp. 382–400). Israel, he argues, must not be isolated from the nations but should serve the nations as “a spiritual pull, attracting the nations.” The “nations whose complete independence is fully respected come of their own free will to Zion to learn the ways of God” (pp. 398–99).

Until recently, discussion regarding the land in theological conception dealt with it either as a saving act of Yahweh (Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* [OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, repr. 2001] 1:296–305) or in association with a specific lifestyle showing an interdependence between moral behavior and land occupancy (Elmer A. Martens, *God’s Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981] 108–15). Frankel’s presentation is balanced, giving pros and cons in his discussion of the land. However, I was sometimes lost in Frankel’s descriptions of the textual developments and embellishments of biblical texts.

By means of source critical methodology of biblical texts, Frankel identifies discordant voices in the text. Because Frankel utilizes a diachronic approach, he appears to assume textual development but he did not provide sufficient evidence for this development. I was somewhat pleasantly surprised to observe that Frankel does not set out to defend

Israel's exclusive right to the land. To the contrary, he advocates tolerance, inclusivism, and universalism.

Michael D. Fiorello
Bethany Chapel, Columbia, SC

Demanding our Attention: The Hebrew Bible as a Source for Christian Ethics. By Emily Arndt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, 196 pp., \$21.25.

Emily Arndt's book *Demanding Our Attention: The Hebrew Bible as a Source for Christian Ethics* addresses the failed status of the OT among Christian ethicists. This failed status, she argues, often results from supersessionist interpretations that prioritize the NT over the OT and consequently fail to recognize its sacredness and authority.

Arndt offers a case study on Genesis 22 (the *akedab*) to show how Christian ethics can and should be derived from the OT. Throughout her book, she expresses concern that ethicists must not permit critical methodologies to "reduce" the text to what they think about it (p. 186). The text, she argues, presupposes an "other" to which readers must relate rather than force the text to relate to them (p. 187). She urges for a responsive relationship with the text that is free from presuppositions, recognizes its authoritativeness, and is both rigorous and sensitive.

In chapter 1, Arndt establishes that biblical texts were intended to be transformative (p. 4) and cautions readers to "read the Bible *'humanly*, as if it mattered" (pp. 4–5). She acknowledges the challenge of treating the OT in a way that preserves its role as a source for Christian ethics and notes that such an undertaking demands interdisciplinary expertise, deftness toward the diversity of our contemporary world, and modern human connectivity to an ancient text (pp. 6–7). She commends those who astutely link biblical texts to contemporary life and recognize that biblical ethics must be understood as a shaping force of Christian ethics and not merely synonymous with it (p. 15).

Chapter 2 focuses on Ronald Green's interpretation of Genesis 22, noting that he compares Jewish and Christian interpretations to explain his theory of universal moral reasoning (p. 25). Arndt concludes that Green's insistence on analyzing moral reasoning, coupled with his examination of religious interpretive traditions by means of a Kierkegaardian framework, demonstrates a critical detachment that leads to Green's failure to "take account of the sacredness or authoritative status of the Bible for many of its interpreters" (p. 45).

In chapter 3, Arndt argues that the presuppositions of both Philip Quinn, who views Genesis 22 as providing a sense of God's moral perfection (p. 23), and Timothy Jackson, who sees Genesis 22 as presenting the notion of *agape* as the overarching framework of Christian ethics (p. 57), bring extraneous religious and ethical categories into their

reading of Genesis 22 and give a role to these categories that exceeds the text itself. Quinn presents a philosophical discussion of “moral dilemma” (Kierkegaard’s teleological suspension of the ethical) into his reading of Genesis 22 (p. 49). Jackson interjects Christian categories to demonstrate that God’s command to sacrifice Isaac was ironic rather than literal, with the intent that the command would transform Abraham’s ethical horizons. Arndt concludes that the theological and methodological categories of these authors negatively impact their reading of Genesis 22 and inhibit ethical understanding of the text. Critical self-awareness and proper attention to the text, she argues, are essential to overcoming the propensity to impose supersessionist interpretations on OT texts (pp. 74–75).

In chapter 4, Arndt surveys the works of Kierkegaard, Philip the Chancellor, and the *Genesis Rabbah*. All three urge interaction with the text in different ways. She notes that “the kind of reading that Kierkegaard’s *Fear and Trembling* implicitly argues for is neither limited to any one approach nor simply expanded to recognize a plethora of possible approaches; rather, reading Genesis 22 is portrayed as a demanding and terrible obligation” (p. 91). Philip the Chancellor demonstrates “both its possibilities and the distortions resulting from our own uncritical adoption of certain ways of appropriating the text in contemporary Christian ethics” (p. 91). The *Genesis Rabbah* utilizes intertextual interpretation to draw connections between biblical texts. In doing so, it demonstrates the absence of contradictions within the Bible and presents a consistency of ethical ideas rather than a harmonization of apparent contradictions. According to Arndt, the *Genesis Rabbah* recognizes that interpretation is a communal task, showing interconnectedness between contemporary events and situations and the text. In so doing, it grants authority to the text resulting in its becoming transformative (p. 132).

Arndt’s analysis of Kierkegaard, Philip the Chancellor, and the *Genesis Rabbah* emphasizing intertextual unity in the previous chapter, informed by historical-critical and literary approaches becomes the template for her own reading of Genesis 22 in chapter 5. Arndt convincingly argues that Christian ethicists must produce works devoid of supersessionism. She also provides careful analysis of represented examples of OT ethicists. Also, her own reading of Genesis 22 makes good use of intertextual method and raises thought-provoking interpretations. Her approach to Christian ethics is free from narrowing associations with any particular school of moral theology. However, Arndt limits her survey to works focusing on Genesis 22. This sample is too limited to draw the broad conclusions she makes. At times, Arndt also exhibits the same detachment from the text for which she criticizes others. Lastly, she does not address divergent viewpoints regarding ethics. Arndt’s book is informative, thought-provoking, and an easy read.

Michael D. Fiorello
Bethany Chapel, Columbia, SC

Biblical History and Israel's Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History. By Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, xvii + 518 pp., \$46.00 paper.

Over the last twenty years, few biblical issues have been more hotly debated than the issue of the Bible's place in writing Israel's history and namely the accuracy of the biblical portrayal of that history. In *Biblical History and Israel's Past*, Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle have produced an excellent attempt at understanding and describing the issues of that debate. Their main purpose for writing *Biblical History and Israel's Past* was to "describe the changing study of Israelite and Judean history and the relationship of the biblical literature to that history since the 1970s, when the idea began to be widespread that the story of Israel's past might at times be quite different from the Bible's description of ancient Israel" (pp. 39–40).

Moore and Kelle, who both have published previously in the field of biblical history and methodology and are indeed qualified to write on the topic, chose to undertake this rather large endeavor by first dividing the book into the traditional biblical time periods. For each of those divisions, they seek to "discuss the significant trends in scholarship that pertain to that era, especially highlighting the development of ideas about the period since the 1970s, summarizing the major scholars, viewpoints, and developments, and presenting the issues . . . most crucial for understanding each period" (pp. 40–41). Following a rather lengthy, but exceptionally helpful Introduction, the book divisions are as follows: "The Patriarchs and Matriarchs"; "Israel's Emergence"; "The Monarchical Period" spaced into three individual parts; "The Exilic or Neo-Babylonian Period"; "The Postexilic or Persian Period"; an "Afterword" that includes several suggestions for advancing the future study of Israel's past; and an extensive bibliography.

Part of the goal for *Biblical History and Israel's Past* is to make the topic more accessible to non-specialists (p. 4). As a means of achieving that end, the book includes a wide variety of sidebars to explain many technical terms and ideas. Ideas such as Egyptology, the role of chronology, plausibility, anachronisms and historical study, the kings of Judah and Israel, the discoveries at Ebla, Mari, Nuzi, depth-dimensional sources, Samaritans, the Gezer calendar, and ideology (to name just a small percentage of the subjects) are discussed in-depth in the sidebars. Such a method has two notable advantages. A non-specialist is given the wherewithal to read and comprehend the rather technical nature of the topic without having prior learning, while a specialist already familiar with the sidebar concepts need not be slowed by their inclusion.

Two other significant features of *Biblical History and Israel's Past* are the "Questions for Discussion" and "Suggestions for Further Reading" that appear at the end of each chapter. These features propel the book from technical monograph into the realm of textbook material. Such inclusions, which easily could be overlooked as simple add-ons, aid both instructor and student. An instructor or course designer can easily incorporate the questions into classroom discussion, online discussion boards, quizzes, and exams. The "Suggestions for Further Reading" section assists both student and instructor in finding research topics and in conducting academic research. I would argue that these features will be much appreciated and welcomed additions.

While *Biblical History and Israel's Past* is justifiably descriptive in character, the actual heart and soul of the book is the "Afterword." In it, Moore and Kelle offer suggestions that "gesture toward the ways of thinking about some of the critical issues involved in the study of the Bible and history that . . . can and should occupy the attention of students and scholars in the coming decades of the twenty-first century" (p. 466). Moore and Kelle rightfully argue that their meticulous review of the previous decades of scholarship has placed them in a position to offer such suggestions. They are correct. Their suggestions are astute, discerning, and thought-provoking.

Their first proposal encourages academic discussions to move beyond the singular discussion of historical methodology. They state that "the preceding years devoted to the reevaluation of methodologies and reconstructions have brought the study of Israel's past to a place where comprehensive history volumes can again be written" (p. 467). They further assert that those "histories must go well beyond the typical focus on the political history of the kings, wars, and states to give the presentation of Israel's past a more wide ranging character" (p. 468). Such a work would include "sustained attention to methodological questions" but also "should pay attention to broader social, cultural, and environmental factors (e.g. climate changes, developments in technology, emic and etic understandings of race and ethnicity, cultural practices related gender roles, households, and family life) as well as socio-ideological aspects related to both ancient and present interpretive contexts (e.g. practices of cultural memory, identity construction, and questions concerning who defines the terms of historical study and whose interests are served in ancient and modern historical representations)" (p. 468). The task appears unrealistic. Yet, Moore and Kelle are very optimistic that such a task is possible.

The second suggestion concerns the Bible, faith, and history. Moore and Kelle do not see the question concerning the relationship between faith and history going away. Thus they suggest, "Perhaps the best hope is for future efforts [at history writing] to take seriously both the effect of historical research on conceptions of the Bible's authority and inspiration

and the import of historians' faith commitments for their interpretations" (p. 471). The duo argue that the extreme arguments from minimalists and maximalists alike are both naïve and obstructive. A middle ground should be sought in the future if progress is to be made.

The third group of suggestions center on the aims of historical study. Moore and Kelle state, "A comprehensive history-of-Israel volume should be more than just a series of descriptions of particular events and situations; it should point to broader social, cultural, and human phenomena that played roles in shaping Israel's past" (p. 473). This broader history should be a "more integrative approach that is not consumed by a focus on the Bible and the possibilities and problems it presents for historical reconstruction" (p. 473). They further suggest that in the future, historians should strongly consider "whether 'biblical history' should be redefined as a distinct subdiscipline of the history of ancient Israel and Judah" (p. 474). And by this they mean that studying Israel's past "as a means of interpreting the biblical literature and its possible meaning and significance should be only one part of historical study rather than its defining characteristic" (p. 474).

These last suggestions seem eerily similar to suggestions made by William Dever in the 1970s and 1980s concerning the transition from biblical archaeology to the then "new archaeology." In 1995, after at least two decades of advocating a separation between biblical studies and archaeology where biblical archaeology would become a subdiscipline of a more integrated form of archaeology, Dever wrote an article for *Biblical Archaeology Review* entitled "The Death of a Discipline" (*BAR* 22 [September/October 1995] 50–55, 70). In that piece, Dever lamented the loss of support for archaeology among Bible colleges, churches, and seminaries. That same type of loss is very possible if biblical history becomes only a subdiscipline of Israel's history. From such a viewpoint, the study of Israel's history would be no more of interest to Bible colleges, seminaries, and churches than would the histories of Greece, Assyria, or Babylonia. The primary interest of Bible colleges, seminaries, and churches is the connection of that history with the Bible. Removing that link would most likely lead down a slippery slope of declining interest.

That concern aside, *Biblical History and Israel's Past* is indeed a fine reference work for those seeking to understand the discussion of history and Israel's past over the last forty years. P. R. S. Moorey's book *A Century of Biblical Archaeology* (Westminster John Knox, 1991) comes to mind as I seek a comparable descriptive work. *Biblical History and Israel's Past* is just as wide-ranging and meticulous in its review of the past biblical history scholarship. I believe Moore and Kelle have produced a book with which all OT teachers and professors will want to be familiar.

Chet Roden

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA

The Origin of the Bible: A Guide for the Perplexed. By Lee Martin McDonald. London: T & T Clark, 2011, 257 pp., \$24.95 paper.

The story of canon formation is often shrouded in mystery, especially in popular-level publications. One of the reasons for the opacity in these accounts is the fragmentary nature of the evidence that must be used and also the fact that no ancient source contains an account of this deeply significant process. What is more, lucid accounts of how the Jewish and Christian Bibles came into being are sometimes wanting, particularly among the churches. In *The Origin of the Bible*, Lee M. McDonald sets out to tell this “untold story” with the conviction that “it matters which books are received into the biblical canon” (p. 1). Drawing on his substantial expertise in the field, McDonald seeks to offer “useful information for the interested nonspecialists” so they might “enter into meaningful discussions of this important topic” (p. 19).

After laying out the way he will use the key terminology in the canon debate, McDonald begins his story of canon formation with the story that generated it. Before there were texts, there were stories about God’s dealings with Israel. Over time, more traditions were added to this core, and after a lengthy process, these traditions were preserved and transmitted in written form. Next, McDonald traces the emergence and then completion of the OT canon. According to McDonald, the writings that eventually make up the OT were always seen in light of and as part of a much wider circulation of other Jewish and Christian literature.

In the next three chapters, McDonald focuses on the emergence of *Christian* Scriptures (a similarly lengthy process) and the roles that “heresy” and “orthodoxy” play in the process. For McDonald, the rule of faith played a bigger part in fending off heresy in the second century than any canon of Scripture. McDonald concludes the volume by outlining what went into the “fixing” of the NT canon in the fourth century. According to McDonald, only after the major Christological debates were settled (regarding who Jesus was) could the NT and Christian canon as a whole (the writings that cohered with these Christological affirmations) be settled.

McDonald makes clear that a good deal of reconstruction and interpretation is necessary in order to tell the story of canon formation in a coherent and understandable way. This element is one of the instructive aspects of McDonald’s work but also one of the most controversial. Indeed, McDonald’s volume represents a well-done articulation of one particular “take” on how the Bible came to be. In McDonald’s narrative, the Christian canon is a product of the political/theological discussions of the fourth century. To speak of “canon” before this period is hopelessly anachronistic since this is when formal lists of biblical books began to appear. He makes a strong distinction between canon and Scripture and argues that “canon” should be understood primarily as a stable list. Thus,

McDonald acknowledges the early presence of authoritative writings (Scripture) but downplays any evidence that might point to a stable and authoritative collection (canon) of these Scriptures prior to the fourth century. In this regard, McDonald denies that there was a clearly defined Hebrew Bible during NT times or a stable NT during the first three centuries of the church.

McDonald also makes a strong and compelling case for the relevance of non-canonical literature in this discussion. For him, the OT and NT apocrypha and pseudepigraphal writings have been wrongly neglected: "Some of the literature that was left behind is not heretical and much can be gleaned from it" (p. 236). Accordingly, McDonald highlights and catalogues a wide-ranging assortment of relevant external evidence (p. 6). He also quotes from these primary sources at length to supplement his analysis. This facet of his work alone makes it a valuable tool for students and researchers of the biblical canon, even among those who would not assign near the interpretive significance on non-canonical material that McDonald does.

This volume is intended to serve as a "guide for the perplexed," and part of McDonald's task is to demonstrate that the process of canon formation is often perplexing (pp. 151, 232). Any account of canon formation that does not acknowledge the complexity of the process has probably precluded a number of important elements.

Inevitably, though, many students of canon history will find some of McDonald's storylines and subplots perplexing as well. For instance, McDonald frequently raises the possibility of revising the contents of the canon. For McDonald, one question that should perhaps remain open is the placement of the boundary markers of the biblical collection. McDonald notes that most communities tend toward certain portions of the Bible to the neglect of others and utilize a kind of functional "canon within a canon" (pp. 46–50). For McDonald, this selective reading is inevitable and should perhaps even be embraced.

In this connection, the author notes that a number of writings that were originally excluded because they did not serve the needs of the church community are now receiving scholarly attention. Thus, McDonald asks whether these writings (e.g. Shepherd of Hermas or 1 Clement) should be included in the Scriptures of the churches and, conversely, whether widely neglected canonical texts (e.g. Leviticus or Jude) should be removed from the biblical canon. In essence, McDonald suggests the viability or possible desirability of having an "open canon" even today (pp. 236–37). This openness to shifting canonical boundaries will seem odd to readers who are expecting an account of how the canon closed.

McDonald also argues that the first moves toward stabilization of the Christian canon as a whole began during the fourth century, and the two main reasons he gives (religious persecution and political pressure)

are external (p. 26). One might ask in response whether any significant internal factors motivated the community to begin thinking of their Scriptures in terms of a limited collection (e.g. for the purpose of discipleship or defense from false teaching). Moreover, McDonald consistently argues that the process of canonization involved the churches *selecting* writings that fit with what they already believed about God and reality (p. 153). Should an understanding of the canonization process not also involve *recognition* of writings already deemed normative or the notion that those beliefs were drawn directly from the texts that were being passed down?

Part of McDonald's purpose in writing this volume for this series is to encourage laymen and potential scholars to participate in the canon formation discussion (p. 19). He achieves this goal by highlighting several critical issues and aiding in a greater understanding of the differences that exist in the history of interpretation and among contemporary scholars. McDonald's work also serves the purpose of encouraging those who would tell the story of canon formation along different plotlines (and with a setting a few centuries earlier!) to nuance the way they speak about which writings were "canonical" and when they became so.

Ched Spellman

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX

Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics. By David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011, xvi + 446 pp., \$34.99.

No matter our level of education, approaching the Bible with the intention of interpreting its meaning is a daunting task. David Bauer and Robert Traina's book *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* seeks to make the task of interpretation more manageable.

This book is a sequel to Traina's 1952 work *Methodical Bible Study* (p. xiii). Traina's original work offered a more general description of inductive study. This update offers a specific and ordered process that can be applied directly to any biblical text. The authors view the primary audience as those preparing for vocational Christian ministry.

The inductive approach seeks to force the reader to allow the evidence of the text to be the driving factor for determining the possible meanings of that text. This approach is contrasted with the deductive approach, which is often driven by presuppositions the reader brings to a text. The authors define their approach as "a comprehensive, holistic study of the Bible that takes into account every aspect of the existence of the biblical text and that is intentional in allowing the Bible in its final canonical shape to speak to us on its own terms, thus leading to accurate,

original, compelling, and profound interpretation and contemporary appropriation” (pp. 6, 73). Throughout the work, in true pedagogical fashion, this understanding is elaborated upon, repeated, and supplemented with numerous examples by these masters of the inductive approach.

The book has an introduction, five parts, five appendices, bibliography, author index, and subject index. Part 1, “Theoretical Foundations,” addresses the issue of the hermeneutical method used in studying the Bible by presenting some of the characteristics of Bible study (p. 15). The student who approaches the Bible with an inductive approach must be willing to have a “radical openness” to any conclusions warranted by the text (p. 18). Within this section, the authors introduce the student to important aspects of biblical study: speech-act theory (p. 34); the role of presuppositions (p. 34); the implied author (p. 43); the relationship between individual and community study (pp. 57–62); literary structure and units (p. 64); and canonical study (p. 67). By introducing the student to these and other concepts, the authors inform the student of the issue of “objectivity/subjectivity” (p. 30). For Bauer and Traina, biblical study requires students not only to give consideration to the nature of the text, but also to consider the relationship between the text and themselves. The idea of relationship or “principle of suitability” attempts to prevent the either/or mentality of objectivity/subjectivity (p. 31). Inductive Bible study requires the student to give attention to both the objective and subjective elements involved.

Part 2, “Observing and Asking,” is where the proverbial rubber meets the road. The authors walk the student through the steps of inductive study, beginning with a broad survey of biblical books as a whole before moving to narrow sections. The focus is always on the relation of the parts to the whole. The aim of surveying the books and the parts is to develop focused observations of paragraphs and sentences (figure 2, p. 78). The student is introduced to concepts such as: units, subunits, and structure (p. 87); semantics structures (p. 97); rhetorical structures (p. 116); chiasm and inclusio (pp. 118–19); and genre (pp. 145–51). Each chapter ends with an example of implementation of concepts from 2 Timothy and exercises for the student to apply to the books of Jonah and Mark. The authors are aware of the complexities that may trouble those using this method for the first time. They provide multiple examples and figures as pedagogical tools.

Part 3, “Answering and Interpreting,” guides the student in the process of determining what questions, derived from the text, are the most important. The intention here is to help the student in becoming a “more competent reader” (p. 178). The literary context of any given passage is highlighted as the most significant evidence for interpretation (p. 183). In the area of literary context, the focus is on structure and repetition of terms. Guidance is given in areas such as: real world vs.

world of the text (p. 198); signifier and signified (p. 200); syntax (p. 204); literary forms (p. 208); historical background (p. 215); and use of commentaries (p. 232). The second chapter in this section presents different models for accessing the evidence (analytical vs. synthetic). The final chapter, "Implementing Interpretation," contains a description and warning of multiple fallacious practices. The section concludes with a detailed example and exercises.

Part 4, "Evaluating and Appropriating," moves from the interpretation of the text to the point where the student "must ascertain what values for thinking, character, and behavior they may derive from the interpretation of the text for the formation of contemporary and community life" (p. 279). This type of evaluation should take into account the two-fold nature of the Bible (e.g. past-historical meaning and present-historical meaning). The relationship between biblical ethics and systematic theology to the process of inductive study is discussed in brief (p. 299). The authors also discuss what they term "distinctions in process between OT and NT passages" (p. 311). This part concludes with a detailed discussion of fallacies related to evaluation and appropriation. Like the other parts, a detailed example is given, along with student exercises.

Part 5, "Correlation," offers suggestions as to how one might bring together literary and canonical levels of the text. For example, literary correlation suggests one may be able to derive a theology of Paul by drawing together the teaching of the Pauline corpus. Canonical correlation is "the synthesis of canonical rather than authorial units" (p. 337). The authors suggest the possibility of using inductive Bible study to develop an OT theology, NT theology, or even a biblical theology. The final chapter warns the student of common correlation fallacies. Bauer and Traina present a final exercise in which students must correlate their interpretation of Jonah 4:1–11; Mark 4:10–20; and Mark 15:33–39 with the rest of Scripture.

In terms of critique, I offer a few observations. First, I understand Bauer and Traina's purpose as an attempt to draw students of the Bible into the text in such a way that they "imaginatively and subjectively" inhabit the world of the text (p. 30). In every interpretation class I have taught, I labor to draw students to a place where they put themselves into the story. I also labor to remind students that they may not know the texts as well as they think. All too often, students rush to what others have said before they spend quality time thinking about the text themselves. The work of these two men, when taken seriously, should instill an "inductive imagination" that is text-centered in all who begin where they begin (p. xii).

Second, popular hermeneutic textbooks in evangelical circles are often genre-driven. These texts are useful, but I have experienced that in their attempt to achieve simplicity, they omit a lot of necessary material.

This text begins with the authors' desire for the student to approach the text from a pre-critical position where the text is the locus of meaning. However, the inductive approach guides the student in a proper inclusion of critical tools such as narrative methodology, use of literary structure, and canonical readings. This work is a welcomed addition to the field of hermeneutics.

Joshua E. Stewart

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA

Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1–11. By Joseph Blenkinsopp, New York: T & T Clark, 2011, xii + 214 pp., \$100.00 paper.

Joseph Blenkinsopp, with a brilliant mind and admirable ability to write, is a Catholic scholar of considerable merit. He is Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA. His research is obviously familiar with rabbinic, patristic and medieval literature and he quotes with ease from the works of Homer, Hesiod, Plato, Shakespeare, Donne, Cowper, Nietzsche, and Barth.

The author adopts a format that assumes creation cannot be restricted to an event, nor to two versions of an event. He sees the biblical record as descriptive of an allegorical sequence: creation—uncreation—recreation. He utilizes speculative discussion rather than systematic exposition. His view of Genesis is best summarized by his statement that “the Biblical text is a relatively late Hebrew-language version of a literary mythic tradition of great antiquity” (p. 132). He relies heavily on the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis (JEDP). He sees these as the “sources” of the patchwork literary quilt of the Hebrew Bible. Blenkinsopp never explains or defends this theory but simply assumes that his readers know it and accept it as foundational.

Blenkinsopp, then, assumes Genesis to be composed of fragmented myths about creation, the flood, early man, and Hebrew origins. He contends these legends were orally assembled and redacted through the centuries after being adapted from Mesopotamian mythology. He suggests the Pentateuch may have reached its final form as late as the Post-Exilic Period (538–432 BC).

The author is willing to allow for any interpretation of Genesis chapter 1 except “a straightforward chronological reading of the chapter” (p. 20). He insists that the “ex nihilo” view of creation, though accepted by Judaism and NT Christianity, is not the preferred interpretation from a “linguistic and exegetical point of view” (p. 30). The author finds it necessary to remind his readers that science assures us the earth is 4.5 billion years old and that the catastrophic extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago “led eventually to the emergence of mammals, including

humans” (p. 5). There is not even the whisper of an acknowledgement that many biblical scholars and competent scientists dispute this evolutionary tale; there is not a single entry in the bibliography that would indicate Blenkinsopp has read any defense of a literal six-day creation. To be fair, he does mention “creation science” (p.131), though he would not be comfortable with a framework hypothesis for Genesis 1–2. Such omission must be intentional considering the author’s acumen and ability. Given Blenkinsopp’s view of God, which could be charitably described as open theism, it is probably inaccurate to describe his view as theistic evolution.

Speculative discussion serves Blenkinsopp’s purpose better as he promotes Genesis 1–11 as mythology; his view is that the Bible has no more credibility or reliability than any other ancient Near Eastern mythology. He is clearly conversant and comfortable with a plethora of mythologies and indicates they all have a contribution to make in understanding human origins and specifically the question of evil.

Blenkinsopp includes a litany of speculative mythology including Adam’s “first” wife as Lilith or perhaps a serpent-goddess. He is certain that there is no connection between “Adam” and sin but finds perhaps an allegorical explanation of the nature of death. His ethical concerns consist of how humanity can deal with a damaged world “into which we, like the first parents, have been thrust” (p. 19).

The author also is very much exercised over the long-term detriment of the concept of original sin and how that has adversely affected the advance of feminism. Blenkinsopp leaves little doubt about his dismissal of original sin as he laments, “This unfortunate tradition of denigration, in which male fear of the female played, and continues to play, a significant part, was perpetuated in Early Christianity” (p. 79). The “traditional” view of original sin “offends our modern sensitivities” (p. 80).

The author concludes that Genesis 1–11, while not inerrant nor infallible, can provide us with “often surprising resources for understanding our place in the world, opening up new perspectives, and suggesting fresh points of entry into a revelation and worldview that can free us to go beyond our mundane formulations and taken-for-granted assumptions” (p. 190). What that revelation might be or what value that worldview might have, Blenkinsopp is perhaps reserving for another book.

There may be some value in such a book in a study of ancient Near Eastern mythology; however, its rambling format makes it less suitable for reference. The book could be useful for graduate students who desire to study and understand more clearly the clear incompatibility of the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis with the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture.

David Pitman
Temple Baptist College, Cincinnati, OH

Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh. By Seth D. Postell. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011, xii + 204 pp., \$24.00 paper.

Seth D. Postell, lecturer in biblical studies at Israel College of the Bible, has written *Adam as Israel* “to apply a text-centered, compositional analysis to Genesis 1–3 in order to discern the relationship between these chapters and the remainder of the Torah” (p. 2). Postell develops his methodology in chapters 2–4. Following the work of scholars such as John Sailhamer, Postell’s approach locates textual meaning in the strategy of the final redactor/author of the Pentateuch. His concern, therefore, “is to understand the intentionality of the individual (author) responsible for the Torah in its *final form*” (p. 44; emphasis original). One discerns this intentionality through intertextuality. Postell’s argument hinges on Genesis 1–3 as “composed with Israel’s story or biblical history *already in mind* (perhaps prophetically)” (pp. 68–69, emphasis added). Thus, the initial reader of the final form of the Torah is the Israelite in exile (pp. 133–34). One should understand the final form of the Torah in this exilic context.

Rooted in this methodology, Postell argues that “Genesis 1–3 intentionally foreshadows Israel’s failure to keep the Sinai Covenant as well as their exile from the Promised Land in order to point the reader to a future work of God in the ‘last days’” (p. 3). The main upshot of this thesis is that Genesis 1–3 “*is not meant to encourage Israel to keep Sinai*” (p. 4; emphasis original). Given the exilic context of the final form of the Torah, the implication is that the Torah points to God’s future work *in Christ*, anticipating NT faith. Chapter 5 argues for Genesis 1–3 as the introduction to the Torah because Adam’s failure to keep God’s commands and subsequent “exile” from Eden foreshadows Israel’s disobedience and exile. Chapter 6 argues for Genesis 1–3 as the introduction to the Torah based on Adam and Eve’s seduction by the serpent in Eden as foreshadowing Israel’s seduction by the Canaanites in the land. Furthermore, chapter 6 demonstrates that Genesis 1–3 functions as “a *prophecy* that the Israelites *would not keep* the Sinai Covenant” (p. 135; emphasis original). Postell bases this argument on (1) the beginning and end of the Torah emphasizing Israel’s inability to keep the Law; and (2) the end of Genesis and Deuteronomy focusing the reader’s attention on God’s future act in the last days. Chapter 7 then argues for Genesis 1–3 as the introduction to the Tanakh based on the shape of the OT canon, “canonical seams,” and the placement of Chronicles at the end of the canon.

The strength of *Adam as Israel* is its careful attention to the intertextuality in the OT. Any reader will find fresh insights into the allusions and echoes of the OT canon. In particular, Postell’s connections between Adam, Israel, Israel’s kings, and Psalms 1 and 2 deserve scholarly

attention. However, if one does not subscribe to Postell's approach, one may find his interpretations of these connections lacking.

Postell consistently strains the meaning of these intertextual allusions because his methodology can cause him to ignore the immediate narrative context, to read backward from exile to creation rather than from creation to exile, and to provide incomplete word studies. These interpretations include: the land "created" in Gen 1:1–2:4a as the Promised Land (pp. 82–95); the absence of light in Gen 1:3 reflecting a gloomy proto-exilic land (p. 97); the serpent as good in Eden prior to the Fall (pp. 122–23); Israel's fear in Exod 20:18–21 as an improper response to Yahweh despite Deut 5:23–29 (pp. 126–29); and Adam's "clinging" to Eve anticipating Solomon's fall due to his "clinging" to many foreign wives (pp. 131–34).

Given these connections but strained interpretations, Postell demonstrates that Genesis 1–3 serves as the introduction to the OT, but does not demonstrate the intertextuality as the intention of a single author at the end of the canonical period. Thus, Postell's meaning for Genesis 1–3 as the introduction to the Tanakh suffers. Seemingly, the Pentateuch calls Israel to faithfully do the Law *as they wait for God to act in the future*, especially since the future work of God envisioned in the OT is God's circumcising the hearts of his people *so that* they do the Law. Thus, serious questions remain for Postell's approach. Is textual meaning found *exclusively* in the intention of a single author of the final form? Can this approach apply to the entire canon, or only "key junctures" and "seams"?

Mark T. Catlin

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC

1 Kings. By Philip Graham Ryken. Reformed Expository Commentary. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2011, xvi + 619 pp., \$34.99.

This commentary by Philip Ryken is composed of a series of expository sermons preached on the Book of 1 Kings while Ryken was pastor at Philadelphia's Tenth Presbyterian Church. In line with the goals of the Reformed Expository Commentary Series (REC), Ryken combines biblical and doctrinal exposition from an explicitly Reformed perspective with a redemptive-historical focus culminating in application to the twenty-first century.

The commentary divides 1 Kings into thought units, though at times these units subdivide narratives that logically belong together (e.g. 1 Kgs 18:19–46 is subdivided into three different expository units). Ryken's exposition of a passage typically begins with an attention-grabbing introductory anecdote related to the main idea of the unit, followed by expository sections that exegete the passage and explain its significance. Because of his homiletical focus, Ryken does not directly engage scholarly

debates unless they impinge directly upon the exposition of the text, though scattered comments and footnotes illustrate his familiarity and interaction with a good number of commentaries and other resources.

Ryken's occasional references to narrative and rhetorical techniques such as dramatic irony (p. 37), inclusio (p. 57), apostrophe (p. 352), and Hebrew word plays (p. 320) are helpful observations that aid exegesis and exposition. Intermingled with exegetical matters, Ryken will often add canonical and redemptive-historical observations that give additional perspective to the passage and link it with larger canonical developments and doctrinal emphases. These observations then provide the foundation from which Ryken makes contemporary application of the passage, at times using effective references to popular media and culture to bring the text into the twenty-first century, such as his comparison of Hadad the Edomite's drive for revenge against the House of David (1 Kgs 11:14–25) with that of Inigo Montoya from the 1987 film *Princess Bride* (p. 309).

One of the greatest strengths of this commentary is Ryken's ability to blend exegetical detail with canonical and doctrinal development into an accessible and coherent form that is both a useful window into the original text and spiritually invigorating. Ryken moves skilfully between various levels of reading the text. When explaining the abundance of Solomon's kingdom in 1 Kings 4, Ryken notes how the references to Solomon's horses (1 Kgs 4:26, 28) serve a dual purpose in the narrative. They illustrate Solomon's wisdom in preparing for the contingencies of war, but they also represent a spiritual danger (cf. Deut 17:16). Ryken rightly points out the canonical warnings of relying upon military strategy and armaments rather than Yahweh (Pss 20:7; 33:16–17) and how these references foreshadow the seductions to which Solomon falls prey later in the book (pp. 111–12). In this way, he draws this detail into a larger canonical perspective and highlights the significance of this sometimes underappreciated point in the overall Solomonic storyline for his audience.

Another value of this commentary is its commitment to reading every passage through redemptive-historical lenses so as to highlight the Christological and inter-canonical linkages flowing from the text of 1 Kings. It is this emphasis that makes this commentary such a valuable tool for homiletical and devotional purposes. Ryken's use of a variety of methods to draw these connections, such as: echoes or developments of other OT texts (p. 448), NT references to figures from 1 Kings (p. 433), NT fulfillment of OT promises (pp. 145, 313), and by far the most frequent method—typological connections (p. 113), make the commentary a valuable aid for teaching the two Testaments together.

However, this commitment to a redemptive-historical reading of 1 Kings may also serve as a weakness, in that Ryken on occasion attempts to draw NT or contemporary applications not fully in line with the original context or intent. For example, in the first of seven lessons on prayer derived from 1 Kgs 18:36–45, Ryken suggests believers should pray

on the basis of a sacrifice for sin (pp. 506–8). As support, Ryken points to Elijah’s sacrifice of a bull and prayer for fire because Elijah realized Israel “needed to receive atonement for their sins” (p. 507). This interpretation is unlikely given the identical sacrifice offered to Baal (1 Kgs 18:23—surely not for the purposes of atonement), the lack of stated atonement intent, and that bull sacrifices were not restricted to atonement sacrifices (Num 15:8). Ryken sometimes spiritualizes incidental details in the text, as when he notes how the masons of Solomon’s temple shaped their stones at the quarry rather than on the temple mount (cf. 1 Kgs 6:7). This silence signifies the temple workers’ quiet reverence and reminds Christians of God’s work in shaping his people “in the quarry of sanctification, using suffering and temptation to chip away everything that is still unholy” (p. 140). However, the reference to pre-shaped stone in 1 Kgs 6:7 probably reflects a different rationale (cf. Exod 20:25; Deut 27:5; Josh 8:31) that does not easily lend itself to the application Ryken draws.

As noted above, Ryken does well in reading 1 Kings at various levels within a canonical context. However, this commitment at times changes the original point of a passage, and so misreads it. For example, 1 Kings 1 is driven by the question, “Who will become king after David’s death, Solomon or Adonijah?” Ryken interprets Adonijah’s play for the throne as an act of rebellion against Yahweh and his preordained and appointed king based on a post-exilic comment in 1 Chr 22:9–10 (p. 8). However, while there are hints that Solomon may be David’s divinely ordained successor (2 Sam 12:24; 1 Kgs 1:17, 36–37), it is not a foregone (or foreordained) conclusion if we read the plot of Samuel and Kings. Neither Yahweh nor David explicitly name Solomon as David’s successor in these books. By injecting 1 Chr 22:9–10 into the plot of 1 Kings, Ryken subtly but substantially changes the plot in 1 Kings 1–2 from “who will become king after David?” to “how will the details of Solomon’s accession play out in the face of this obstacle?” This reading is faithful to the canonical story, but is not a reading of the narrative related in 1 Kings.

One of the features common to volumes in the REC series is the absence of an introductory section. This makes sense given the homiletical focus of the series. However, given the theological interests of the series, this absence leaves unstated both the strong influence of the book of Deuteronomy on 1 Kings and a unifying theology of the book of as a whole. A short introduction to the setting, main themes, and theological emphases of the book would add to rather than detract from the usefulness of this work and would also provide a macro theological orientation to guide the reading of 1 Kings.

Despite these weaknesses, Philip Ryken is to be congratulated for a very practical commentary that largely achieves its stated goals. It will be a useful aid for teachers and preachers who seek to exposit Scripture in its full canonical context and apply God’s word to life in the twenty-first century. Ryken moves from the world of the text to the world of the

modern reader in a winsome, engaging fashion that is both spiritually nourishing and challenging for those who wish to read the Book of 1 Kings.

Gordon Oeste
Heritage Theological Seminary, Cambridge, ON

Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction. By Craig G. Bartholomew and Ryan P. O'Dowd. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011, 336 pp., \$30.00.

Craig Bartholomew and Ryan O'Dowd have written an introduction to OT wisdom literature that emphasizes the theology of the corpus. "Our overall aim," they write, "is to open a dialogue about what it means to embrace and embody a theology of the Old Testament Wisdom literature today" (p. 16). They divide their chapters along the following topics: three chapters of introduction (chaps. 1–3); six chapters devoted to Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes (chaps. 4–9); and three concluding chapters (chaps. 10–12). They provide brief bibliographic suggestions at the end of each chapter.

Their three introductory chapters cover general issues (e.g. the churches' history of allegorical interpretation, the concept of wisdom, the centrality of the "fear of Yahweh"), wisdom in the ancient Near East (contrasting e.g. the Egyptian concept of Ma'at with Lady Wisdom, the Mesopotamian royal tradition of building and furnishing a house with Wisdom's building and filling a house in Proverbs 24), and the importance of poetry in OT wisdom literature (e.g. parallelism, figurative language, and poetic structures).

Chapters 4–9 are the heart of their work. In chapter 4, Bartholomew and O'Dowd offer an engaging, theologically rich, and hermeneutically nuanced survey of the book of Proverbs. They emphasize the importance of chapters 1–9 as a hermeneutical grid for chapters 10–29; they stress the concept of "fear of Yahweh" in the structure of the book; and, with dependence on van Leeuwen's work, they discuss the necessity of wisdom when applying individual proverbs to everyday life. The book of Proverbs testifies how in a fallen, broken world, there are many exceptions to the retribution principle taught in chapters 1–9. In chapter 5, the authors offer an in-depth study of the "valiant woman" of Proverbs 31, noting its genre (a hymn) and message (to affirm the concept of *vocation*) and offering theological reflections on the poem's contemporary significance. Selecting Proverbs 31 for detailed comment is judicious; having taught wisdom literature for several years now, I find our class discussion of this chapter consistently evokes animated and interesting responses.

Their next two chapters deal with the book of Job. One of the highlights of the authors' overview is an extended discussion of "A Theology of Job," in which they comment on the pastoral importance of the book, epistemology, and whether or not Job is a type of Christ. (They think in some ways he is.) They also offer an extended "excursus" on the theme of theodicy. Bartholomew and O'Dowd have chosen to focus their detailed exegesis on the wisdom poem in chapter 28, discussing its modern readings, its outline, and its structure, and concluding with theological reflections. In my opinion, they have painted a false "either/or" in their interpretation: *either* an interpreter accepts the modern conviction that somehow chapter 28 is different in tone, is therefore out of place, and must be repositioned by critical methods, *or* the poem is Job's words and part of his argument. There is, of course, a third alternative—namely, that the poem functions as a meditation on the theme of finding wisdom in a confusing and contradictory world and, though not Job's words, is placed exactly where it should be, in such a way as to heighten tension and introduce Job's final three-chapter speech. However, this objection aside, their discussion of how the poem highlights the limitations of knowledge and modern society's pride is well spoken. Our postmodern age resonates with these sentiments.

Bartholomew and O'Dowd treat the book of Ecclesiastes with exegetical sensitivity and an informed scholarship. They suggest the book was written in the 4th century BC and therefore deny Solomonic authorship. They rightly stress the role of the narrator, as distinct from Qohelet, and ultimately conclude that in Ecclesiastes 12, the narrator, Qohelet, and the "implied author" all hold the same view. They find a narrative movement in the book, in which Qohelet, motivated by an unspecified crisis of faith, searches for wisdom using his own self-centered methodology. After discovering his epistemology has failed, Qohelet gradually returns to the "fear of the Lord" as the only perspective that can provide meaning to life. For their in-depth study (chap. 9), the authors focus on the popular "There Is A Season" passage in chapter 3, which few people over 50 can read without hearing the Byrds sing! Rejecting a deterministic understanding of the passage, they analyze its literary and poetic structure, concluding that the author affirms time is a mystery that only God knows. In subsequent verses (Eccl 3:9–15), the author of Ecclesiastes puts forth contradictory solutions to the problem. On one hand, he "despairs of being able to discern the time and the place;" on the other, he "celebrates time as the context in which to rejoice, do good, eat and drink, and enjoy one's labor." These two approaches reflect the competing epistemologies in the book, one depending on reason alone, the other on God as creator. Ultimately, Qohelet embraces the latter.

Bartholomew and O'Dowd's final three chapters are conclusions. First, they survey the use of wisdom vocabulary and motifs throughout

the NT, especially as the NT authors seek to explain the significance of Jesus, who he is and what he has done (chap. 10). They next step back and delineate the main contours of OT wisdom literature. They reflect on creation, the character-consequence motif, the distinction between knowledge and wisdom, and finally, the relationship between wisdom to covenant, law, and prophets. This chapter contains some delightful discussions of interesting topics, such as the importance of wonder, how wisdom can combat the prevailing Gnosticism in our churches today, and how the books of Ecclesiastes and Job *complement* the theology of Proverbs rather than *contradict* it. Chapter 12, their final chapter, begins by relating wisdom to kingdom via God as both redeemer (kingdom) and creator (wisdom). Bartholomew and O'Dowd then devote the next thirty pages to exploring "some of the many implications of wisdom for Christian life and thinking today" (p. 293). They isolate five: wisdom and education; wisdom and politics; wisdom and spirituality; wisdom and the ordinary; and wisdom and the dark night of the soul. Though space prevents me from interacting with their many positive ideas, I'll venture just one: their discussion of the "dark night of the soul," à la St. John of the Cross, helpfully positions the struggles of Job and Qohelet squarely in the spiritual tradition of those who struggle deeply, whether experientially (Job) or intellectually (Qohelet), with matters of faith.

We are currently blessed with several well-written introductions to wisdom literature by evangelicals: Kidner (IVP), Estes (Baker), Bullock (Moody), Lucas (IVP), and even the *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings* (IVP). Bartholomew and O'Dowd's work emphasizes hermeneutics, theology, and contemporary application and is a helpful contribution, suitable for personal study, pastoral ministry, and the classroom.

John C. Crutchfield
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

Ecclesiastes/Lamentations: A Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition. New Beacon Bible Commentary. By Stephen J. Bennett. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 2010, 256 pp., \$25.99 paper.

According to the general editor's preface, the New Beacon Bible Commentary (hereafter NBBC) series is designed to do the following: (1) "make available to pastors and students in the twenty-first century a biblical commentary that reflects the best scholarship in the Wesleyan theological tradition"; (2) "communicate clearly the critical consensus and the full range of other credible voices who have commented on the Scripture"; and (3) "make available to the church and for her service the fruits of the labors of scholars who are committed to their Christian faith" (p. 9).

The structure and organization of the NBBC series are well described in the general editor's preface. Each commentary begins with "an Introduction section that gives an overview of authorship, date, audience, occasion, purpose, sociological/cultural issues, textual history, literary features, hermeneutical issues, and theological themes necessary to understand the book" (p. 9). The commentary proper includes a brief outline of the book and verse-by-verse explanations based on a contemporary Wesleyan theological understanding from the original language within a three-part framework. These parts are designated "Behind the Text," "In the Text," and "From the Text."

When discussing Ecclesiastes and Lamentations, Bennett faithfully follows the general guidelines of the NBBC series. In the introduction section of Ecclesiastes, he concisely evaluates the controversial introductory issues such as authorship, date, and theological themes. He proposes that Qoheleth intentionally arranged the paradox, enigmas, and contradictions appearing in Ecclesiastes to deliver a coherent message regarding the true meaning of life and that there is good and even joy to those who live their daily lives under the sovereignty of God despite absurd and incomprehensible life circumstances. Based on these rather balanced perspectives, Bennett offers a wide range of meanings for the essential word *hebel* as follows: "futile," "unattainable," "evil," "fleeting," "profitless," "inconsequential," "ineffective" and "incomprehensible" according to the contexts (p. 35). In addition, he suggests some significant themes of Ecclesiastes such as sovereignty of God, limitations of wisdom and righteousness, doctrine of retribution, profit and portion, wealth and contentment, and ethics.

In the commentary section, Bennett's verse-by-verse exegetical comments are quite helpful, particularly when he introduces some extra-biblical sources from the Targumic and Medieval Jewish interpretations. Unfortunately, in most verses he briefly describes other scholars' opinions but does not provide his own ideas or insights.

Overall, Bennett's commentary on Ecclesiastes is well written and fairly easy to read, especially for the main target reader group, that is, pastors and theological students. However, his exegetical and theological discussions are occasionally hard to follow. For instance, Bennett's definition of the word *hebel* as "evil" is somewhat dubious. The main reason he defines it this way is that it has an immediate connection with another word, *ra'* (2:7; 4:8; 6:2). In these passages, however, the word *ra'* does not mean "evil" as opposed to "good." Rather, it means "terrible," as C. L. Seow has properly proposed. Second, based on Eccl 3:18–22, Bennett insists that "Qoheleth denies the possibility of human life beyond death" and "[t]he Christian doctrine of resurrection provides a clear alternative to the pessimistic view of Qoheleth" (p. 92). Yet the passage of 3:18–22 does not support Bennett's affirmation. In actuality, the main

point in this passage is not the possibility of the existence of human afterlife. Rather, the main point is that people and animals have the same fate; both will eventually die. The passage is neither pessimistic nor optimistic; it simply reveals the reality of human fate.

In the introduction section for Lamentations, the author again presents succinct and valuable information. The commentary proper addresses a brief outline and the verse-by-verse exegetical comments. In the exegetical comments, again Bennett does not provide his own insights; rather, he merely summarizes other scholars' discussions. Like many other scholars, Bennett thinks that chapter 3 is the climactic pivot point for understanding the theology of Lamentations. He suggests a nicely balanced view that the book of Lamentations does not offer easy answers to the voice of suffering people (whose pain results from sin against God), but permits their voice to be heard in forceful and honest language within faith toward God as the source of their hope (p. 256).

Bennett's commentary on the book of Lamentations provides a readable and balanced exegetical work. Nevertheless, some minor concerns are in order. First, when discussing the poetic meter of Lamentations, he comments, "Most OT poetry has a three/three pattern" (p. 199). This statement is simply untrue. According to the recent studies on the poetic meter, OT poetry exhibits a wide range of diversity in its metrical pattern. Second, based on the discussion of Lam 3:38, Bennett comments, "In strict Old Testament monotheism, the source of evil cannot be blamed on the devil" (p. 237). Here, he needs to clarify what the word *rā'ôl* means. As in Amos 3:6, calamities and disaster come from God's will and permission, but this does not support the idea that God is the source of moral evil. Third, when Bennett deals with the theologically complicated issue of suffering, one might wish that he had discussed it at more length. For instance, the issue regarding punishment of children for the sins of the fathers in Lam 5:7 is ethically significant, as compared with Ezek 18:4. Readers might like to see how our author deals with this issue in depth, but his discussion is too brief. Fourth, if this book had an index, it would be easier for readers to find discussion of various passages.

All in all, despite a few exegetical and theological concerns, Bennett's contribution can be considered a valuable addition to the NBBC series, particularly for pastors and theological students.

Sung Jin Park
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, OH

Song of Songs. By Paul J. Griffiths. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011, lviii + 182 pp., \$32.99.

Paul J. Griffiths's *Song of Songs* is a 2011 contribution to the Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible published by Baker. Distinctive of

this series is the assumption that doctrine clarifies the interpretation of Scripture and organizes the Bible's heterogeneity. Doctrine is "fluid" and multiplex, says editor R. R. Reno, and so takes precedence over the rigidity of exegesis. Other hallmarks of the Brazos series include preference for the Nicean tradition, the inclusion of varied hermeneutical methods, a communal reading of Scripture, a postmodern framework for interpretation, and the application of Origen's *analogia fidei* (rule of faith) to an understanding of the text.

Griffiths divides the Song into 77 small units of mostly one or two sentences each, contending that the text displays little unity. Rather, it is a "compilation of disparate song fragments" (p. xxvii). He does, however, grant "approximate" chiasmic structure to the work, with 5:1 as the axis (pp. 91, 118). The Song took shape over a long compilation process, with post-exilic completion and fixation in the canon by the second century, he posits (p. xxiii). The reason for its Solomonic association is "unclear," Griffiths concludes, noting that the Hebrew king is "marginal" to interpreting the text (p. xxvii).

Characteristic of Griffiths's reading of the Song is what he labels a "figural" approach in which an event or saying "communicates something other than itself" (p. lvii). He distinguishes this method from allegorism in that the "figural" affirms the "literal," surface sense of the text. In my view, this "figuring" resembles typology, yet without the pre-figuring element. The result, though, allows the text to mean pretty much whatever the reader wants it to mean. Authorial intent is, to Griffiths, a "chimera" (p. 11). Something of the medieval *quadrigia* echoes through the poetic lines when, for example, "the beloved" (female) can be read to mean not just the girl in the love poetry, but also Israel, the church, Mary, and the individual believer/reader (p. xxxviii). Similarly, we seem to stretch the limits of language to see Solomon's couch as the temple (p. 48) and approaching his bed as the equivalent of approaching the Lord (p. 85). Perhaps these may enter a reading of the Song as applications, but is the surface structure of the text elastic enough to load all of these ideas as meaning? I remain skeptical.

As far as strengths go in *Song of Songs*, I note several: Griffiths's detailed surveys of themes and words in the Song as they occur throughout Scripture (e.g. p. 21); the candor with which he wrestles with difficulties in the text (e.g. 6:12; 8:11–12, 13); Griffiths's feel for the shifting tones and moods of the book—the interplay of presence and intimacy with absence and separation, for example (p. 73); his application, I would say, of human love qualities to the believer's love for the Lord (p. 48); the way he exhibits a pastoral concern for the needs of the reader (pp. xxxviii, 16–17); sensitivity to literary features, including tropes, bracketing, tense shifts, and marker phrases, to name a few (pp. 51, 57, 75, 82, 91); and finally, acknowledgement that the lover and his beloved are archetypal of all monogamous love (p. 74).

In addition to the previously mentioned expansiveness of a “figural” reading—the author claims “an infinity of possible readings” present themselves (p. lvi)—other problems include the following: his choice of the New Vulgate as the basis for his translation and commentary, so that, for example, in 2:7 we are examining the Latin *caritas*, “lovingkindness,” rather than the semantically rich Hebrew *hesed* of the MT; the imposition of Catholic doctrine upon the text, since doctrine precedes exegesis in the philosophy of this series (pp. xii, xvi, 88), thus burdening the interpretation with a pan-Marianism (cf. pp. 22, 80; references to “Mary” in the index outnumber those to Jesus more than two to one) and suggesting that Griffiths’s mention of “Christian” is the equivalent of “Catholic” (pp. xxxiv, 35); needlessly provocative language in places (the Lord wants to kiss us, p. 8; human lovemaking figures “lovemaking” to the Lord, p. 53; sucking at Scripture’s breasts, p. 40); illegitimate totality transfer in places—for example, heaping up all the nuances of “anointing” as if they come into play in 1:2–3a where “anointing” is not even mentioned *per se*.

Griffiths’s postmodern reading of the Song informed, ironically, by medieval Catholic theology will doubtless offer reflective enrichment for those disposed to find meaning beyond the text. However, readers seeking an understanding of what the text of the Song of Solomon means and how it applies to them would be better served by the works of Richard Hess, Duane Garrett, Tremper Longman III, or Iain Provan.

Garnett Reid

Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, TN

The Concept of Canonical Intertextuality and the Book of Daniel. By Jordan M. Scheetz. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011, ix + 174 p., \$21.00 paper.

In recent years, canon has emerged as an important topic in biblical studies. *The Concept of Canonical Intertextuality and the Book of Daniel*, authored by Jordan M. Scheetz (Assistant Professor of Old Testament Languages and Literature at Tyndale Theological Seminary), contributes to this vital discussion through a canonical intertextual reading of the book of Daniel.

The first chapter surveys key scholarship on intertextuality (Julia Kristeva), intratextuality (George Lindbeck), and canon criticism (Michael Fishbane, James Sanders, and Brevard Childs). This discussion sets the foundation for Scheetz’s adoption of canonical intertextuality, largely based on Georg Steins’s concept of *kanonisch-intertextuelle Lektüre*. Canonical intertextuality examines how biblical texts “exegete one another through their order and overall placement together, giving a big picture that would not have been possible if textual units had been left by themselves” (p. 34). Its goal is to “understand the actual composition of the text of scripture that is at the same time a text and many texts” (p. 32).

The second chapter examines the date of Daniel's composition. Scheetz finds three possible approaches: composition during the Babylonian era, composition during the Maccabean period, and composition spanning both the Babylonian and Maccabean periods. In light of key differences between Daniel 1–6 and 7–12, Scheetz favors the last of these positions, saying, "The reality of this new phase of understanding is seen in the present state of Daniel research...that shows only varied forms of this approach" (p. 47).

The next two chapters outline Scheetz's canonical intertextual reading of the book of Daniel. The foundation for his analysis is the observation that "the book of Daniel is clearly divided into ten discreet scenes," each "distinguished from one another through a superscription of sorts that gives the initial setting for what is to follow" (p. 48). With the exception of the final scene, which spans Daniel 10–12, each chapter of the book preserves a unique scene. Because these scenes are not arranged chronologically, each pericope's diachronic indicators reveal "tension within the text" (p. 48). This tension indicates that the book is to be read not as a chronological narrative, but as a collection of discrete narrative units that "exegete one another through their ordering and overall placement together" (p. 129). Scheetz demonstrates canonical intertextuality by pointing to literary parallels (e.g. the role of the fourth kingdom in Dan 2:40–43 and 7:7–8 [pp. 87–88]) as well as linguistic ones (e.g. usage of the verb *מרר* in Dan 8:7 and 11:11 [p. 121]).

Scheetz concludes his study with two chapters that examine how the Old and New Testaments exegete or are exegeted by the book of Daniel. Scheetz presents texts from Exodus, Deuteronomy, Ezra, and Jeremiah in which Daniel 6 and 9 (especially 6:6–10; 9:10–11, 13) are "clearly being connected with other texts" (p. 130) through their reference to the law of God as well as to the covenant blessings and curses. Scheetz investigates, moreover, the placement of the book of Daniel within the canon, contending that Daniel's association with both the Prophets and Writings in ancient tradition reflects a tension in the book's interpretation. Lastly, Scheetz examines the NT's quotations of Daniel: Dan 3:6 (Matt 13:42, 50); Dan 7:13 (Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev 1:7); and Dan 9:27 (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; cf. Dan 11:31; 12:11).

As noted above, Scheetz's work offers an important contribution to discussions of canon and intertextuality. Scheetz moreover, offers a thoughtful and creative approach to understanding the book of Daniel, particularly regarding the relationship between Daniel 1–6 and 7–12. However, Scheetz never clearly defines what it means for a text to exegete another. How is one to know if conceptual parallels reflect the cognitive environment of apocalypticism rather than intertextuality?

Another problem is Scheetz's contention that "the underlying presupposition of this entire dissertation has been that the text of Daniel is a book found in the Hebrew Bible and further that it is rightly located

in the Ketuvim or Writings in the tripartite division of Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim" (p. 140). How this presupposition is foundational for his study is unclear, especially since Scheetz goes on to note how Daniel was associated with both the Prophets and Writings in antiquity and concludes, "Regardless of which placement is the 'original,' the fact that Daniel is understood as being a part of two different sections of the Hebrew Bible demonstrates a tension in the interpretation of the book of Daniel" (p. 144).

Lastly, Scheetz never addresses apocryphal works such as Bel and the Dragon. For example, how do the additions to Daniel relate to the biblical canon, and what role might they play regarding canon and intertextuality?

Despite the above drawbacks, Scheetz's *Concept of Canonical Intertextuality and the Book of Daniel* is an insightful example of how canonical intertextuality might be applied to biblical studies. Those who are interested in the book of Daniel and the issue of canon will profit from reading this book.

Benjamin J. Noonan
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, OH

The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition. Edited by Michael W. Holmes. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature; Bellingham: Logos Bible Software, 2010, xxiii + 516 pp., \$29.95.

Why a new edition of the Greek New Testament? That is the question addressed in the preface (pp. vii–viii) of the *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition* (SBLGNT), which was sponsored by The Society of Biblical Literature in conjunction with Logos Bible Software. The preface contains three answers to this question. First, although the Nestle-Aland (NA) and United Bible Society (UBS) editions are widely appreciated and used, there are many scholars and students in "underresourced regions" who do not have access to an "up-to-date, critically edited Greek New Testament (GNT) in electronic form" (p. vii) to use in their research and publications. The SBLGNT is freely downloadable for study and limited use in publications at <http://sblgnt.com> and has been encoded in an easily exchangeable Unicode-compliant font in order to meet the needs of such students and scholars. (Users should consult the extremely liberal "End-User License Agreement" [p. iv].) Second, the SBLGNT may serve to remind readers of the GNT that the task of NT textual criticism is not finished and that they should not passively accept the standard text as the "final" text. Finally, and related to the last point, the SBLGNT may foster further interest in identifying the earliest text and all the variant readings in order to understand better "how particular individuals and faith communities

adopted, used, and sometimes altered the texts that they read, studied, and transmitted” (p. viii).

In the introduction to the SBLGNT the editor, Michael Holmes, explains the methodology he employed in compiling this text, the symbols in the text, and the apparatus. Holmes established his text with the help of four other editions of the GNT. He used Westcott and Hort’s text (1881) because of its wide influence, its use in the creation of the original Nestle text, and its use as the initial basis of comparison in the making of the UBSGNT. He chose Tregelles’s GNT (1857–1879) because of the consistency of Tregelles’s view and the breadth of his knowledge of the textual evidence. The third edition he used is Goodrich and Lukaszewski’s *A Reader’s Greek New Testament* (2003), which “presents the Greek text behind the New International Version, as reconstructed by Edward Goodrick and John Kohlenberger III” (p. x). It is close to the NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} text, differing from it only at 231 places, and it represents the text chosen by the international group of scholars responsible for the NIV translation, the Committee on Bible Translation. Holmes also used Robinson and Pierpont’s *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform 2005*, because it is a reliable representative of the Byzantine textual tradition.

To establish the text of SBLGNT Holmes started with the Westcott and Hort text (WH) and matched it to the orthographic standards of the SBLGNT, which follows the Bauer-Danker-Arndt-Gingrich lexicon (BDAG) for spelling, accents, and breathings, both in the text and apparatus. BDAG was chosen as the basis of the orthography because it is used worldwide and for pragmatic reasons. (Holmes edited his text in one year, and it took Westcott and Hort twenty-eight years, partly because they wrestled with questions of orthography.) Then he compared the modified WH to the other three editions to find points of agreement and disagreement between them. Where all four editions agreed those readings were tentatively accepted as the text of the SBLGNT. Holmes then worked through the entire text, giving special attention to the points of disagreement, but evaluating every reading, even when all four texts agreed.

In his evaluation of the four Greek editions mentioned above for the SBLGNT, Holmes employed an approach to textual criticism known as reasoned eclecticism. He does not explain his methodology in the introduction to the SBLGNT, but for an overview of the methodology and historical perspectives that Holmes employs in the practice of NT textual criticism see his article “Reconstructing the Text of the New Testament,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* (ed. David E. Aune; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) 77–89. On page 84 of that article, he writes that reasoned eclecticism “seeks to apply to the New Testament on a passage-by-passage basis, all the evidence, tools, and criteria available” (both external and internal evidence), and practitioners of this

methodology approach each variation unit “on its own merit and as possibly unique.” Especially important for the determination of the results different practitioners of reasoned eclecticism obtain is their view of the history of the text. Holmes (following G. Zuntz) believes that original readings could be preserved in any one of the three main textual traditions, although they are preserved more often in the Alexandrian than in the Western or Byzantine. (For more detail about Holmes’s views concerning the history of the NT text, see his article “Westcott & Hort at 125 (& Zuntz at 60): Their Legacies and Our Challenge,” which is available on his SBLGNT web page (<http://michaelwholmes.com/sbl-greek-new-testament-2>).

Holmes’s application of this methodology results in some interesting readings in the SBLGNT. Out of the 6,928 variation units in the apparatus, Holmes prefers a reading not found in any of the four primary editions 56 times. In 969 variation units the SBLGNT agrees with the Robinson-Pierpont Byzantine text, and in 66 units it agrees with the Robinson-Pierpont text against the other three primary editions. It differs from Westcott and Hort’s text in 881 instances. Also, the SBLGNT differs from the NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} text over 540 times. Thus, the UBSGNT is not meant to complement the NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} text, but rather to challenge it where it disagrees with it. (The NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} text [NA in SBLGNT] is explicitly cited in the SBLGNT only when it differs from the NIV textual base.)

Holmes follows various works for other details of the SBLGNT. For capitalization he follows the pattern he used in the third edition of *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), capitalizing the first word of a paragraph, the first word of direct speech, and proper nouns. For verse divisions he follows the NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} text. For punctuation he generally follows Westcott and Hort’s text, and for paragraphs he generally follows the pattern of the NRSV.

The symbols in the text and the textual apparatus are easy to understand. The textual apparatus contains a textual note for each variation unit, indicating the readings of the primary editions for each unit. Readers may not be satisfied using the SBLGNT apparatus by itself, since it only lists the readings of the four primary texts (and NA where it differs from the NIV) and has no manuscript evidence. This was done for pragmatic considerations, and the apparatus of the SBLGNT is meant to complement the NA^{26–27}/UBS^{3–4} apparatus, not to replace it. The font of the SBLGNT (SBL Greek font) is larger than the pocket edition of the NA text and very readable.

Holmes makes the wise decision to use brackets sparingly in the text; he employs single brackets, indicating the enclosed text is doubtful, only six times. He does this because he feels brackets have been overused in some recent editions, because he believes one of an editor’s duties is to make hard choices, and because there is a concern that brackets bias the

reader's decision-making process toward inclusion; one cannot bracket the omission of words.

The SBLGNT is a gift to the church; students of Scripture who have never been able to access a GNT previously now have one available online. The SBLGNT is also a welcome contribution to NT scholarship; Holmes's 543 differences from the NA²⁶⁻²⁷/UBS³⁻⁴ text should stimulate renewed discussion of the original text, the history of the text, and the best methodologies to employ in pursuit of the original text.

W. Edward Glenny
Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN

Stone and Dung, Oil and Spit: Jewish Daily Life in the Time of Jesus. By Jodi Magness. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, xv + 335 pp., \$25.00 paper.

This book provides an engaging discussion of Jewish daily life in the time of Jesus. Magness compares and contrasts the views and practices of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and at times Jesus and his followers. Of course, most of what we know about the various theological views comes from written sources; so primary documents (Talmud, Qumran, Gospels, Josephus, etc.) are referenced often. These written sources are deftly illustrated by, and sometimes interpreted through, archaeological finds. The result is an enlightening and enjoyable read.

Chapter 1 provides the setting for the book. Magness reviews the socio-economic groups that formed Jewish society in Jesus' day and observes that Jesus was part of the large lower-class population. Chapter 2 covers purification through bathing and hand washing, as well as a fascinating discussion of why scrolls were widely considered to cause impurity. Chapters 3–6 deal largely with eating: clean and unclean foods, ways of preparing food, household vessels, dining customs, and fasting. The question of whether or not glass vessels were susceptible to impurity provides a helpful case study in the development of purity laws for items that did not exist when the OT was written. Equally interesting is the discussion of vessels made of stone and of dung, and their relation to purity laws.

Chapters 7 and 8 cover coins and clothing. Regarding the temple tax, Magness observes that both the Essenes and Jesus rejected the switch from a one-time to an annual temple tax. Another interesting discussion regards the discovery of thousands of small denomination coins along the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, perhaps thrown there in accord with rabbinic injunctions related to vows and sin offerings. In the chapter on clothing, Magness argues convincingly that Jesus belonged to a minority of Jews who wore tassels (*tzitzit*) on their outer garments as prescribed by OT law, and that it was this "fringe" rather than a simple garment hem that was touched by some of those Jesus healed (Matt 9:20–21; 14:35–36).

She also suggests that those seeking to touch Jesus' *tzitzit* may have wished to avoid passing along their own impurity by touching him more directly.

Chapter 9 focuses on two subjects, oil and spit. Magness attributes the use of oil for bathing/anointing to the adoption of a Roman custom. The custom appears a number of times in the Gospels, and it is traceable in the archaeological record by the appearance of unique perfume and oil bottles (*unguentaria*). Spitting was another activity that was subject to a variety of purity laws, and Magness pulls together a variety of interesting texts in this regard. Unfortunately, the NT occurrences of this activity, from Jesus' use of spit for healing to the soldiers spitting on Jesus during his trial, are largely neglected.

Ancient toilets and associated habits are the topic of chapter 10. The bulk of the chapter is given to a discussion of Essene toilet habits, which appear to have been based on particular OT regulations and were much more private than the rest of Judaism during the time of Jesus. This is accompanied by a discussion of the various remains found at Qumran (Magness accepts the Qumran, Essene, sectarian document connection) and the theories that have arisen to explain them. Interestingly, Magness demonstrates that the Essenes were different from other Jews in considering toilet activities to be ritually polluting.

Chapter 11 focuses on tombs and burial customs. This is the longest chapter in the book, and perhaps the most interesting. Magness traces the appearance of monumental tombs in Israel from the first great Hasmonean monuments, likely inspired by the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, to the tomb complex of Herod the Great. Even more intriguing is the appearance of ossuaries during this period. Magness suggests that these are likely modeled after Roman cinerary urns, and thus that Jerusalem's elite adopted the external trappings of cremation while preserving the bones of the deceased. By contrast, the lower classes used simple pit or cist tombs, as found at places like Qumran and Khirbet Qazone.

After a broader discussion of burial customs, Magness addresses three specific examples: Jesus' death and burial, the recently discovered Talpiyot tomb, and the James ossuary. Having reviewed the evidence for crucifixion during this time period, as well as Jewish customs related to death and burial, she concludes that the Gospel accounts of Jesus' removal from the cross and burial accord well with both archaeological evidence and Jewish law. In contrast, the claim that the Talpiyot tomb belonged to Jesus' family is to be rejected. This is particularly true if one is inclined to accept the Gospel accounts, but the archaeological evidence for burial practices of lower-class families and the complete lack of any corroborating literary evidence also weigh heavily against it. In a similar vein, Magness considers it very unlikely that the James ossuary belonged to the brother of Jesus. She bypasses the longstanding debate on the age

or authenticity of the ossuary and its inscription, focusing instead on a different aspect. She reasons that James, like Jesus, came from a lower-class family, and thus probably could not have afforded his own or a family rock-cut tomb. Furthermore, the epistle of James (if penned by the same man, as tradition has it) expresses rather negative views of the wealthy. It stands to reason, then, that James would have been buried in the same manner as other lower-class Jews of his day. While Jesus received an exceptional burial due to the circumstances of his death, there is no indication that this could or would have applied to James.

A final chapter, actually an epilogue, describes some of the changes that took place within Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70. It is generally agreed, she observes, that rabbinic Judaism became more inclusive and pluralistic, with less emphasis on the differences between the various groups, movements, or sects. Although brief, the chapter functions well as a wrap-up of the preceding discussion.

Nearly half of the book consists of notes, bibliography, and indices (the main text ends on p. 186). Thankfully, the notes section includes the corresponding page numbers of the text at the top of each page, making it much easier to navigate than many books that use endnotes. The two indices cover modern authors and ancient texts, including Scripture. About 50 good-quality black and white photos and drawings are included between chapters 6 and 7.

One of the aspects of Jewish daily life in the time of Jesus that is brought out in this book again and again, although perhaps not intentionally, is the burden that Jewish law had developed into by Jesus' time. As Magness compares and contrasts the purity requirements of different sects, looking for commonalities and ultimately a source (usually in the OT), it is repeatedly obvious that the OT laws were extended and expanded. Jesus' words "My yoke is easy, and my load is light" (Matt 11:30) must have been welcomed in ways that modern readers often miss.

This book would work well for a NT backgrounds or culture class. It would also be a great supplement for a NT Survey or Life of Christ course, on either the college or seminary level. A heftier (and much pricier) reference work on roughly the same subject is the *Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine* (ed. Catherine Hezser; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). In addition to her mastery of the material, Magness's writing is easy to understand and engaging, making this book a welcome addition to the study of the NT and late Second Temple Judaism.

Kris J. Udd
Grace University, Omaha, NE

Jesus and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament. By Steve Moyise. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011, viii + 147 pp., \$21.99 paper.

Few pursuits in NT scholarship have elicited more perennial interest than the quest for the historical Jesus and the NT use of Scripture. Indeed, the two pursuits are frequently related. On the one hand, those interested in the historical Jesus are compelled to ask to what extent the historical Jesus conceived of his life, ministry, and death as a fulfillment of the Scriptures of Israel. On the other hand, those concerned with the hermeneutical practices of the NT authors are bound to wonder whether the use of Scripture in the NT emerged primarily from the theologizing of the early church or from the way in which Jesus himself interpreted Scripture. Hence, the quest for the historical Jesus and the investigation into the NT use of Scripture must inevitably intersect at the quest for the historical Jesus' use of Scripture, a potentially wearisome expedition that quite often involves many complex and inter-related issues. Thankfully, Steve Moyise proves to be an eminently qualified guide for the journey, offering a succinct, accessible, and engaging introduction into the scholarly discussion of the use of Scripture by the historical Jesus in his recent work, *Jesus and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.

In his introductory chapter, Moyise orients the readers to the discussion, explaining that an analysis of the use of Scripture by the historical Jesus entails two basic steps. First, the task requires a consideration of the distinct portraits of each of the Gospel authors. How do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each present Jesus using Scripture? Second, given the ostensible differences between each of the Gospel portraits in this regard, the quest for the historical Jesus' use of Scripture must then press on to a critical appraisal of the evidence, in which the historian attempts to discern what Jesus actually said to provide the impetus for the various Gospel accounts. In other words, in order to reach sensible conclusions concerning the use of Scripture by the historical Jesus, one must first survey the available evidence in the primary sources and then evaluate the various arguments that might be employed in the service of any particular historical reconstruction. Having established this two-step framework for the discussion, the rest of the book then pursues each of these issues in turn.

The first four chapters of the book are dedicated to an analysis of Jesus' use of Scripture in each of the four Gospels. For the Synoptic Gospels, Moyise structures his analysis according to the threefold division of the OT into the law, the prophets, and the writings. Each chapter begins by addressing that particular evangelist's portrayal of Jesus' attitude toward the law. Then, the analysis proceeds to a consideration of Jesus' use of the prophets and the writings. Though brief, these chapters offer an overview of some of the distinctive elements in each of the Synoptic

accounts of Jesus' use of Scripture. Throughout the work, the author affirms Markan priority and is optimistic that Q provides the earliest strata of recoverable tradition. For John's Gospel, Moyise adapts his approach, since the Johannine Jesus explicitly quotes Scripture only four times. The author evaluates each Johannine scriptural quotation in sequence before considering other allusions and references to Scripture by Jesus in John. Moyise is skeptical that John offers much help in reconstructing what Jesus actually said concerning Scripture, though the Gospel may contribute more indirectly to a general understanding of the self-perception of the historical Jesus.

Having surveyed the testimony of each of the Gospel accounts, Moyise then develops a typology of different approaches to the task of historical reconstruction with regard to Jesus' use of Scripture. Accordingly, three successive chapters introduce the minimalist, the moderate, and the maximalist views of the use of Scripture by the historical Jesus. Moyise traces the basic contours of each approach and surveys the work of some especially prominent figures within each tradition of interpretation. Thus, Geza Vermes and Dominic Crossan are identified as important minimalist scholars, and Marcus Borg is depicted as a transitional figure between the minimalist and moderate viewpoint. James Dunn is set forth as a prominent moderate interpreter, with Tom Wright serving as a bridge between moderate and maximalist perspectives. Finally, the key figures within the maximalist camp are identified as Charles Kimball and Richard France. Any attempt at classification is bound by certain limitations, and one might quibble with the classification or exclusion of a particular author. However, Moyise's approach lends clarity to the discussion, furnishing a heuristic framework that allows the author in his concluding chapter to identify some of the crucial presuppositional points of contention upon which the debate turns. The book also includes two appendices and a select bibliography for further study.

The most praiseworthy feature of Moyise's work is its accessibility. With a clear and winsome manner of presentation, *Jesus and Scripture* orients readers to many of the key figures and issues within a realm of debate that can frequently become quite technical. Unfamiliar terminology is consistently defined. Highlighted paragraphs set apart brief excurses pertaining to topics of special interest, such as the criteria of embarrassment and dissimilarity, the question of eyewitness testimony in the Gospels, and Hillel's seven exegetical rules. In addition, the print and layout of the text is appealing and contributes to the book's readability.

As one might expect with such a brief introductory text, the work at times is prone to oversimplification and generalization. William Wrede, for example, is the sole figure mentioned as a forefather to the minimalist perspective. Likewise, Albert Schweitzer is set apart as the lone early

representative of an apocalyptic approach to the historical Jesus. To those familiar with the history of scholarship pertaining to the historical Jesus, these will be seen as definite simplifications. Perhaps most peculiarly, Moyise repeatedly refers to the verdict of “most scholars” on matters as controversial as the provenance and dating of Q (p. 9), the nature of Jesus’ observance of the Jewish law (p. 16), and the location of the Temple demonstration in the chronology of Jesus’ ministry (p. 73). Certainly at least a citation referring to a more detailed discussion would be warranted at these points. Nevertheless, though Moyise’s work is necessarily selective and lacking in nuance at a few places, the analysis is by no means superficial. Whatever may be lost in subtlety is more than made up for by the vitality of the author’s presentation.

Indeed, by adopting an open-ended approach that encourages further discussion, *Jesus and Scripture* invites its readers into a more sustained engagement with the historical Jesus’ use of Scripture. For the most part, the work’s approach is simply to lay out some of the most important data to be considered and then to leave readers to come to their own conclusions about Jesus’ use of Scripture. An exception occurs in the discussion of the moderate viewpoint, when at times Moyise cannot refrain from taking up a defense of certain interpretations. Yet overall the author is quite restrained and even-handed in his presentation of the available evidence. The conclusion of the book, in particular, provides a good starting point for further consideration of the issues at hand, briefly revealing the author’s own position and directing the readers toward an evaluation of some of the most fundamental concerns that undergird the historical enterprise. As an introductory text, *Jesus and Scripture* is sure to be a useful resource for those who wish to become acquainted with the scholarly discussion of the historical Jesus, the use of Scripture in the Gospels, and, most particularly, the use of Scripture by the historical Jesus.

Benjamin R. Wilson
University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

The Gospel and Letters of John. By Urban C. von Wahlde. 3 vols. ECC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, lii + 705 pp., xvii + 929 pp., xii + 441 pp., \$180.00 paper.

The Gospel of John is no stranger to massive monographs and commentaries, but the recent commentary on John’s Gospel and Letters in the Eerdmans Critical Commentary series by Urban von Wahlde is in printed format a descendent of the Nephilim, with a 3-volume price (\$180) that is just as gargantuan. Despite its size and cost, this commentary “plus” (for it is more than a simple commentary) is the *magnum opus* of a world-class scholar and a major contribution to Johannine studies.

Rather than producing a commentary on the Gospel and Letters of John, von Wahlde has more accurately written a commentary on the entire Johannine tradition. By focusing on the tradition, von Wahlde is not merely concerned with the Gospel in its final form but with all of its tradition history and compositional complexity. The primary entry point into the Johannine tradition is an examination of “aporias” or literary problems that obstruct a smooth, consistent reading of the material (e.g. awkward sequence, contrasts in theology, alternations in language, contradictions, and varieties of viewpoint). While such an approach is not new, previous attempts were lacking in the development of the proper criteria for identifying the material. For this reason von Wahlde provides a robust methodology to recognize aporias or seams, and he provides objective-leaning criteria to identify interpretively the material according to its type, with a resulting reconstruction of various “editions.” Although the methodological details cannot be rehearsed here, it is worth noting that von Wahlde is quite conscious of detractors and provides several pages of possible “questions and concerns” regarding his analysis (pp. 34–43). Ultimately, von Wahlde is primarily concerned with the final form (final edition) of the Gospel of John, but he is convinced that the earlier editions are a useable resource not only to explain the final edition (and vice versa) but also to depict the trajectory of the tradition, which the final form is receiving and interpreting. This is why von Wahlde’s work is a commentary “plus” and not a commentary for the casual reader. Von Wahlde is analyzing several layers or traditions in any one passage simultaneously, attempting to account for the full literary and theological development of the Johannine literature. Von Wahlde admits that his commentary “makes no pretense to be a ‘handy reference work’” (p. 44), and it is the only commentary I have ever seen that spends nearly eight pages explaining how to read the commentary, with alternatives provided depending on the reader’s intention.

Since von Wahlde is commentating on the entire Johannine tradition, an overview of his reconstruction of it is necessary. The first edition (E1) of the Gospel (AD 55–65) was a complete narrative of the ministry of Jesus, focusing more on miracles than conflict and containing a traditional Jewish Christology (e.g. Jesus greater than Moses). The second edition (E2) of the Gospel (AD 60–65), by means of continued reflection upon the meaning of Jesus’ ministry by the Johannine community, moved beyond the more basic Jewish theology and came to be more at odds with its parent Judaism. E2 is markedly shaped by conflict with “official Judaism” via the local synagogue, including debates centering upon the identity of Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit that reveal their anachronistic nature. Following E2, an internal division in the community occurred (AD 65–70) over the understanding of its own tradition, especially elements of E2, with 1 John representing one position. The opponents (of the position of 1 John) depart from the community prior to the writing of 1

John, so that 1 John serves to promote and clarify the community's tradition, followed several years later by the aging wisdom of "the elder" of the community in 2 and 3 John. Between 3 John and E3 the elder dies (AD 80–90), leaving the community in need of a fresh articulation of its relation to the church at large and a reassessment of its own tradition and leadership. Shortly thereafter the third and final edition (E3) of the Gospel is written (AD 90–95), enshrining the interpretation of the tradition put forward by 1 John and the elder, now referred to as "the Beloved Disciple" and addressing new issues (e.g. relation with Synoptics; relationship between the Beloved Disciple and Peter) for the community.

The complex reconstruction of the Johannine tradition is reflected in the layout of the three-volume commentary. In volume 1: "Introduction, Analysis, and Reference," the commentary's method and procedures are substantially laid out, with the criteria for the identification of the material of each edition provided (i.e. terminology, narrative orientation, theological characteristics, features, and synthesis). Von Wahlde provides a remarkable analysis of the theological trajectories made manifest between the editions, with a robust "development" of Johannine theology. Volumes 2 and 3 are commentaries on the Gospel and the three Johannine Letters respectively. The commentary of volume 2, for example, is fitted to the interpretation of the tradition of the Gospel (in contrast to its final form) by examining for each pericope notes on the final form, composition history and intra-edition relations, interpretation for the verses within their edition, and role in the Gospel tradition. The analysis is remarkably consistent with the proposed method, and the insights are rich at numerous exegetical levels. The notes at the front and the addenda at the end of each pericope exhibit a mastery of the scholarly issues surrounding John and are saturated with rich historical, literary, and theological insights.

This commentary "plus" is a unique contribution to commentaries on the Gospel and Letters of John precisely because it is a commentary on the letters *and Gospel* of John. While it is commonplace for commentaries, especially more technical commentaries, to analyze the composition history of John, even adjusting their commentaries to fit their own proposed solutions (cf. Bultmann and Schnackenburg on the order of John 5–6), rarely does their analysis go beyond the Gospel's final form with any substantial analysis. Von Wahlde not only provides commentary equally on the final form and its preceding editions, but also analyzes the development trajectories between the editions. In fact, based upon his concern "that one cannot approach multilayered texts naively," this kind of commentary is not only warranted, it is for von Wahlde simply being faithful to the Gospel and Letters as they truly are. Thus, *The Gospel and Letters of John* might be the first and most comprehensive commentary on "the Johannine tradition" in print.

Since there is no space to deal with von Wahlde's handling of particular pericopae, our evaluation of the commentary can only remain general. There are several notable strengths. First, the depth and breadth of its diachronic analysis is unparalleled. With the spike in interest in narrative/synchronic approaches to the NT and, therefore, the Gospel of John, von Wahlde provides a strong argument and partnering tool for examining the Johannine literature diachronically. Even more, von Wahlde is clearly aware of the synchronic bent of the guild, and his commentary demands that the diachronic nature of biblical texts not be retired prematurely or considered passé. Evangelicals, who are especially concerned with the situatedness of the biblical documents, must be forthright regarding the possibility and reality of the fleshly composition of the inspired Scriptures. Second, this commentary has provided not only a competent diachronic analysis but also a rich analysis of the textual details (the most useful for me are in the notes section) and the theology of John. Von Wahlde is a Johannine veteran, and a career of research is bulging forth from these three volumes.

With any commentary, and especially with one that tackles one of the enigmas of the biblical documents, there are a few weaknesses worthy of reflection. First, as much as von Wahlde has made a strong case for a diachronic interpretation of the Johannine tradition, in so many of its parts and even as a whole a convincing case just cannot be made for his reconstruction and, therefore, for so many of his judgments and analyses. Beyond the large scale concerns or tweaks I and others might suggest in regard to method in general, the plethora of judgments on top of judgments makes certain that no two interpreters would agree, and the likely cumulative range of disagreement is worth noting. It is fair to say that the overall approach of von Wahlde, even after granting his diachronic concerns, is where I had the most reservations. Second, the strength of the commentary—its composition concerns—also becomes its weakness. The commentary spends as much space interpreting what we do not have (E1 and E2) as it does what we do have (E3, the final form). While von Wahlde admits the commentary is not user friendly, what is also apparent is that, because there would be so many methodological disagreements, a good portion of the commentary would be unusable or would at least require a healthy dose of the reader's revision. Third, as much as this commentary is written "for readers who seek to understand the religious meaning of those texts" (p. 1), it presupposes a definition of the nature and function of Scripture that is far from being universally accepted. For this reason this excludes other potential definitional disagreements, like the nature of meaning and the role of history, topics that go a long way to give direction to the commentary. Even beyond the basic hermeneutical differences, the theological analysis is particularly narrow in light of the Christian tradition as a whole. For example, the theology mined by this commentary is the

theology of “the elder” of the Johannine community behind the text, not the theology proclaimed to the contemporary reader or the message of the God who inspired it. Even more, while von Wahlde established a sort of canon inclusive of three Gospel additions and three letters, a much more common canon is the Old and New Testaments, which themselves have development trajectories that are worthy of analysis. (Why do “reinterpretations” of John stop at E3 and not progress further—through the canon and ultimately the church?) Thus, even if we could agree with the interpretation of the Johannine literature for John’s church, von Wahlde would still not have sufficiently interpreted the Johannine literature for *the* church. To be fair, this final concern is more a concern with what von Wahlde did not say than with what he did, but such a concern is valid when one is interpreting a collection of books that are part of a larger “canon” and belong to a very different “church.”

Edward W. Klink III

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

Echoes of Friendship in the Gospel of John. By Martin M. Culy. New Testament Monographs 30. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2010, xii + 226 pp., \$95.00.

Friendship in the ancient world is a burgeoning topic of interest that Martin Culy’s book, *Echoes of Friendship in the Gospel of John*, adds to in a positive way with his study of the friendship motif in the Gospel of John. Culy does *not* believe friendship is the major theme driving the Fourth Gospel, which is obvious to anyone reading it (p. 178). Instead, he argues that friendship is a motif whose language was woven in an unconscious manner into the text (p. 20), likely recognizable to most intended readers of the Gospel (p. 184), and as a result would highlight a startling claim of Jesus’ missed by modern readers unfamiliar with the ancient language of friendship (p.187). *Echoes of Friendship in the Gospel of John* is a revision of Culy’s dissertation from Baylor University.

The layout of the book is simple: first chapter, method; second chapter, background; third and fourth chapters, application of method and background in light of two avenues into the friendship motif in the Fourth Gospel; fifth chapter, conclusion; plus bibliography and indices at the end. In the first chapter, Culy explains the differences between a theme (distinct) and a motif (indistinct): “Where a theme relates to what a story is about and will tend to be readily apparent through a superficial reading of the text, motifs are woven into the fabric of the text and operate below the surface” (p. 14). For Culy, friendship in the Gospel of John is a motif, not a theme. Culy investigates the friendship motif via audience criticism (with some other literary insights such as characterization included), relying heavily on the idea of the “authorial audience” from the works of Peter Rabinowitz. His goal is to perceive

how the author's intended audience would have heard or read the Gospel text specifically in relation to friendship—and to do this Culy uses chapter 2 to set up the “conceptual field” (p. 34) for the manner in which ancients understood friendship in their own context. He then examines friendship in contemporaneous Greco-Roman, Jewish, and early Christian writings, with a great deal of emphasis placed on the works of Cicero. Culy finds that friendship between humanity and deity was unachievable in Greco-Roman context, even though the idea appears in non-ideal ways in Jewish context. One more point is worth noting: Culy's main interest is neither friendship in general nor some politics-friendship hybrid but *ideal friendship*—the kind of friendship humans long for among the people they know. Therefore Culy's thesis is to “consider how ideal personal friendship—a single code or ‘social norm’ that makes up part of the set of communication codes shared by the original writer and readers—would have shaped the authorial audience's reading of the Fourth Gospel” (p. 25).

In chapters 3 and 4, Culy reads the Fourth Gospel along two avenues for traces of ideal friendship that would show up in the minds of readers within the authorial audience. He summarizes ancient-world ideal friendships as characterized by unity, mutuality, and equality (p. 62), and he combs the Gospel for these virtues as he reads the text. In chapter 3, Culy considers the relationship between Jesus and the Father, and sees “at least 58 allusions to the conceptual field of friendship that are used as a tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the Father” (p. 128). Most of these occur early in the Gospel; even the prologue introduces the friendship motif in its characterization of the relationship between the Word and God. In chapter 4, he considers the relationship between Jesus and his followers and finds that “language from the conceptual field of friendship is used at least 18 times to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers” (p. 175). While the Gospel of John only mentions four people who are recognized as being friends/beloved of Jesus, Culy sees echoes of friendship between Jesus and other characters in John, especially in the latter half of the text. The footwashing scene, the farewell discourse in the upper room, and the epilogue each trigger the conceptual field of friendship for the intended audience. Interestingly, Judas is depicted as the anti-friend (p. 148). The actual numbers from each chapter may not seem particularly strong divorced of exposition, but Culy does a fine job of explaining why ancient readers within the authorial audience would have, in fact, seen and heard friendship where modern readers do not.

Chapter 5, the conclusion to the book, reveals the importance of the friendship motif. The Fourth Gospel makes a startling claim that would seem even more shocking to a reader steeped in the ancient language of friendship. This claim is that God has an ideal, intimate friendship with his Son, Jesus, and that Jesus lowers himself to people so that they may

have an ideal, intimate friendship with him. Again, Culy's explanation is more robust than would appear in review. This claim is largely missed by readers outside of the authorial audience, but to readers within that audience, the transformation of ideal friendship would have been audacious (p. 32). Thus, "followers of Jesus are invited to enjoy a level of intimacy with him that can actually (and perhaps only) be compared to the level of intimacy that he enjoys with the Father" (p. 178).

One concern with Culy's book is the differentiation between ideal friendship and friendship in its more general usage. Culy succeeds in demonstrating that the authorial audience would have viewed the relationships in the Gospel much more through a lens of friendship than do modern readers. Yet the ideal friendship concept is less clear, both as a modern explanation of ancient ideas and as a distinct point of the friendship motif in the Gospel. This concern coincides with Culy's own questions for his book, as to (1) how ancient people used prior knowledge in their reading of a text; and (2) what prior knowledge would ancient people possess (p. 30). More clarity on these questions is needed. Culy's claim that it is the "language of *ideal* friendship" (p. 163, emphasis his) that is consistently used throughout the Gospel to characterize relationships is unconvincing at this point—in that further work and clarification needs be done for this to be evident. Culy is on the right track, and this concern does not mar the work but does open the door for future effort in this area.

Perhaps by their nature, monographs are often guilty of shoehorning everything into one, overarching theory. In contrast to this, one of the great strengths of Culy's approach is his willingness to state that friendship is not the one and only way to read the Fourth Gospel (p. 180) and his willingness to take a much more subtle (and accurate) approach by working through the conceptual fields of friendship in the ancient world. Another strength of the book is Culy's avoidance of the semantic field fallacy, meaning that he recognizes that not every use of $\phi\iota\lambda\iota\alpha$ indicates friendship, nor is the absence of $\phi\iota\lambda\iota\alpha$ always indicative of the absence of friendship (p. 39). Culy's work will prove useful as a starting point for understanding how ancient readers perceived the idea of friendship in the texts they read and for additional insight into the background of the Fourth Gospel. It is highly recommend for NT scholars and libraries.

Douglas Estes
Dominican Biblical Institute, Limerick, Ireland

Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul: A Comparative Study. By Jason Maston. WUNT 2/297. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010, viii + 218 pp., €54.00 paper.

This book is the published form of Maston's Ph.D. thesis, completed under the direction of Professor Francis Watson at Durham University. It is a comparative study of divine and human agency in Sirach, the *Hodayot*, and Rom 7:7–8:13. Consciously written within the context of the "Copernican revolution" begun by E. P. Sanders (a.k.a., the new perspective on Paul), Maston's work sheds new light on the soteriological patterns of both Second Temple Judaism and Paul by examining these patterns through different lenses than the now traditional categories of "covenantal nomism" or "works of the law in Paul." My review will summarize Maston's argument and then highlight the contributions of his work.

In the introduction, Maston reframes the new perspective debate in terms of divine and human agency. Following the work of Sanders, the new orthodoxy in Pauline studies assumes that both Second Temple Judaism and Paul emphasize divine agency in salvation. Judaism was not a religion of legalistic works righteousness, but a religion in which salvation was by grace. This monolithic view of Judaism, however, is called into question by Josephus's descriptions of the Jewish schools. According to Josephus, the Essenes attributed everything to fate, whereas the Sadducees attributed nothing to fate, and the Pharisees stood in the middle. Josephus's descriptions demonstrate that there was a range of opinions in Second Temple Judaism about divine and human agency. Maston's study probes two documents that highlight this variety.

Sirach prioritizes human agency in obedience, employing the two-ways paradigm of Deut 30:15–20. Wisdom and life come through obedience to the law. Moreover, Ben Sira believes that human agents are able to obey the law without divine assistance—"ought" implies "can." Sirach even emphasizes human agency when he speaks of the judgment of God, since God rewards or punishes strictly on the basis of human deeds. Thus, Sirach is representative of Josephus's description of the Sadducees. "It was he who created humankind in the beginning, and he left them in the power of their own free choice. If you choose, you can keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice" (Sir 15:14–15 NRSV).

In sharp contrast, the *Hodayot*, a collection of hymns found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, is representative of Josephus's description of the Essenes. These hymns contain a pronounced pessimism about human agency in obedience, because human beings have been created from the dust and thus are morally weak. Countering this pessimistic anthropology, the hymns prioritize divine agency in the salvation of human beings—God predestines the righteous and imparts a spirit or inclination for

obedience. Thus, the *Hoyadot* “coordinates human action within the sphere of divine action” and prioritizes divine agency in obedience (p. 81).

The final chapter examines Paul’s argument in Rom 7:7–8:13 in light of his previous discussion. This passage falls within a larger section (6:1–8:13) that asks whether Paul’s Torah-free message can lead to human obedience. In Rom 7:7–25, Paul engages the two-ways tradition found in Sirach. The *éγώ* represents this tradition as a person who attempts to keep the law for life and optimistically believes this is possible. The *éγώ* discovers, however, that a third agent, Sin, prevents obedience and brings enslavement. In Rom 8:1–13, Paul engages the Jewish tradition found in the *Hodayot*. In this passage, God has sent another agent, the Spirit of Christ, to enable the human agent to obey the law. Significantly, Paul makes a Christological modification to the Jewish tradition of divine enablement. God not only predestines but intervenes in human history through the death of his Son. Thus, Paul’s view of agency prioritizes divine agency while including both divine and human action in the obedience of the law.

This volume makes significant contributions in at least three areas of Pauline studies. First, it demonstrates throughout that the interpretation of the OT plays a pivotal role in the debates surrounding the new perspective on Paul. Both Second Temple Jewish texts and Paul’s letters are interpreting the Hebrew Bible, and sometimes in different ways. For example, whereas Ben Sira reads the Torah through the lens of Deut 30:15–20, Paul begins with Hab 2:4 and Gen 15:6. These different hermeneutical starting points lead to different conclusions in Sirach and Paul (pp. 42–43), and Paul critiques the two-ways tradition found in Sirach (p. 133). In some cases, however, Paul interprets the Hebrew Bible in a way that is similar to his Jewish contemporaries. For example, both the *Hodayot* and Paul pick up the language of the Spirit who enables obedience from Ezekiel 11 and 36–37 (pp. 106, 160). Maston’s emphasis on the importance of the OT is not unique in these debates (see, e.g., *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* [London: T & T Clark, 2004] by his mentor Watson). Yet it is a helpful reminder that Pauline interpreters must primarily explain how Paul is reading the OT.

Second, Maston’s work offers a sustained critique of Sanders’s category of “covenantal nomism.” This term summarizes Sanders’s description of the pattern of religion found in Second Temple Judaism. One “gets in” the covenant by election, and the law is only a means of “staying in” the covenant. Because of the provision of atonement, anyone who intends to keep the law will stay in the covenant, except for those who deliberately reject the covenant. In response, Maston demonstrates that Sirach actually reverses the structure of covenantal nomism: Sirach seems to argue that the covenant was initiated by Abraham instead of God; he interprets “faith” in Gen 15:6 to mean obedience rather than trust in God’s promise; and he sees establishment of the covenant as a

response to Abraham's obedience in Genesis 22 (Sir 44:19–21; pp. 38–40). Further, Ben Sira's understanding of the Mosaic covenant emphasizes the human act of obedience rather than divine initiation (p. 41).

Similarly, Maston demonstrates that covenantal nomism does not fully describe the salvific pattern of the *Hodayot*. On the one hand, the pattern is similar in that God first acts in grace and the human responds in obedience. However, Sanders's categories of "getting in" and "staying in" lack an eschatological perspective—in the *Hodayot* entrance into the next age is dependent on election (cf. Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002]). Moreover, Sanders's categories of getting in through grace and staying in through obedience distinguish "too sharply between divine and human action. The *Hodayot* portrays obedience as something done by the human through the spirit" (p. 121). Maston's critique does not overthrow Sanders's paradigm, because Maston only examines a select number of texts. And it should be noted that Maston follows Sanders at certain points (e.g. the point that Paul rejected the law because of his conviction that God had acted in Christ; p. 171). Maston's critique does, however, question the paradigm of Sanders by demonstrating that Judaism was simply not monolithic. If nothing else, this should free Pauline interpreters from the interpretive constraints advocated by new perspective scholars (i.e. the constraint of interpreting Paul's critique of Judaism in light of the orthodox Sanders paradigm).

Maston's final contribution is to highlight the compatibility of divine and human agency in both Judaism and Paul. Although Sirach prioritizes human action, he still recognizes God's control of the world (p. 65). Although the *Hodayot* and Paul both prioritize divine action, they still recognize the necessity of human obedience. This compatibility is important because modern interpreters often assume their incompatibility. It is true that Paul argues that eternal life and death are in some sense conditioned upon human obedience in Rom 8:13. However, one cannot conclude, therefore, that final salvation is dependent on human works rather than divine action (contra Chris VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006]): "Paul, unlike VanLandingham, finds no conflict between the divine and human agents" (p. 168). Paul's prioritizing of divine agency in salvation also includes the enablement of the human agent to fulfill the law through love.

One question I had is whether Paul is challenging a Jewish perspective in Rom 8:1–13. In Rom 7:7–25 he continues the larger argument that the law cannot bring life or justification, a position that is clearly a challenge to the Jewish perspective represented by the dialogue partner in Romans 2 (and Paul's opponents in Galatians). However, in Rom 8:1–13, there is no indication that Paul is challenging a Jewish perspective. Clearly, both the *Hodayot* and Paul are drawing from the promise of the Spirit in the OT. Yet this does not mean that Paul is

challenging the perspective found in the *Hodayot*. Granted, Maston does give a caveat that the Paul is not engaging in “straightforward polemical engagement” in Rom 8:1–13 (p. 172).

Overall, Maston is to be commended for a careful and balanced explanation of the Jewish texts and Paul’s letter to the Romans. This book will be particularly useful for Pauline theologians who write about Paul and the Law.

Kevin W. McFadden
Louisiana College, Pineville, LA

Greening Paul: Rereading the Apostle in a Time of Ecological Crisis. By David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, and Christopher Southgate. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010, ix + 333 pp., \$34.95 paper.

Paul says that creation “has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth” as it waits for its liberation from decay and death. The modern ecological movement says that creation’s groaning is only getting worse, largely because of human impact on the planet. Global warming as a result of humans (disputed by a few) is not the only instance: land use and abuse, pollution, deforestation, desertification, dwindling water supplies, species extinction, and a host of other issues constitute creation’s intensifying groan. As the authors (self-identified as British academics formed by the Protestant tradition) of *Greening Paul* note, Christians have repeatedly brought the passages of Rom 8:19–23 and Col 1:15–20 to bear on issues related to ecology. However, up to this point “there has been no thorough, wide-ranging attempt to read Paul from an ecological perspective” (p. 4). This is the lacuna they hope to address.

In chapter 1, the authors offer a typology (with the usual caveats about oversimplification that accompany any attempt to offer a typology) for analyzing the way Scripture is used with respect to ecological concerns. The purpose of the typology is to show how hermeneutical issues, in particular issues related to biblical authority and one’s commitment to the issue in question, always and necessarily pervade any attempt to engage Scripture with contemporary issues, in this case ecology. They identify three types: resistance to Scripture because of ecological concerns (which they call Resistance Type A); resistance to ecological concerns because of Scripture (Resistance Type B); and an attempt to recover Scripture for use in promoting ecological concerns (Recovery).

In chapter 2, the authors analyze weaknesses of each of these three types in order to show that each of the types fails to address underlying and trajectory-setting hermeneutical commitments. To take the third type as illustrative, they argue that attempts to recover Scripture for ecological concerns fail to see that any “recovery” requires hermeneutical commitments that inevitably over-determine the texts themselves. For

example, an attempt to “recover” a biblical concept of stewardship requires giving functional priority to some texts and subordination of others in ways that make more of the texts in question than would appear to be justified outside of or prior to certain commitments about the aims for which the text is intended to be used. In their own ways, the other two types share the same fundamental weaknesses. The authors are clear that the weakness is not *that* the types have hermeneutical commitments, but that the types fail to account critically and consciously for those hermeneutical commitments.

The authors then propose an alternative way to appeal to Scripture, one that they think strikes a middle way between Resistance and Recovery types and does a better job of attending to hermeneutical commitments. They call this a “‘revisionist’ hermeneutic” (p. 46). In conversation with the work of Ernst Conradie, they argue that “the engagement between ancient text and modern context is one in which similarities are *made* by bringing certain motifs, ideas, or themes to the center, in a way that unavoidably ‘distorts’ the text, making of it something new, prioritizing some aspects of it and interpreting them in a particular way, and marginalizing or ignoring others. The task that this approach suggests is to articulate what kind of hermeneutical lens(es) might emerge from a (re)reading of the biblical texts in our contemporary situation and might appropriately resource an ecological theology” (pp. 46–47).

In chapter 3, they undertake this task and argue for a narrative hermeneutical lens for approaching Paul in light of ecological concerns. After surveying the turn to narrative in biblical and theological studies, and then specifically as the turn has been applied to Pauline studies, they engage the work of Northrop Frye and James F. Hopewell to outline narrative types that will inform their reading of Paul. In particular, they seek to trace out the narrative sub-structure of the Pauline corpus with respect to “the past, present, and future of creation” (p. 57).

In chapters 4, 5, and 6, they consider and then compare the “mantra” texts used so frequently with respect to ecological concerns, Rom 8:19–23 and Col 1:15–20. Since their engagement with the texts is substantively informed by the methodological and hermeneutical issues considered in the first three chapters, I can only give at best a general summation of it. On Rom 8:19–23 (chap. 4), the authors argue that it takes the shape more or less of Frye’s romantic genre as creation’s quest of longing for transformation, a quest that follows on Christ’s path of suffering and death unto glory. On Col 1:15–20 (they do not take up in-depth questions of authorship since their concern is with the canonical Pauline corpus, aside from authorship), they argue that it takes the form of Frye’s comic genre, as peace is made between creation and God. In chapter 6, the authors compare the two texts and find enough compatibility within their differences to warrant a hermeneutical focus on

the eschatological liberation of all creation, which serves as an appropriate hermeneutical lens for approaching the Pauline corpus as a whole.

The final two chapters consider first the Pauline corpus more broadly (chap. 7), and then in a preliminary way some possible ethical implications (chap. 8). In chapter 7, through engagement with numerous themes and texts in the broader Pauline corpus and in conversation with several contemporary interpreters of Paul, the authors offer an account of Paul's theological vision, informed by their hermeneutical lens as it was shaped and sharpened by narrative considerations of Rom 8:19–23 and Col 1:15–20. In sum, they find a vision that looks decisively forward to God's transformation and redemption of *all things*. Paul's vision is thoroughly Christo-centric, as Christ himself is the key to the unfolding plot. Humans have an important role to play for Paul, a role that suggests ethical implications with respect to ecology.

Some of those ethical implications are addressed in a preliminary way in chapter 8. On the generally agreed upon assumption that Paul's theology and ethics are inseparable, the authors suggest that Paul's theological vision implies an ethic of "christologically grounded other-regard and corporate solidarity" (p. 189). They argue that participation in Christ, coupled with the narratively warranted extension of other-regard and corporate solidarity to non-human elements of creation, has near limitless applications to ecological concerns, from vegetarianism to extinction prevention to climate change. In each case, it is Paul's eschatological vision for all creation that propels the Christian into concern for ecology.

Greening Paul is a fascinating, well-researched reading of Paul with ecological concerns in mind. On the one hand, the book is clearly aimed primarily at scholars in the fields of biblical and theological studies especially as they engage issues of ecology. On the other hand, given the explicit cross-disciplinary boundaries present, the book is, in most cases, free from overly specialized disciplinary jargon, and so, while careful and thoughtful, it is not overly technical. As such, in addition to a constructive contribution to both Pauline studies and to ecological studies, the text might serve a useful purpose even in upper level undergraduate environments, and certainly in graduate classes. Aside from obvious points of contribution to biblical studies with respect to Paul and to theological ethics with respect to ecological concerns, the book could serve as a useful case study in hermeneutics as the authors both explicitly address hermeneutics and then intentionally embody hermeneutical concerns in their argument.

While the authors do not identify themselves as evangelicals and while their approach and conclusions may well diverge in some respects from what most evangelicals would affirm (for example their suggestion that a literal fall does not fit with Darwinian evolution), the text ought to be read constructively, not only critically, by evangelicals. As noted above,

the hermeneutical issues explicitly raised and then ably embodied in the text, in particular their narrative approach to Pauline literature, could potentially serve as a constructive theological tool in the hands of evangelicals. Furthermore, for evangelicals pursuing ecological theological reflection and the ethical implications of that reflection, their engagement of the Pauline text with respect to ecological concerns makes substantive and provocative connections between the texts and the issue. Finally, their work deserves the attention of evangelicals if for no other reason than the simple fact that they do display a serious and interesting engagement with Scripture. Any serious attempt to engage Scripture ought to be considered charitably, even if critically, by evangelicals.

Aaron B. James
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

Regulations Concerning Tongues and Prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14.26–40: Relevance Beyond the Corinthian Church. By Elim Hiu. Library of New Testament Studies 406. London: T & T Clark, 2010, xii + 227 pp., \$120.00.

A little over a century ago, a new wave of Christians across North America and around the world took Christendom by storm with their newfound emphasis upon utterance gifts. Originally self-described as “Apostolic Faith,” these Pentecostals believed that if Christians of the “apostolic era” heard and proclaimed God’s revelation via prophecy, tongues, and interpretation, why not today? While certain pastors and academicians through the twentieth century opted for cessationism, Pentecostals forged ahead with not a little success. Though Pentecostals were often criticized and ostracized for their teachings and practices, few traditions of twentieth-century Christianity remained untouched; these phenomena would come to be a defining mark of the Charismatic Renewal and be received with gladness, particularly among global south Christians. Given the current trajectory of twenty-first century Christianity, Elim Hiu produces a timely volume to help contemporary readers assess the pastoral leadership of Paul (and other NT contributors) concerning first-century practices and subsequent implications for contemporary churches.

As the main title indicates, Hiu begins with Pauline regulations concerning the practice of tongues and prophecy at Corinth (1 Corinthians 12–14). Due to problems surrounding the use and abuse of spontaneous utterances, Paul must provide specific instructions for the congregations at Corinth. According to Hiu, the Corinthian gatherings smack of “competitive sport” marked by divisive and disruptive employment of utterance gifts (pp. 108–9). While these members view tongues speech as a badge of spirituality, Paul offers firm correctives. Paul encourages prophecy, but retains a positive yet relegated openness to

tongues; he pushes for greater emphasis upon prophecy since only vernacular speech edifies the many in contrast to uninterpreted tongues that edify only the speaker. Hiu argues correctly that Paul's preference for prophecy over tongues does not suggest the superiority of one kind of utterance to another (and certainly not a blanket condemnation of glossolalia), but the exercise of certain gifts at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right place (p. 119). For gatherings at Corinth, Paul's array of instructions for orderly worship returns consistently to his concern for edification. In a single meeting, Paul limits the number of tongues speakers to three. They must speak one at a time followed by an interpretation. Though Paul celebrates limited spontaneity, the speaker must exercise self-control (versus the bizarre behavior often celebrated in various mystery religions) and create space for diverse ways to receive edifying instruction.

With Paul's exhortations to the Corinthian believers firmly established, Hiu seeks to assess the weight of these injunctions alongside the Lukan narratives of church practices and regulations offered among other churches of the first century (p. 158). Hiu determines that Paul's prescriptive instructions to the Corinthian church may be applicable either generally or specifically to other NT congregations. Hiu wrestles with Paul's exhortations to seek peace/order and to do so "in all the churches" (1 Cor 14:33, 40). For example, while decency and order must be maintained, "there does not seem to be a consistent thread throughout all churches that a main concern was the edification of a congregation of believers" (p. 185). By implication, Hiu suggests that Paul's specific exhortations for the Corinthians may be modified in other churches as long as the primary principle of the edification of the whole church is not violated. In order to answer such variance, Hiu moves systematically through NT churches.

Hiu begins with a comparison of the Pentecost event in Jerusalem (Acts 2) to the Corinthian churches. Whereas the context of the Corinthians suggests repeated tongues, the tongues at the Jerusalem Pentecost serve an initiatory purpose. Whereas Paul exhorts the Corinthians to interpret for the sake of others, the listeners in Jerusalem understand the tongues (though Peter explains the significance of the event). Whereas Paul accuses certain Corinthian participants of self-promotion, Luke attacks no such desires among the Jerusalem participants. According to Hiu, these differences do not lead to a conclusion that the early disciples show lack concern for order (as Jews they would certainly be familiar with Temple and synagogue worship and liturgical practices). Moreover, though Luke chooses not to address order and disorder, Peter and the Eleven focus the participants upon homiletical discourse concerning the life and message of Jesus. Similarly, members of Cornelius's household (not necessarily a formal gathering of the church) at Caesarea speak in tongues with no indication of interpretation (Acts

10:46). Caesarean believers also entertain the role of prophets including the four daughters of Philip as well as meetings with Agabus. On the latter, Hiu suggests the narrative models the collective discernment required for the apparent incompatibility of Paul's revelation concerning a Spirit-directed trip to Jerusalem and the revelation of Christians at Tyre (Acts 21:4) who implore Paul not to go to Jerusalem. According to Hiu, Paul rejects the emotion-laden desires of those unwilling to adopt his call to suffer on account of the gospel (p. 166).

Paul's mission to Asia Minor includes engagement with residential and visiting prophets (Acts 13:1; cf. 11:27–30) at Syrian Antioch. The latter account suggests an evaluative and collective decision-making process that includes prayer and fasting. At Pisidian Antioch, elders are appointed with prayer and fasting. For both congregations, Hiu argues that the Corinthian regulations regarding prophecy would be applicable to the churches at Pisidian and Syrian Antioch (p. 168). At Ephesus, Luke reports prophecy and tongues in conjunction with Spirit-reception (Acts 19:6). The Lukan account resonates with the letter of Ephesians with its exhortation regarding prophets as well as Spirit reception that includes singing in the Spirit (possibly glossolalic; Eph 5:18–21) as a mode of instruction and admonishment (p. 171).

For believers at Thessalonica, Paul addresses issues of edification (1 Thess 5:11) consistent with exhortations to the Corinthians (p. 179). Finally, Paul writes to Christians at Rome concerning various gifts (including prophecy, p. 89) and calls for a "proportion of faith" (Rom 12:6). Hiu suggests the practice of these ministries includes some kind of aberrant conduct and requires Paul's call for behavior consistent with 1 Cor 14:26–40 (pp. 172–73). Concerning tongues, Hiu views Paul's "sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26) as Spirit-led intercession on behalf of believers, which may include glossolalic prayer (p. 174). Though Paul's general instructions concerning order remain consistent throughout the Acts narrative and the Pauline corpus, Hiu concludes that different "kinds of tongues" with various functions such as prayer, thanksgiving, and praise (whether human or angelic language) require careful contextualization (pp. 73–74).

Hiu closes with a brief appendix to address contemporary implications of his research. First, he remains unconvinced (as do I) by cessationist arguments against tongues and prophecy; that he refers to himself as a "practicing glossolalist from an evangelical charismatic tradition" comes as no surprise (p. 199), since it seems to me that cessationism carries less freight among more and more traditions/denominations including evangelical ones. However, Hiu represents not only the growing charismatic leanings in contemporary Christianity, but an academic (and ecclesial) community desperate to address boundaries and excess. In this regard, he offers careful exegesis and encourages readers to weigh general versus specific implications. For

example, is it possible for uninterpreted tongues in public meetings to be consistent with Paul's regulations for corporate edification through the speech act of corporate glossolalia (p. 200)? During a recent visit in the Philippines, I encountered collective tongues (including singing in tongues) in numerous worship settings. While my exegetical orientation creates an inward uneasiness, when I engaged these seminarians on the matter, they argued emphatically that order is not at stake. Instead, collective tongues speech confirms the special relationship between believers and/or their relationship to God; "In light of these observations, could there be a case for corporate tongues without interpretation in public meetings?" (p. 201). Though Hiu finds it difficult to identify edification without interpretation of tongues and shares Paul's concern for the impact upon uninitiated persons, I appreciate his struggle.

Concerning contemporary employment of prophecy, Hiu argues correctly that disorderly conduct generally proves less problematic than the content and application of a prophetic word (this also extends to tongues and interpretation). Again, Hiu calls for careful creativity. For example, since first-century gatherings did not encounter megachurch numbers, evaluative processes must be contextualized. To avoid erroneous, misleading, or (in extreme cases) covertly manipulative utterances, Hiu suggests various ministry models that include discernment by an appointed body before utterances be given to the entire gathering.

Scholars, students, and pastors should find this to be a valuable resource. Hiu demonstrates skill with biblical texts, solid engagement with the academic community, and pastoral sensitivity. This work would make a fine primary textbook for courses on spiritual gifts or 1 Corinthians and a secondary text for courses on pastoral theology and ecclesiology.

Martin W. Mittelstadt
Evangel University, Springfield, MO

Galatians. By Thomas R. Schreiner. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010, 423 pp., \$34.99.

The Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament is a relatively new commentary series that is in the vanguard of a renaissance of the commentary genre. Publishers are now moving beyond simple prose commentaries to works that highlight important interpretive elements that normally receive short shrift, such as structural analysis, literary genre, theological themes, and homiletical application. Schreiner's contribution on Paul's letter to the Galatians serves as an example of the new direction taken by this series from Zondervan.

Reviewing this commentary requires assessment of the work as an example of the series as a whole, as well as the particular author's contribution, because there is a concerted attempt in this series to advance

the commentary genre. This Zondervan series is aimed not toward the layman on the one hand nor toward the scholar on the other, but toward the individual somewhere in between who has had some training in exegesis, backgrounds, and biblical interpretation (see p. 9 of the work for seven criteria of the assumed reader the series editors kept in mind). To fulfill this goal the editors have developed a distinctive approach in the commentary that addresses seven areas for each division of the biblical text: literary context, the main idea, translation and graphical layout, structure, exegetical outline, explanation of the text, and theology in application. Some of these areas are regularly discussed in commentaries, but some are not, even though they have been part of the exegetical method taught in Bible colleges and seminaries for quite some time. For the reader with training in exegesis, this approach will be quite welcome, but it could be overwhelming for the uninitiated reader. For example, the translation and graphical layout can be quite confusing unless you understand the principles that guide the layout of the text and the additional clausal functions (see pp. 10–11 for the editors' explanation). On the whole, however, each element makes a strong addition to the overall presentation. The page layout is pleasing and easy to navigate, so that the reader should be able to find desired material quickly. On the whole, the series shows great design, and Zondervan is to be applauded for such innovation in biblical commentaries.

Schreiner's contribution to the series progresses through its paces in expected fashion. The introduction first covers more general topics of special introduction, such as authorship, recipients, and date. The classic destination debate receives an even-handed treatment: Schreiner favors a South Galatian destination but argues fairly that one cannot remove all doubt on this issue. Next, the introduction covers topics with special import for Galatians, such as the situation that occasioned the letter and the mirror reading required to understand it, the identity of the opponents, and the structure of the letter. The section on the opponents' identity is particularly helpful and thorough. Schreiner argues that Paul's opponents here were Jews who had properly confessed that Jesus was the Christ but who had improperly argued that no one could participate in the Abrahamic blessing without circumcision.

Each section of the commentary proper deals with a particular unit of the book, discussing each of the seven areas of focus in turn. The discussion is organized around clause-by-clause exposition with footnotes providing technical discussion and references as needed. Throughout the reader can find short excursions on important topics related to the exposition. Schreiner generally provides a solid discussion of the text, with a good balance between the parts and the whole. I especially appreciate his theological and applicational emphases that close each section of the text. These are well written and focus clearly upon central and attendant theological themes in each paragraph.

The biggest issue I have as I read this commentary is how Schreiner deals with the New Perspective on Paul. It is not that I disagree with him; rather, I disagree with the way he handles the topic in the warp and woof of the text. Schreiner is clear that he does not accept the New Perspective and that he consciously writes from the more traditional interpretive perspective. He states on p. 13, "I know it is out of fashion in some circles, but it seems to me that Martin Luther and John Calvin were substantially right in their interpretation of the letter and that their pastoral application of the letter still stands today." I think this is a defensible position to take. However, one has to look throughout the text in many different places to find this out. Because the New Perspective is casting such a long shadow over Pauline interpretation in our contemporary scholarly situation, I think the reader would have been better served if Schreiner had taken the issue head on in a lengthy excursus or perhaps in the section on themes within the book.

Another difficulty I have with this commentary is its brevity. The current work is solid but quite terse throughout. The reader is often left wanting a more thorough discussion to flesh out the interpretive issues that do receive discussion. To be fair, Schreiner himself acknowledges this in his preface (see p. 13). However, that does not change my feeling that the reader would have benefited from more involved discussions in many places.

There are some other minor faults to mention. The table of contents indicates a "Theology of Galatians" on page 71, but that particular section is nowhere to be found in the book. Page 71 is where the commentary proper begins. Perhaps this table of contents reference is meant to refer to the section "Themes in Galatians" on page 387, but one could certainly argue that themes and theology are quite different. The primary exegetical outline of the book (pp. 58–59), subsets of which are repeated throughout the commentary, is a mix of phrases and complete sentences; consistency here (either all phrases or all sentences) would be an improvement that helps the reader see the flow of the book more readily.

Schreiner is already well known and appreciated for his scholarly work on exegesis and interpretation, NT theology generally, and Pauline theology specifically. To this current work he brings extensive learning to bear on the interpretive task. The work makes a worthwhile contribution to the study of Galatians and should be consulted regularly for the traditional interpretive stance on Paul.

Michael H. Burer
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

She Must and Shall Go Free: Paul's Isaianic Gospel in Galatians. By Matthew S. Harmon. BZNW 168. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010, xi + 330 pp., €93.41.

This study is a revision of a doctoral dissertation that was carried out under the supervision of Doug Moo and accepted at the Wheaton Graduate School. It consists of five chapters, the first of which provides the expected introduction to the topic, a literature review, discussions of the interpretation of Isaiah in Second Temple Judaism and of Paul's access to the book as well as a discussion of methodology and of the structure of Isaiah 40–66, and finally a summary of the “Scope and Overview” of Harmon's project.

Each of the next three chapters (chaps. 2–4) works its way through consecutive two-chapter sections of the letter and provides an overview of the argument of that section of the letter, a discussion of proposed “Instances of Isaianic Influence,” a synthesis of the discussion and a summary and conclusion. The fifth and final chapter provides an overall “Synthesis and Conclusion” with a summary of “Reflections” and a helpful “Master Chart of Proposed Isaianic Influence.”

The conclusion to chapter 2 (on Galatians 1–2) is that “Paul relies heavily on Isa 49–53 in explaining his calling as the apostle to the Gentiles” (p. 121) and what has taken place through Paul “was in fulfillment of Isa 49–53” (p. 122). The conclusion to chapter 3 (on Galatians 3–4) is that “Paul frames his argument largely within the parameters provided by Isa 51–54” with an “echo of Isa 51:1–8 in Gal 3:6–9 and the citation of Isa 54:1 in Gal 4:27 serving as bookends” (p. 202). Harmon concludes, “The citation of Isa 54:1 in Gal 4:27 is particularly important, for it signals to the reader that not only the trope of Gal 4:21–5:1 hinges upon it, but the totality of Gal 3–4 as well. Isaiah 51–54 supplied Paul with the necessary lenses to read the Abraham narrative in Genesis in a manner that supports his contention that Christ is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant and all . . . who are united to him by faith are full heirs/sons of Abraham” (pp. 202–3). The conclusion to chapter 4 (on Galatians 5–6) is that “allusions, echoes and thematic parallels from Isa 40–66 continue to shape Paul's argument and theology” as he seeks “to describe the messianic age,” and the only phrase capable of expressing the whole is Isaiah's: “new creation” (p. 248).

This monograph reflects great learning and familiarity with the tremendous amount of bibliography relevant to the topic. Harmon carefully sifts through each portion of Galatians looking for any possible tie to Isaiah, whether an echo, allusion, or merely thematic parallel. Charts are provided in which parallel (or potentially parallel) Greek (and, occasionally, Hebrew) texts are presented side by side for easy comparison. Other researchers will benefit from this work as it seems Harmon has turned over every rock and looked behind every tree in order to bring to

our attention both potential instances of Isaianic influence and possible ties between such instances within Galatians. Many of Harmon's proposed instances of Isaianic influence have been proposed before by other scholars and commentators, but a number are new and along the way Harmon displays a keen sense of observation and some fine insights that others have missed.

I found Harmon's treatment of Gal 4:21–5:1, and the place of Isa 54:1 within it, particularly valuable, despite the fact that I think he exaggerates the importance and influence of Isa 54:1 (and the surrounding section of Isaiah) as the key to Paul's rereading of the Genesis narrative. In my view, there is too much in the passage that is clearly directly dependent on the Genesis text and to which Isaiah makes little or no necessary contribution. Still, Isaiah does make an important contribution to part of Paul's argument in the passage, and Harmon sheds some important light on it. I also agree with Harmon that Gal 4:21–31 is not a digression but the climax of Paul's exegetical argument, and I think he does a fine job of reinforcing that argument.

The boldest part of this monograph is the argument that the letter as a whole reflects not merely the influence of bits and pieces of Isaiah in isolated places, but the ongoing influence of an Isaianic narrative structure. As suggested by the title of the book, Harmon sees Galatians as a whole as a letter that reflects a fundamentally Isaianic theology, with other scriptural texts cited by Paul being read through an Isaianic lens. While I am impressed with the boldness of the thesis and the work carried out to defend it, I find myself largely unconvinced, but still grateful for insights gleaned along the way.

The method focuses on looking for any possible parallel between Isaiah and Galatians and then looking for patterns in the parallels. (Although it is not an intentional part of the method, it seems to me that there is also a tendency to highlight similarities and to ignore or downplay significant differences.) In my view, the problem with the methodology is that alternative sources for influences on Paul's thought are not given significant attention. (Of course, giving them the needed attention would require a much longer and more complicated study.) So potential parallels with Isaiah are granted importance without spending time discerning whether or not the Pentateuch (especially Genesis, Exodus, or Deuteronomy) and/or other prophets (perhaps especially Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Daniel, or Jeremiah), as well as Jewish developments of prophetic and apocalyptic ideas, might provide as good or even better background for Paul's argument.

When I keep other potential sources for Paul's thought in mind, it seems clear to me that Paul's gospel is based on a much wider swath of material, and it is far from clear, even after working through this study, that the other biblical materials are all being read through the lens of Isaiah rather than a lens that has been formed in light of a wide range of

biblical texts. In light of Dietrich-Alex Koch's argument that for Paul the Scriptures (in general and as a whole) serve as a witness to the gospel (*Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1986]), it would seem that to establish any particular book as the primary source for his gospel would require also attending to other potential biblical sources and showing that they are not, in fact, equal contributors to his thinking. There are too many places where it seemed to be suggested that Isaiah was doing the scriptural heavy lifting when there were other texts (including ones that Paul explicitly cited) that were more likely to be the key sources for his thought (and perhaps those same texts served as the sources for the ideas found in Isaiah).

On pages 135–36, there is a discussion of Paul's merging of "the concepts of faith, justification/righteousness, blessing to the Gentiles and an advance announcement of the gospel" and a proposal that the grounds for Paul's merging together of these concepts "lies within Isa 51–54 and the retelling of the Abraham story found there" (p. 136). Within the discussion the expression ἐκ πίστεως is cited various times but without any apparent awareness that this expression (despite the frequency with which each of the two words appears in Greek texts) never appears in extant Greek (in literature, papyri, or inscriptions) prior to its appearance as a translation of Hab 2:4 and then only in Christian authors who cite Hab 2:4 or discuss justification by faith. Of course, that expression shows up in Paul's quotation of Hab 2:4 in Gal 3:11 and six other times in the near context (Gal 3:7, 8, 9, 12, 22, 24). Paul also quotes Gen 15:6; 12:3; and/or 18:18, and explicitly attributes the "advance announcement of the gospel" to the latter text(s). It is not clear to me that we need to look any further than the texts from Genesis and Habakkuk to account for all the merged themes. The proposed parallels from Isaiah are interesting, and perhaps they would support a similar theological conclusion, but appealing to them as the basis for Paul's argument here strikes me as a case of ignoring the beam for the sake of a possible speck. I accept that the language and concept of gospel proclamation go back to Isaiah, but it seems that Paul has drawn key parts of the contents of that message from other biblical texts and he points us more directly to those.

On page 151, we are given a chart with the Hebrew and LXX texts of Isa 41:8 side by side with Gal 3:16 as part of an argument affirming a key role for the text of Isaiah in Paul's argument. On the following page, we are told that "[t]he verbal connection between Isa 41:8 and Gal 3:16 is seen in the combination of σπέμμα and Αβρααμ; outside of Genesis this combination occurs in the LXX in the same verse only eight times, and outside of the Pentateuch in only four places." But, of course, the second appearance of σπέμματι in 3:16 is from a snippet of a quote from Gen 12:7, leaving no mystery at all about the source of Paul's argument about

Abraham's seed and suggesting (in my opinion) that it is quite a stretch to go looking for it in Isa 41:8. Of course, Harmon's argument is that Paul's use of Gen 12:7 does not make sense apart from Isa 41:8 (it is not that Harmon does not recognize the place of Gen 12:7 in Paul's argument, but he thinks his use of that text is dependent upon "the connection made between the seed and the Servant in Isa 40–55"; p. 155). It seems highly unlikely to me that anyone with any Jewish messianic expectation would have had much difficulty in deciding that references to Abraham's seed in Genesis would have their ultimate fulfillment in the Messiah. That is, I would think what we see reflected in Isa 41:8 (identifying Israel as God's servant and the seed of Abraham) would not have seemed like much of a new revelation that could not have been easily discerned from the text of Genesis by other Jews as well, and that Paul may have simply done the same.

The presence of a reference to new creation in 6:15 is taken as evidence that new creation motifs are present throughout Galatians in references to "justification, righteousness, faith, promise, inheritance, seed, freedom, the Spirit and sonship" (p. 163). That is, "Although the phrase 'new creation' does not occur until Gal 6:15, the various motifs it refers to permeate Galatians" (p. 193). Yet the fact that Paul may be drawing on a concept from Isaiah in 6:15 hardly seems sufficient to assert that we must read so many other concepts against that particular background, and it is far from clear that all the concepts listed are strictly part of a "new creation" concept.

This study will be useful to all those studying the use of the OT in Galatians, having brought to our attention every possible link between Isaiah and that letter and suggesting how such background may have informed Paul's thought in large as well as small ways. In using it, each one may want to do their own analysis of whether or not the proposed linguistic, thematic, or narrative parallels are distinctive and clear enough to support the proposed weight, and whether or not other scriptural texts might have equal or even stronger claims to make, or at least provide elements that would be less easily derived from Isaiah.

Roy E. Ciampa

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA

Hebrews. By David L. Allen. NAC. Nashville: B & H, 2010, 671 pp., \$32.99.

David L. Allen, who wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Lucan authorship of Hebrews, is Dean of the School of Theology, Professor of Preaching, and Director of the Center of Biblical Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Thus it was appropriate for

him to write this volume on Hebrews in a series dedicated to both scholarship and the exposition of Scripture within the church.

Three features highlight this commentary's contribution to the interpretation of Hebrews. First, Allen spends much of the introduction arguing that Luke wrote Hebrews from Rome around AD 67–68 to a group of Christian ex-Jewish priests who now lived in Antioch. Luke's purpose was to encourage spiritual maturity. Allen's proposal helps the reader to see the many connections between Hebrews and Luke-Acts. Thus his arguments on this issue are interesting—though inconclusive, as all such reconstructions must be in light of the available evidence. His exposition of Hebrews is not unduly dependent on this reconstruction. The introduction ends with a reasonable outline of Hebrews, which forms the basis for the following exposition.

Second, Allen begins with detailed consideration of the syntax and semantics of each passage before addressing larger rhetorical issues. Most units are also followed by a section on theological reflection. He habitually enumerates the various options for the interpretation of disputed points (three, four, five, or, in the case of the identity of Melchizedek, nine!) before evaluating them. His theological reflections are sometimes helpful for grasping the texts continuing relevance.

Third, Allen's approach to the warning passages is integral to his overall interpretation of Hebrews. He dedicates 49 out of the 537 pages of actual commentary, or nine percent of the total, to the five verses of the warning passage in Heb 6:4–8. Allen argues that the people addressed are true believers, but that the sin against which they are warned is rebellion, not apostasy. Thus they are not being threatened with loss of salvation. Rather, they are in danger of losing heavenly rewards, perhaps of losing a place of honor in the millennium, and of being condemned to perpetual spiritual immaturity. Allen supports this position by examining the use of the word translated "to fall away" in other sources. He does the same with the words used to describe the punishment awaiting the disobedient. He argues that the author's failure to describe the recompense awaiting the unfaithful in earlier warning passages, such as Heb 2:1–4, suggests that he is talking about something less than ultimate loss. Allen follows Mathewson and others who argue that the writer of Hebrews identifies those addressed as believers in Heb 6:4–6 with the wilderness generation of Heb 3:7–4:11. According to Allen, the wilderness generation suffered not an eternal but only a temporal loss of the Promised Land. After all, Num 14:20 says that God forgave them, indicating that they did not forfeit eternal salvation. Besides, neither Moses nor Aaron entered the Promised Land. No one would condemn them to exclusion from eternal life.

As is so often true, Allen's strengths are also his weaknesses. He concentrates so heavily on the syntactic and linguistic/semantic details of the text that he rarely gives adequate attention to the larger discourse. For

instance, one will find nothing here about the careful way in which the author of Hebrews has constructed chapter eleven for rhetorical effectiveness. Allen tells us little about the unique role that the different parts of this chapter play or the distinctive contribution of the various examples.

In my judgment, Allen is sometimes guilty of overinterpreting a term or syntactical feature of the text to the neglect of the immediate and larger context. Is the present tense of “bearing witness” in Heb 2:4 a conclusive argument that miracles ceased with the apostolic age? Does the fact that the term translated “world” in Heb 2:5 often referred to the physical “inhabited world” indicate that it refers to an earthly millennial kingdom in Hebrews? Would not “inhabited world” be an appropriate description of the heavenly Jerusalem described in Heb 12:22–24?

Allen’s treatment of the warning passages is sometimes characterized by these same shortcomings. Few would disagree that the word translated “to fall away” (Heb 6:6) was not a technical term for “apostasy.” Most, however, would insist that the immediate context requires such a meaning. Sometimes his arguments seem to be reductionist. Does the fact that the earlier warning passages (e.g. Heb 2:1–4) contain no description of the threatened punishment soften the description in Heb 6:6–8? Instead, does not Hebrews build suspense by postponing this description until chapter 6? Does the lack of genitive qualifier (such as “from Christ”) after “having fallen away” in 6:6 prevent this term from referring to apostasy? In light of the four preceding participles the author of Hebrews, a master of stylistic economy, would probably have considered such a qualifier redundant. Can we truly affirm the following assertion: “The author’s statement about ‘crucifying the son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace’ may not be a reference to repudiating Christ and his sacrifice at all” (p. 365)? It is difficult to believe that “there no longer remains a sacrifice for sin” (Heb 10:26) could refer to anything less than eternal loss, since the author has just described the sole sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice (8:1–10:18).

My greatest concern, however, is the way Allen, in agreement with several other scholars, uses his own interpretation of the OT to determine what Hebrews must mean. Is the temporal nature of the Promised Land lost in Numbers 14 determinative for Hebrews? Such an argument overlooks both the temporal character of almost all OT judgment and its potential typological significance. Does God’s forgiveness of the wilderness generation recorded in Num 14:20 play any role in Hebrews? Hebrews says nothing about Moses and Aaron’s failure to enter the promised land (neither, of course, did their “carcasses fall in the wilderness” 3:17!). Yet Allen’s understanding of these facts is fundamental to his argument that loss of “rest” in Heb 3:7–4:13 could not refer to the loss of eternal salvation—despite the unambiguous indication to the contrary within both the immediate and larger discourse. A

straightforward reading of Hebrews 3 and 4 makes it clear that the “rest” lost by the wilderness generation and pursued by the readers of Hebrews is nothing less than God’s eternal rest that he entered at the culmination of creation. The larger context identifies this “rest” with the heavenly eternal City of chapter 11. In commenting on 9:24 Allen himself identifies this “rest” with entrance into the heavenly sanctuary. Furthermore, within the book of Numbers the fact that God “pardoned” the rebellious wilderness generation “according to” Moses’ “word” (Num 14:20) simply means that he did not destroy them.

Finally, both Allen’s determination to limit the punishment for faithlessness to the temporal and his inclination to find a millennial period in Hebrews prevent him from grasping the overall rhetorical shape and purpose of this carefully constructed biblical book. The rhetorical shape of Hebrews comes into focus only when one sees that the rest lost by the wilderness generation is equivalent to the heavenly city pursued by the faithful of chapter 11. After laying a foundation in 1:1–2:18, the author of Hebrews turns his hearers from the disobedience and loss of the wilderness generation (3:1–4:13), by means of the sufficiency of Christ (4:14–10:18), to the faithful endurance of those who enter the heavenly City (10:19–12:29). Allen’s work assists us in seeing the relationships between Hebrews and Luke-Acts. His commentary contains insightful statements and thorough, useful syntactical observations. In my evaluation, however, it offers little help in grasping the overall message and purpose of Hebrews.

Gareth Lee Cockerill

Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson, MS

Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels. By James D. G. Dunn. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, xx + 201 pp., \$21.00 paper.

During three weeks in the spring of 2009, James Dunn presented three different lecture series on the historical Jesus, the apostle Paul, and the Gospels. In these three series, Dunn summarized much of his research and major contributions to NT studies in the last forty years. Consequently, it is fitting that these lectures were reformatted and published in book form under the title *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels*.

On one level, while this is a rather short book (at least when compared to most of Dunn’s other books), it is difficult to review sufficiently, since in so doing, one must reckon with not only the content of the book itself, but also the many books, articles, and essays that stand behind it. However, since aspects of Dunn’s research have been dealt with at great length elsewhere, I feel no need to interact with all or even most of his arguments in this short review. Rather, after summarizing the content of the book, I briefly will comment on some of its key positive

and negative features, along with making some observations about its usefulness.

The book is formatted rather simply. Dunn begins by discussing the Gospels by summarizing the main contours of his research on the Gospels and their transmission. He repackages his argument against the traditional literary model of Gospel transmission and emphasizes the significant role the oral traditions played in the transmission of the Jesus tradition (see James D. G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making*, vol. 1: *Jesus Remembered* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003]). Beyond this, Dunn also discusses the Synoptic problem, strongly advocating Markan priority, both in terms of chronology and literary structure. He concludes that Mark's Gospel was the first of a new genre and that Matthew, Luke, and to a lesser degree, John (which still fits well in the Gospel genre in spite of its differences with the Synoptics), are dependent on Mark.

The second part of the book, "From Jesus to Paul," discusses the relationship between the Jesus of the Gospels and the Pauline epistles. Dunn sees three general parallels between Jesus' dominical teaching and Paul's letters. First, both proclaimed the "openness of God's grace." While Jesus himself was not as explicit in his acceptance of Gentiles, it seems that his association with sinners set a trajectory that leads to Paul's Gentile mission. Second, both share an "eschatological tension." That is to say, both see the kingdom of God (and the ministry of the Spirit) as both already and yet to come. Third, both see love as the fulfillment of the Law. Dunn goes so far as to say, "Nowhere is the line of continuity and influence from Jesus to Paul clearer than in the love command" (p. 114). Thus, Dunn makes a strong case for Paul as a disciple who is faithful to the teachings of his master Jesus.

In the last part of the book, Dunn summarizes his well-known research on the apostle Paul. He strongly emphasizes the ongoing Jewish self-identify of the apostle. Along with this, he repackages some of his earlier research on Paul's "conversion," arguing that, in his new allegiance to Christ, Paul's zeal for Israel's boundaries was transformed into a zeal for Israel's commission to be a light to the nations. Unsurprisingly, Dunn devotes significant attention to Pauline justification, arguing that the Gospel had (and has) both a vertical and social dimension. He then concludes the book by summarizing his work on the body of Christ and its role as a "charismatic community." In this vein, Dunn argues that by "shutting up the Spirit" in the sacraments, the Bible, and the hierarchies of the church, we have foreclosed on any opportunity for the Spirit to work in the way that he did in the earliest days of the Christian church.

Dunn's ability to summarize, repackage, and condense much of his life's research into this concise form is certainly admirable. His wit and clear thinking come through at many points. Beyond this, each of the three sections contains points that are worthy of significant praise. His work on the transmission of the Jesus tradition is a clear and helpful

summary of his larger argument, and is an accessible introduction to the problems with traditional source-critical models of Gospel transmission. His discussion of the relationship between Jesus and Paul makes a clear and compelling case for several lines of continuity between Jesus and Paul. Similarly, his argument for Paul's self-understanding of his ministry as a fulfillment of the hopes for Israel demonstrates the important link between Paul and the OT. In addition to these features, the book is accessible to a wide range of audiences and so could be useful in graduate or even upper level undergraduate courses as an introduction to an influential NT scholar.

In spite of these positive features, the book does raise more than a few questions. While we cannot deal with all of these questions, as noted above, many others have raised similar questions about Dunn's research, particularly his understanding of justification and the development of the Jesus tradition. However, in this review, I would like to point out two difficulties that illustrate some of the methodological problems with the book.

First, in his discussion of Paul's conversion, Dunn makes a strong comparison between Paul's experience on the road to Damascus in Acts 9 and the account of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10–11. Dunn concludes, "As *Paul* had been changed from one who regarded openness to the Gentiles as a threat to Israel's holiness, so *Peter* had been changed from one who regarded Gentiles as such as unclean and a threat to Israel's purity" (p. 157). This statement significantly underestimates the nature of Paul's conversion. Regardless of whether Peter was present at the stoning of Stephen, it is quite clear in Acts that he was not complicit in Stephen's murder, nor was he involved in persecuting Hellenistic Christians. The same could not be said of Paul. Therefore, to equate the two "conversions" seems to be a classic case of putting in the foreground what should be in the background while putting in the background what should be in the foreground. Paul's conversion was first and foremost a turn from rejecting Jesus as Messiah to embracing him as Messiah and risen Lord. While a new attitude toward Gentiles was certainly part and parcel of his new identity, the implications for the Gentile mission are secondary to his new allegiance to Christ as Lord.

On a somewhat different note, Dunn's discussion of the role of the Spirit raises another point where Dunn's method and overall approach to Scripture seems to be less than satisfactory. Dunn is to be commended for his strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit's ongoing role in the life of the church. However, he also expresses a concern that the modern church will hinder "the Spirit who broke through the boundaries round Israel to open the grace of God to Gentile as well as Jew" (p. 179). Dunn suggests that the church not be bound by the "letter of the Law" in the organization and community of the church. However, this seems to be methodologically inconsistent with his view of Paul's Spirit-led mission.

Throughout most of the third section of the book, Dunn goes to great lengths to demonstrate that Paul's self-understanding of his mission was faithful to and a fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures. Rather than Dunn's somewhat open-ended warning to exercise care lest we bind the Spirit, we can do even better by following the example of Paul, who faithfully sought to fulfill the Scriptures by the power of the Spirit.

This book is a useful introduction to Dunn's research, along with many important fields of NT studies. Since Dunn has been one of the key players in NT studies over the last several decades, any student of the Bible would benefit from reading this book, if only to be caught up on the major conversations. Moreover, for students who are methodologically and theologically savvy, it could be a great help. While many of Dunn's emphases and method can be frustrating at times, one cannot deny the impact he has made on the field, and this short book is an excellent summary of his research to date.

Christopher R. Bruno
Antioch School Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicalism Is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture. By Christian Smith. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2011, xiv + 220 pp., \$22.99.

God's Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship. By Kenton L. Sparks. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008, 415 pp., \$28.00 paper.

When children grow up and become members of an evangelical church, there is a time in their life when they begin to question the faith that they adopted. If the child becomes a scholar in a discipline requiring interaction with their faith, this questioning can become even more acute. A main area in which this challenge becomes especially acute involves the nature of Scripture. The texts discussed in this review involve two different Christian scholars examining different aspects of the nature of Scripture. It seems that each of them is writing the book to explain their departures from conservative evangelicalism. The result of these seemingly introspective examinations is a substantial revision of their faith. Both scholars were at the University of North Carolina in different capacities when their belief systems were challenged and to some extent overturned. This review will look at both of these important texts in terms of the major content, what each has in common and a critique of their positions.

Christian Smith is a distinguished sociologist teaching at the University of Notre Dame.

He has written many impressive sociological texts, some of which have dealt with evangelicalism. His text, *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), is a book I have given to non-evangelicals to help them understand evangelicalism from a fair and even-handed sociological perspective. Smith taught at the University of North Carolina before coming to Notre Dame. While his terminal degree is in sociology, Smith attempts to deal with the nature of Scripture. The basic thesis of his text is that the Bible is not as authoritative and clear as some conservative evangelicals believe. His focus is on how the Bible functions rather than its nature. He refuses to enter into the inerrancy debate, but the effect of what he says brings the whole concept of inerrancy into question.

The focus of the book is on what Smith calls “Biblicism,” which he defines as “a theory about the Bible that emphasizes together its exclusive authority, infallibility, perspicuity, self-sufficiency, internal consistency, self-evident meaning, and universal applicability” (p. viii). The reason that biblicism is wrong is that this theory about the Bible does not “work,” that is, it does not function the way that biblicists claim because there is “pervasive interpretive pluralism.” (p. x). The Bible produces a pluralism of interpretations that are multiple, diverse, and incompatible among the group of evangelicals who claim to be biblicists (p. 17). Thus, any claim that the Bible is authoritative in a way that can provide meaningful and true interpretations of what God says is false. If it were true, we would have univocal rather than polysemic interpretations of most of the major texts and doctrines of the Christian faith.

Smith divides his text into two major sections. Part one is a description of pervasive interpretive pluralism, while the second part discusses a tentative proposal to solve the problem using a Christocentric interpretive method. According to Smith, pervasive interpretive pluralism is clearly demonstrated by different views of important theological issues like church polity, free will and predestination, the Fourth Commandment, slavery, gender difference and morality, and even central issues like atonement and justification. The differences on these issues and many others show that “Biblicism as a theory contains flaws that it cannot explain away, and such flaws make it impossible for its believers to put it into practice with integrity and confidence” (p. 42). Instead of a book with a clear univocal interpretation, the Bible functions something like a “huge jigsaw puzzle” (p. 45) that is “multivocal in its plausible interpretive possibilities: it can and does speak to different listeners in different voices that appear to say different things” (p. 47). As a result, citing authors such as Paul Ricoeur, Hans Gadamer, and Kenton Sparks, Smith avers that Scripture is semantically indeterminate where “exact meanings of its texts are undetermined by the words of the texts themselves” (p. 48) with “more than one, possible arguably legitimate interpretation” (p. 53).

The results of pervasive interpretive pluralism leave Protestant claims of *sola Scriptura* and biblical perspicuity hollow because Protestantism “is itself extremely fragmented doctrinally, ecclesiological and culturally” (p. 53). Biblicism itself exists and thrives because of its adherence to philosophical views of common sense realism and Cartesian foundationalist epistemology as well as a psychological need to cluster with groups with whom biblicists agree rather than being challenged by different types of thinking.

Because the point of the book is to point out the “fatal problem” of biblicism rather than coming up with a “complete solution” (p. 95), Smith looks at what he calls some viable alternatives. The Bible can function as an authority by looking at Jesus Christ as the interpretive key to Scripture. One of his ideas is using the early church concept of the “rule of faith” to provide boundaries of interpretation through an essential summary of the gospel based on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Smith sees such a Christocentric approach as a “necessary and crucial first step” (p. 116) to overcome the problem of pervasive interpretive pluralism. The point is to “undermine simplistic and divisive interpretive habits of some biblicists who . . . point to this or that practice of God’s people recorded in the Bible and pronounce the same practice is binding today because it is clearly ‘biblical’” (p. 140). The meaning of the gospel can then be opened up to contemporary interpretations that fit the agenda of modern society to include egalitarianism and other universal human rights (pp. 168–71).

Kenton Sparks received his doctoral degree from the University of North Carolina and serves as a professor of biblical studies at Eastern University. His background is in OT studies. I met him in 1999 while he was completing his doctoral work and was serving on the pastoral staff of a Baptist church and a denomination that he now calls populist fundamentalism (p. 367). It is important to note that when Sparks wishes to disagree with those to his theological right, he uses terms like “very conservative evangelicals” or “fundamentalists” without attempting to explain the meaning of the terms. In fact, these undefined fundamentalists have a religious ideology and temperament that are often “intellectually and psychologically unhealthy” (p. 308). The book seeks to answer many important questions about the nature of Scripture. He takes an approach called “believing criticism” (p. 20), by which he adopts the academic consensus on historical critical issues of the Bible while at the same time believing in the authority of Scripture.

The basic idea behind the book is his attempt to paint his views as the reasonable middle ground between the extreme views of secularists and conservative evangelicals and fundamentalists. On the one side, the secular view takes the assured results of biblical scholarship to prove that the Bible is of purely human origin. On the other extreme, traditionalists reject the “standard results of biblical scholarship” (p. 19) because those

conclusions are a threat to biblical authority. Traditional scholars use various means to reject these ideas, which he covers in chapter 4. The reasonable middle is what Sparks calls believing criticism, which means that we accept the assured results and academic consensus of historical critical scholars while at the same time affirming the Christian faith. This is the “constructive response . . . referred to as believing criticism” (p. 20).

A fundamental problem with the analysis of this book, seen as an example at the beginning and used throughout the book, is that historical criticism and its assured results are so scientific and obviously true that the failure of many evangelicals to acknowledge these findings is similar to the church rejecting the heliocentric teachings of Galileo. The sheer hubris of this continual comparison demonstrates either arrogance or ignorance regarding the difference between scientific findings and the speculative and ideological results of the social science known as historical criticism. The assured findings of the academic consensus have been proven wrong time and time again, but that fact does not seem to bother Sparks. In fact, he is very defensive when his beliefs in the assured findings of historical criticism (e.g. the JEDP theory of the Pentateuch and multiple authorship in Isaiah) have been increasingly rejected by historical critical scholars of all theological viewpoints.

Before engaging in a critical examination of the content of the Sparks text, it is important to note that Sparks is asking the right questions. From epistemology to the historicity of the text to the nature of biblical authority to the role of Christian higher education, he deals with the type of issues that all evangelical scholars should both understand and address. The fact that I disagree with Sparks on almost all his conclusions does not mitigate the useful nature of the text and the respect that I have for him as a scholar who is willing to state his viewpoint regardless of the consequences.

Sparks begins with a discussion of how epistemology impacts hermeneutics. After providing a brief but helpful summary of epistemological issues in history, he once again casts himself in the reasonable middle ground between the conservative evangelicals who hold to a narrow foundationalist epistemology and the radical “antirealist” postmodernists. His view, called practical realism, is a kind of undefined form of epistemology that excludes the “extreme” views of narrow foundationalism and antirealism. However, his views seem to fit a form of nonfoundationalism advocated by progressive evangelical theologians such as Stanley Grenz, John Franke, and Roger Olson.

For example, consistent with his view of the predominately human aspect to Scripture, Sparks states that the canon (and its formation) is the result of a historically contingent process (pp. 281–82). In other words, God had no real role in the final form of the canon. This means epistemologically that the church has decided to accept the canon as authority rather than God inspiring the choice and content of the texts.

The community becomes the determiner of truth (no foundations) rather than the text inherently containing the truth (foundationalism). A better concept that fits the historical view of Scripture as inerrant is a form of broad foundationalism called Reformed epistemology found in the writings of Alvin Plantinga, William Alston, and others. Belief in God is properly basic and truth does not have to be established to a certainty; rather, the two notions have plausibility or warrant based on properly functioning capacities of memory, perception, testimony, and inductive beliefs. While Sparks states that those who believe in inerrancy are narrow foundationalists (p. 55), the truth is that broad foundationalists also believe in the historic views of inerrancy. His view of practical realism does not properly encompass the entire sphere of differing positions between narrow foundationalism and antirealism.

The second part of his text, covering chapters 2–6, discusses the assured results of biblical criticism in forming his idea that God’s word is for the most part human words: “God has selected to speak to human beings through adequate rather than inerrant words” (p. 55). Sparks adopts almost all the findings of the modernist views of historical criticism. For example, the JEDP theory is “surely correct”; Exodus as well as much of the narrative of the OT is historical fiction with no historical evidence (pp. 99–100); and the Gospel of John contains seemingly many historical inaccuracies (described as theological biography). In place of the views of the Reformers, very conservative evangelicals, and fundamentalists, Sparks opines that we should adopt in some measure the views of Karl Barth, David Steinmetz, Donald Bloesch, and narrative theology in terms of how to understand the nature of Scripture.

Chapters 6–9 discuss what Sparks believes is the proper way to understand Scripture.

As a human genre, the Bible is not intended to communicate ideas that appear to be historical as being truthful recitations; instead, they are intended to be fiction to make a theological point (Jonah and parts of John being cases in point). As a divine genre, Scripture manifests the fact that God allows some errors as accommodations to human limitations. In this chapter, Sparks creates another straw man with the views of Wayne Grudem and Carl Henry as representative of conservative evangelicals that reject divine accommodation. In fact, most conservative evangelicals accept divine accommodation (like Augustine and Calvin) because their epistemology is based on a broad rather than narrow foundationalism that Sparks does not incorporate in his analysis.

Where does this leave biblical inerrancy under the concepts elucidated in this text? The views of our secular culture become God’s word to us today. Instead of the relying on the words of Scripture, Sparks tells us in chapter 9 that Christians should look to tradition and the created order in interpreting the text. While there is nothing wrong with

looking to those things, and they are important guides to help us with boundaries (traditions) and application (created order), Sparks leaves us with little else in understanding the text by recasting the Bible as mostly fiction to be interpreted theologically. And what is that theology? Chapter ten provides the answer: the secular ideologies of our age. We must recast traditional biblical interpretation under the concept of a trajectory to provide a proper meaning for today. For example, even though a proper reading of 1 Timothy 2 leads to a complementarian conclusion, the trajectory of the NT—based on Gal 3:28 and other egalitarian notions—should overturn what the Bible clearly teaches (p. 353). Under this type of superficial and rationalistic analysis, Sparks proposes that homosexuality should also be accepted because the direction of the NT (as well as contemporary society) is toward committed relationships with the assured findings of science proving that the homosexual lifestyle is not a choice.

The final chapter of this book is the most important and holds the most promise for further discussion in the Christian community as a whole. Sparks adroitly points out in his conclusion that the Christian academy does not really engage in any serious discussion of issues of the nature of the Bible and biblical criticism because they do not really talk to each other. Based on a book by Duane Litfin, Sparks believes there are two different models of hiring faculty in a Christian university. The first is the umbrella model that does not require all faculty members to be confessing Christians but incorporates a few core members to have a generally Christian perspective. Examples of this type of institutions include Wake Forest, Southern Methodist University, Duke, and Emory. A second model is the systemic model where every faculty member is required to believe and embrace a doctrinal statement. This model is generally practiced by evangelical institutions. Contrasting the two, Sparks notes that the umbrella institutions have turned into bastions of theological liberalism while the systemic model needs more ideological freedom. In any case, the faculties that are hired tend to agree with each other, with the result that the umbrella institutions have departed from the historic Christian faith while the systemic model is more susceptible to what Sparks calls populist censorship. It is an important issue that needs to be squarely addressed because there needs to be an openness of dialogue in the faculties of evangelical institutions while maintaining the essentials of the historic Christian faith and the particular denominational emphases that mark the identity of the institution.

There are basic common emphases of the two books. First, they both create straw men in their attack on “biblicists” (Smith) and “fundamentalists and very conservative evangelicals” (Sparks) by implying that all of these groups are narrow foundationalists. To be fair, most biblicists probably hold to this form of epistemology; however, many who hold to classic inerrantist views of Scripture subscribe to broader foundationalist perspectives that do not require certainty. As Sparks

clearly points out, it is important to recognize the close relationship between epistemology and hermeneutics because “[h]ermeneutics . . . has to do with understanding the conditions that make interpretation and knowledge possible” (p. 26). By seeming to paint everyone to their theological right as narrow foundationalists, the authors do not fairly deal with the nature of biblical authority held by many evangelicals who hold to a classic position on inerrancy. This leaves the readers with a misunderstanding of the results of biblical interpretation.

A second common emphasis of both texts is the notion of pragmatism. This is highlighted in the basic premise of the Smith text that pervasive interpretive pluralism proves that Scripture is not clear and consistent. His perspective clearly overstates the problem. It also fails to deal with the nature of biblical interpretation. It is true logically that those who combine a Cartesian epistemology with a biblicist approach should come up with a singular interpretation; however, there are many who do not hold to this epistemology. In addition, while biblicists come up with applications of the text that seemingly address all sorts of practical issues, these applications are merely possible implications of principles found in the text. The process of taking the original meaning of the text and then finding its meaning as well as possible applications for today has little to do with the nature of Scripture. Current meaning and applications involve human judgments of principles that are cross cultural; such interpretations and assessments obviously include the fallibility and sinfulness of human beings. This does not mean, however, that Scripture is not clear or verbally inspired. On the major points of Christian doctrine there are a narrow range of interpretations held by orthodox Christians within the boundaries of the historic Christian faith. On secondary points, differences due to presuppositions as well as appeal to texts that are less amenable to clear understanding are to be expected. While Smith’s point about a Christological focus to interpretation and Sparks’s focus on tradition and the created order are welcome and timely, their conclusions about the problems inherent in Scripture are overstated and faulty.

A final major emphasis of both texts is the willingness to reflect the ideologies of secular culture. While attacking the nature of Scripture to reflect truth, they are more than willing to use the authority of Scripture to reflect egalitarian and moral views of our time. Because there are implications from the gospel (Smith) and hermeneutical trajectories (Sparks), the Bible demonstrates an egalitarian view of women in ministry. In addition, according to Sparks, the OT concept of holy war is “sub-Christian” and “genocidal” (p. 298). Once one eliminates the ability of Scripture to reflect what God was intending to communicate, the result is that one uses the Bible for one’s own political purposes or simply reflects the moral views of one’s culture. In other words, and despite the protests of Smith and Sparks, the modernism implicit in biblical criticism as well as

the theological liberalism of our times is reflected in the meaning or implication of both texts.

A final comment about the unintended hypocrisy of each text. Christian Smith has now become a Roman Catholic. His new book, entitled *How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in Ninety Five Difficult Steps* (Cascade, 2011), is a description of his journey from evangelicalism to the Catholic faith. While I am sure he did not intend to use *The Bible Made Impossible* to defend his rejection of his formerly evangelical beliefs, it would have been prudent to discuss his conversion in the text.

In his last chapter, Sparks advocates hiding higher critical views of the nature of the Bible from what he calls the “underinformed” people in the pew. Christian colleges should not allow the person in the church to affect what and how the faith is taught. As a person who used to be a Southern Baptist, Sparks is advocating a latent hypocrisy that led to the conservative resurgence in the SBC. This movement arose because Southern Baptist university and seminary professors were the advocating views of Schleiermacher, Bultmann, and Barth while attempting to hide those views from what Sparks calls the “underinformed.” While he believes that the academy should be insulated from the church and populist fundamentalists, I assert that pastors and professors should possess the integrity to state their beliefs about the nature of the Bible and educate their constituencies about how they arrived at these views.

In reading these books, evangelicals can learn about the differing views of the nature of Scripture and form their own conclusions.

Stephen D. Kovach

Howard Payne University, El Paso Teaching Center, El Paso, TX

Whosoever Will—A Biblical-Theological Critique of Five-Point Calvinism. Edited by David L. Allen and Steve W. Lemke. Nashville: B & H, 2010, x + 306 pp., \$24.00 paper.

David Allen and Steve Lemke bring together several sermon texts and position papers as “Reflections from the John 3:16 Conference,” a 2008 gathering of Southern Baptists in Woodstock, Georgia. The title, from Rev 22:17, hints that the book offers more than reflections on John 3:16, and with the subtitle expresses the overall thesis that five-point Calvinism’s tendency toward theological determinism contravenes the Bible’s revelation of true human freedom. Its critique is offered, apparently, as an alternative to the many conferences, publications, websites, and well-known personalities promoting Reformed theology (Together for the Gospel, John MacArthur, Al Mohler, John Piper, the Founders’ Conference, et al.).

The writers designate five-point Calvinism variously as strict, Dortian, high, or hyper-Calvinism. Their criticisms are not new ones, and Calvinists will have a stockpile of answers at hand, but the book's strength lies in its cumulative effect, and the whole will not be dismissed easily as non-Calvinists' ignorance of Reformed tenets. Although the early sermons lack the academic rigor many will expect, most chapters examine specific Reformed positions by citing published works. Specificity can be a two-edged sword, however, if a critique is deemed to have engaged an off-brand of Calvinism (e.g. quoting R. C. Sproul Jr. as representative of the majority view), but consensus-building for Calvinism is not these writers' concern. They see implications in the Reformed system itself that generate their concerns, no matter who expresses them. Still, many chapters quote extensively from Owen, Edwards, Spurgeon, Hodge, Hodges, Packer, Lloyd-Jones, MacArthur, Piper and others to provide a wide expression of the Calvinist brand. Strongly Reformed interpretations of Scripture are also contrasted with earlier milder ones, not to showcase inconsistencies, but to argue that five-point Calvinism reflects Dortian philosophical systematizations on the nature of God, the atonement, the church, human freedom, and so forth. In particular, strict Calvinism's *ordo salutis* (regeneration as prior to one's faith and repentance) is challenged as a theological-anthropological construct that is not the biblical revelation of what occurs in salvation (repentance and faith, then new birth).

The editors divide the book into two parts: sermons and essays. Part One opens with addresses by Jerry Vines and Paige Patterson from the John 3:16 Conference. These offerings may disappoint as the first two chapters of a work promising a "Biblical-theological critique," and may be better fit for a work on doctrinal preaching rather than the opening salvos in a theological debate. Readers looking for exegetical, theological, historical, and philosophical engagement with five-point Calvinism will find that more in the later sermons of Part One (chapters 3–6, which seem to be more fully revised for print) and the essays of Part Two (chapters 7–11). In this critique of *Whosoever Will*, chapters 4, 5, 10, and 11 will be the focus to show the general line of the arguments made, then specific concerns will be expressed about chapter 3.

David Allen's chapter 4 addresses the "L" in TULIP, limited atonement, which views Christ's payment for sin to be meant only for the elect (those divinely selected for redemption). Allen quite effectively lets Reformed theologians dispute that view. Readers not familiar with the terminology employed are helped by a list of definitions (pp. 62–65). Allen explains that the alternative to a "limited" view, the "universal" view, is wholly distinct from the heresy of universalism (the totality of humanity is saved in some fashion). Then he lets the notable Calvinist Jonathan Edwards state what universal atonement means—"In some sense, redemption is universal of all mankind: all mankind now have an opportunity to be saved otherwise than they would have had if Christ had

not died” (p. 76). Other Calvinists, including Calvin, are cited as arguing that Christ’s atoning work is for all, “the world,” as 1 John 2:2 affirms. Allen argues that the limited view was not the one defended at the seventeenth century Synod of Dort; rather, it was introduced there and subsequently promoted by the Puritan John Owen in his “double payment” and “triple choice” arguments, both of which Allen counters. He adds that if the world and the elect are effectively opposites, as John 17:6 indicates, Calvinism tends to read “God so loved the world” as “God so loved those not of the world,” which has virtually the opposite meaning. Furthermore, Allen’s real concerns are the implications for evangelism and preaching, for under Owen’s view a Christian’s motivation for sharing the gospel is no longer based on God’s love for the lost. Scripture teaches an infinite wideness to Christ’s atoning work, so Allen insists there is no need to insist that God truncates the offer of it, but tenders it instead to all. That makes the gospel truly good news without diminishing one’s view of God or risking a dangerous slide toward universalism because, as Allen puts it, a truly sovereign God extends a truly conditional offer.

In chapter 5, Steve Lemke explains the gospel as God’s “well-meant offer,” yet one which can be rejected. In his critique of irresistible grace, Lemke notes Calvinism’s distinctions between the “general” and “special” calls, but argues that if a special, secret, regenerative work in the elect is what saves, then the general, outward expression of the gospel draws no sinners effectually to Christ—the gospel is *not* a well-meant offer. Lemke also notes that the Bible reveals many instances of God’s grace being resisted, as Israel often did corporately or the rich young ruler did individually, but both examples explain why Jesus truly lamented over Jerusalem. Lemke goes on to argue that Christ’s death for *all*, as argued in chapter 4, explains the titular issue: “whosoever will” trust in that sovereign and gracious sacrifice receives its effect. Furthermore, though most people may not receive the sacrifice, this reality results in neither a diminished view of God nor an elevated view of man, for it is the view that Scripture reveals. And, because the Bible describes salvation and the Holy Spirit’s indwelling as subsequent to repentance and faith, the Reformed *ordo salutis* is unnecessary in light of that sequence. Lemke’s ultimate concern, however, is that Calvinists like John Frame, Terrance Tiessen, and David Engelsma seem to come dangerously close to a monergism that divorces salvation from commitment to any Christian doctrine whatsoever, making the gospel’s implicit propositions merely coincidental to, not necessary for, salvation. Human responsibility, when taken as seriously as the Bible does, means that God’s sovereign and well-meant offer of grace can be resisted yet can be received, and in this way God reveals his maximal glory.

The last two chapters of *Whosoever Will* may contain the hardest hitting exchanges with five-point Calvinism. Jeremy Evans critiques the

compatibilist view of human freedom in chapter 10 and Bruce Little the greater good theodicy in chapter 11. Evans notes Calvinism's definition of human freedom as the ability to follow one's desires unimpeded, which supposedly makes human freedom compatible with divine sovereignty, but this notion sets up the wrong alternatives. Calvinism tends to see God's sovereignty as causally determinative for theological ends, and determinism of any sort is never compatible with freedom fully defined. The libertarian alternative sees humans with a genuine capacity for real choices between actual alternatives. It does not deny God's sovereignty, and admits that humans follow their unimpeded desires, but distinctively adds that humans themselves are causal agents, for that is the scriptural perspective, says Evans. Calvinism wrongly attempts to corner the market on monergistic salvation entailing total depravity and irresistible grace as the Reformed define them. But a libertarian account argues for monergistic salvation as well, because God alone can provide it. Still, it is within his purview to make it an offer resistible by design. For Evans, real human agency explains the human condition better. And although Calvinism's view of God as the sole agent of salvation may have certain advantages, it raises the biblically indefensible notion that God is the ultimate agent of other aspects of the human condition as well, namely sinfulness. Evans uses speech-act theory to argue that the commands of Scripture indicate human agency, because God's intention is for all humans to keep those commands: "What God commands must have a logical connection with what He *intends to accomplish* through His act of commanding With this in mind, consider God's commands to repent and believe. If God has inspired the words of Scripture to reveal His salvation plan, then it is reasonable to believe that He intends in each of these commands to bring about an action of morally positive status for the one to whom the command is directed—He intended to command human beings to repent. . . . namely to do that which they were not going to do but that they *should* be doing. . . . For whom is this command morally binding? Biblically, the answer is everyone. But when a line of thought akin to Calvinism is followed, every last detail of creation manifests the purposes and sovereign control of God, including the damnation of some for His good pleasure [cf. Calvin *Institutes* 3.21.7]. How then are human beings to understand the imperatives [of Scripture] where it seems God has commanded something (repentance and faith from everyone) that He has not willed? The only tenable suggestion is that a wedge splits God's commands from His will, and human beings are morally accountable for the content of God's will and not His commands" (p. 270). In other words, the Reformed system seems to say that God does not intend his own speech to change the moral standing of the non-elect. So, if he never intends their status to change, they are not morally obligated to do what he says. Such a view, Evans argues, is not the revelation of Scripture. He concludes that strongly Reformed

soteriology has too mechanistic a focus on *how* God selects in contrast to Scripture's gospel focus on the person of Christ whose sacrifice for all sin is a real message of hope to every human being.

Bruce Little's chapter 11, "Evil and God's Sovereignty," addresses the implicit question above: If divine election is such that God is the sole causal agent in salvation, what else does he cause—are sin and evil his will, too? Little says that any theological system that makes God the cause of all that happens makes God the cause of sin and evil, because they do happen. Calvinists and non-Calvinists alike strive to avoid the collateral aspects of this conclusion via the popular greater good theodicy: God is good, and God can be the cause of what is not good (sin and evil) in light of some *ultimate* good he has in mind. Thus, things which seem bad to us, that theodicy says, are really good, but our finite minds cannot grasp the good end God has for them. As helpful as this might at first appear, Little shows how disconcerting it is when real-life issues like the Holocaust, abortion, slavery, rape, and murder press against it. Little asks, Why not say such evils are contrary to God's goodness rather than aspects of it? In the most discomfiting section of the book, he challenges the all-too-common yet all-too-shallow appeal to God's glory or secret plan to explain a young girl's torture, rape, and murder as ultimately for her good. A better alternative, says Little, is that a sovereign God has created an order of causes and effects in the world, so that humans employing their libertarian choices do one thing over another and benefit or suffer as they reap what they sow (Gal 6:7). This is the "creation order" that God ordained. Little then challenges popular Calvinists like John Piper and Gordon H. Clark's view of divine sovereignty that, he says, tends to see evil ultimately as good.

The chapters referenced above are strong engagements with Calvinism, yet Richard Land's discussion of election in chapter 3 is an enigma. Most Southern Baptists can appreciate his insights into the history of their denomination's struggles over divine election, but it is difficult to know how well-received Land's "congruent model" of election will be. He makes no reference to Suarez's congruism, or any other notion of concurrence or synergism. Instead, to resolve tensions in the usual Scriptures (Rom 8:29–30 compared to John 3:16 and Rev 22:17; Eph 1:3–5 compared to 1 Tim 2:3–6), Land proposes divine *a*-temporalism of the sort Boethius described and C. S. Lewis popularized, where God simultaneously knows and *experiences* all of our successive states. "God lives in the Eternal Now," Land says, thus "He has always had not just the knowledge of but experience with every individual. So there has never been a moment in eternity when God has not had the experience of every elect person" *as* elect, and similarly for the non-elect (p. 57). What Land seeks to avoid are divine moments prior to human ones, hoping thereby to eliminate the cause-then-effect succession in both Arminian prevenient grace and Calvinistic divine decrees. Land maintains that human freedom

is a willingness or unwillingness to respond to God's "solicitous call," a real choice between real alternatives, but his main point is that the choice made in time is an ever-experience for God: "As His children we will have Him to enjoy and worship personally forever. It lies in the future for us. It has always, eternally been part of God's experience of us. God's experience of my response to, and relationship with, Him has always caused Him to deal differently with me than He does with a person with whom God's eternal life experience has been rebellion and rejection" (pp. 58–59). Human freedom, Land says, is in the fact that the elect *will* to be saved rather than *must* be, and the non-elect *won't* be saved rather than *can't* be—and there is "a big difference between 'must' and 'will' and an even bigger difference between 'won't' and 'can't'" (p. 59). Presumably, then, Land's model has human choices in the flow of time all experienced by God simultaneously, resolving freedom/sovereignty incompatibilities that unconditional election tends to generate.

Land faces a problem, however, in that anyone who is predisposed to theological determinism can say his model of God's eternal experience of the elects' choices actually describes just what unconditional election teaches—every person's salvation status is what God *ever*-knows/experiences it to be (which sounds like a predetermination of it). To keep human choices real, Land insists that everyone "will" or "won't" respond to God's "solicitous call" (as opposed to "must" or "can't"), but his insistence is set against his model's weightier component of God's ever-experience, so his model freezes rather than frees human choices in that punctiliar ever-state for God. Land's model fares no better than others, *a*-temporal or otherwise, in establishing human freedom in an omniscient God's world. If everyone's salvation status is nothing other than what always is for God, theological determinism still looms. Furthermore, models that claim harmony, congruence, or compatibility between supposedly free finite creatures and an infinite creator's unfathomable existence inevitably suffer from two difficulties. On the one hand, the real tensions inevitably get "resolved" by nudging them into the mystery side of the formula—safe, but frustrating, when that theological method actual tries to function. On the other hand, Land's model, like other *a*-temporal efforts, lets describing God's timelessness count as establishing it, which is a form of question begging. A robust alternative to unconditional election could consider an immutable God enjoying divine successive states, as found in the usual explanations of creation *ex nihilo* or the incarnation; or could express God's foreknowledge as an aspect of his omniscience, not redefining it as "present knowledge" or deriving it from an *a*-temporal mode of existence; or could explain humans as causal agents responsible for real choices, as Scripture clearly does. Readers can evaluate one such alternative in Ken Keathley's *Salvation and Sovereignty—A Molinist Approach* (Nashville: B & H, 2010). Unfortunately, however, Land's model of divine timelessness offered here

is neither a full critique of, nor a substantive alternative to, Calvinism's unconditional election.

Generally, *Whosoever Will* proves to be a useful resource, providing clear chapter themes, strong viewpoints, copious citations, jargon-limited discussions, and separate Author/Subject/Scripture indexes that can be appreciated whether one shares these writers' concerns over ardent Calvinism or rejects them as unfounded. Because many of the contributors are widely known, their orthodox commitments and evangelistic concerns will not be caricatured easily as anthropocentric hubris or closet open theism. The work is vulnerable, however, in lacking an adequate response to Calvinist versions of depravity and election, but most of the chapters' exegetical analyses, historical examples, and reasoned arguments present the overall theme well—strongly arguing Reformed theology's penchant for theological determinism is not in accord with Scripture's revelation of human agency. Lemke notes the Philippian jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" (pp. 128–29), and Calvinists would, of course, affirm the biblical answer that Paul and Silas gave, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:30–31). But the contributors to *Whosoever Will* argue that the Reformed *system* seems to want Paul and Silas to have answered differently. Its monergism seems to want the answer, "Nothing!" Its view of divine decrees seems to issue the corrective, "Don't you mean, 'What must I do if I am elect?'" Its *ordo salutis* seems to alter the verb tense so that being saved is not subsequent to believing. *Whosoever Will* proposes what it believes to be the biblical and God-glorifying alternative that Christ's death atones for all of humanity's sin so that a sovereign God makes a genuine conditional offer of it to humanity: to trust in Christ's payment for sin is the only way to receive the benefit of it. Those wanting to know what compels these authors to express this alternative should read the book as penned. Those eager to engage them might start with the last chapter and read them in reverse order.

Steven W. Ladd

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC

The Challenge of Being Baptist. By Bill J. Leonard. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010, 162 pp., \$24.95 paper.

Bill Leonard wrote this book because he is around many people who believe "Baptist identity itself seems to be perched on the edge of oblivion" (p. xi). The seven chapters that compose this book were initially each lectures given in four different venues, two in Europe, three at Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, TX, one for a gathering sponsored by Associated Baptist Press, and one for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. A final chapter seeks to apply the material of the first six.

Leonard looks at the Baptist past and current dilemmas in an effort to salvage that which is valuable for the constructing of a Baptist future. Throughout, more than any other single source, Leonard uses the early seventeenth-century witness of John Smyth and Thomas Helwys as a paradigm for Baptist ideas.

In chapter one, Leonard enumerates several challenges to the retention of historic Baptist identity and proposes that, even if one does not retain all that the Baptist past presents us, some ideas and values are worth retaining, or recovering, for the present encouragement of all Christians. Chapter two discusses many sources from which Baptists developed their historical consciousness. Leonard emphasizes the diversity, and often the contradictions, involved in this process. While he shows great deference to the groups that emphasize the priority of conscience over external authority and the necessity of toleration of individuality in Baptist churches, he still asserts that “the priesthood of all believers should not lead to the idea that being a Baptist means that one can believe anything at all.” While insisting that there are “many ways to be Baptist,” he is reluctant to give up the name in favor of “some nebulous, generic religious ethos,” and expresses his conviction that “religion has specificity and offers a place to stand from which to relate to other movements” (p. 38). This probably is the most perplexing parts of Leonard’s book. The “specificity” of a “place to stand” never comes into clear focus; it always looms on a hazy horizon as a “nebulous, generic” form of something or other. The most distinctive aspect of Baptist identity, and the very reason for the historic origin, is the commitment to an ecclesiology built on the regulative principle. Leonard, however, does not accept the idea that a regulated ecclesiology exists in Scripture, and in accord with that he posits a dilemma: “In other words, the question for Congregationalists is less *what* is the polity of the New Testament than *which* New Testament polity shall become normative” (p. 40).

The third chapter points to the strengths as well as the difficulties of the way in which congregationalism has worked out attempts to unify churches for missionary and benevolent ministries. Leonard’s emphasis is on the messiness that has come when different theologies in the churches have caused schism in the denominational body. Although he quotes the First London Confession with its emphasis on “one and the same rule” and its position that churches seeking to unite for “counsel and help” are “members of one body in the common faith,” he makes no comment on the ideal of theological unity measured by a jointly held confession, but places all authority in the individual members and local churches. He recognizes the right of “associations and denominations . . . to dismiss those whose ideas and positions differ” but makes this a problem, a messy problem, of the individualism fostered by Baptist polity (pp. 50, 51).

Chapter four, moreover, informs us that it is not only Baptist polity that contributes to the confusion among Baptists, but a fundamental

fissure in the Baptist view of authority. Historically, Leonard argues, *sola Scriptura* has conflicted with *sola fide*, biblicism has been put in conflict with conversionism, and a literalist authority has been set in conflict with pietistic spirituality. Each of these tensions has fostered a particular hermeneutic—hermeneutic of contradiction, of evangelical inclusion, of cultural accommodation, of liberation, and of piety—eliciting a conclusion that this hermeneutical pluralism has been at the bottom of the many divisions that have made being a Baptist so messy. In illustration of the conflicts that developed over hermeneutics, Leonard discusses the Calvinism-Arminian division at the earliest stage of Baptist life, the missionary movement of Carey and Fuller, the slavery issue among Baptists in America, the acceptance or rejection of females as potential candidates for gospel ministry, and the use of real fermented wine in communion. “Baptists interpret the Bible in light of text and tradition,” Leonard writes in one of his six conclusions, enforcing a strong application by asserting, “Denying that reality is a sure path to historical hubris and theological confusion” (p. 72). If Leonard’s analysis is true, I would find it difficult to create any more theological confusion than he contends has existed among the Baptists from the beginning. It seems that theological confusion is the goal of his view of Baptist identity.

The chapter contains much that is provocative and informative and it all must be taken seriously. At the same time, his isolation of areas of disagreement and the volatility engendered by differing interpretations of certain pivotal passages of Scripture leaves, in my opinion, an impression of greater murkiness than actually is the case. True, these have not been unimportant areas of disagreement that have led to significant division, but the controversies should not mask the massive areas of theological continuity. Biblical perspicuity is not quite as problematic as one may be impressed from the discussion of this chapter, and affirmations of inerrancy do matter more than Leonard admits. While “other Baptists insist on the authority of the biblical text without the need to affirm any degree of textual inerrancy,” and while, as Leonard claims, “theories about the text cannot protect Baptists (or anyone else) from the power and unpredictability of the text itself” (pp. 59, 72), commitment to the inerrancy of the text makes the struggle with interpretation an ongoing confrontation with truth and always holds out the hope of an eventual conformity of life and mind to a divinely revealed precept. Rejection of inerrancy, or unconcern about any theory about inspiration, releases one from biblical ideas that are seen either as culturally unacceptable or critically untenable, no matter how clearly the text presents them. Leonard is concerned that damage will be done by those “who try to protect its veracity rather than explore its wonder” (p. 113). Possibly, but one may do both, for no dichotomy exists in these two options.

Chapter five, “Once Saved, Almost Saved,” has much good to commend it. Leonard describes the Baptist requirement of conversion as

an essential of church membership through writers and confessional statements and gives an insightful analysis of the difficulties created by “transactional conversion,” the decisionistic style of evangelism that began gradually to dominate after the middle of the nineteenth-century. His call for a reinvestigation of the doctrine of regeneration should be heeded. His opting, however, for a style of Christian nurture within the framework of a sacramental congregationalism, and his implicit rejection of the necessity of a monergistic effectual call (p. 93) prepares the way for his sixth chapter entitled “A Congregational Sacramentalism.” This chapter contains a strong affirmation of believers’ baptism by immersion, at least from a historical standpoint, as a radical and dangerous act of dissent from the state-based, culture-bound privileged status of churches based on parish-centered infant baptism. Unknowingly, the Baptist act of religious dissent for the purpose of creating believing communities based on personal faith in Christ, opened the door to liberty of conscience and religious pluralism. He celebrates, movingly, Roger Williams’s view of his town of Providence as a “shelter for persons distressed of conscience” but later applies what Williams intended as a statement about civil society into a desideratum for Baptist churches, that is, “How might Baptist churches again become, in the words of Roger Williams, ‘a shelter for persons distressed of conscience’” (pp. 98, 104). Leonard confuses the church and the state here in a way that his own research on the Baptist view of regenerate church membership would refute. Leonard’s discussion creates an uncertainty as to whether baptism contains some degree of sacramental efficacy [seemingly not] or whether it is symbolic of a converting grace received entirely anticipatory of baptism [seemingly so] (pp. 99–102). In addition, his questions about the current practice of baptism in Baptist churches press toward a compromise with infant baptism, employing a “renewal of baptismal vows” for new members from other traditions as a public profession rather than the immersion of believers (p. 102).

Leonard is at least as concerned with maintaining a witness of dissent and allowing the voices of the unorthodox to be heard as he is to find a path of clear faithfulness to biblical ecclesiology. His use of a Baptist confession again illustrates this propensity. He quotes from an article in the *Orthodox Creed*. The article makes a vigorous negation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of implicit faith as a “blind obedience” that destroys “liberty of conscience, and reason also, it being repugnant to both.” Leonard quotes this as a “dramatic illustration of Baptists’ commitment to the power of conscience. It was the call to uncoerced faith that produced the appeal to conscience and the necessity of dissent” (p. 99). As far as he goes, Leonard is right, and in pointing out the beauty of the relation between uncoerced faith and liberty of conscience in Baptist history he is straight with the record. He omits, however, to speak to the purpose of the article in the *Orthodox Creed* as an argument for the

sole authority of Scripture. The framers of the *Creed* argued that conscience can only submit to the Lordship of Christ who sets sinners free from the thralldom of sin by his atoning work. The truth of that is communicated through the Bible. The consciences of men, therefore, cannot be imposed upon by anything “contrary to his revealed will in his word.” Any action, call to obedience, or practice that is “not grounded in, or upon the authority of holy scripture, or right reason agreeable thereunto” must be shunned, for it cannot be a requisite aspect of true faith. To concede to any “command or decree, that is not revealed in, or consonant to his word, in the holy oracles of scripture, is a betraying of the true liberty of conscience.” Exalting conscience above Scripture or celebrating it as an independent virtue outside of the truth of Scripture has never been the Baptist view until the massive revision of the last fifty years.

The final chapter summarizes his discussion by asking questions and making proposals for consideration as to how the Baptist tradition of dissent and covenant community relate to present culture, changing worship styles, new coalitions of Baptist churches, the tendency of controversy over Scripture’s authority to hide deeper problems with the text of Scripture, how evangelistic methodology threatens Baptist understanding of the church, and how churches will do ministry in their ambivalent standing as cultural-challengers and culture-shapers. Leonard agrees with Phyllis Tickle’s observation that the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura* is “hopelessly outmoded and insufficient” and that the information set forth on the basis of a simple commitment to that principle must be taken by the network of the Scripture community and “tried and amended and tempered into wisdom and right action for effecting the Father’s will” (p. 114). In closing, Leonard makes some important suggestions about Baptist views of regeneration and processing its relation to community life; gives a helpful reaffirmation of the purpose of believers’ baptism; discusses the nature of the church, the importance of reengaging the text, of presenting a worldwide witness in the context of different models for engagement of other religions; and affirms the need for “audacious witness.” Leonard views conservatives as unable to decide between dissent from a non-religious secularism in culture or to work for an establishmentarian mentality of arguing for the appropriateness of a “Christian” nation. Liberals and Moderates “are so uncertain about their past and future that they cannot seem to decide what, when, or if to protest anything at all” (p. 126) Neither of these is the stuff of an audacious witness.

As usual, reading a work by Bill Leonard creates frustration and provokes some creative thought. He is too narrow in his discussion of Baptist identity (and thus, ironically, too diffuse) and does not recognize the ongoing broad areas of theological agreement that existed among confessional Baptists in spite of their many disagreements. He is too

nebulous in his view of the importance of the issue of biblical inspiration and its implications, seemingly opting for the relative unimportance of inerrancy, setting up hermeneutics as a valid option to authority. He wants to transport Baptist views of liberty of conscience in society into the church as a principle of doctrinal freedom. He seems to be willing to compromise believers' baptism while at the same time arguing for the importance of its ongoing witness. But he also asks some very important questions and gives some magnetic proposals for helping mend the damage done by unbalanced, ahistorical, confessionally-suspect ways of managing the practical witness of the churches.

Tom J. Nettles

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

Baptists through the Centuries. By David W. Bebbington. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010, 320 pp., \$39.95 paper.

This book is a straightforward textbook approach to Baptist history but shares many of the concerns expressed in Leonard's monographic approach to Baptist identity. David Bebbington is Professor of History at the University of Stirling and has taught Baptist History at Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University on several occasions. He writes that this book is the "printed equivalent of a course" taught there on four separate occasions. It has sixteen chapters. After an introductory chapter, Bebbington discusses the Baptist roots in the Reformation, the issues of the relationship of Anabaptists to Baptists, the arising of Baptists in the seventeenth century as both Arminians and Calvinists, the decline and revival of the eighteenth century, and the polarization of Baptists in the nineteenth century over a number of issues. This carries the reader through chapter seven. Chapters eight through fourteen discuss single ideas that Baptists have had to absorb into their view of witness in the world: The social gospel, the controversy over race, the ministry of women, the nature of the church including the recent contentions that original Baptists held sacramental understandings of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Baptist witness to religious liberty, the involvement of Baptists in foreign missions, and the global spread of Baptists after almost three centuries of its being virtually an exclusive Anglo-American phenomenon. Now the reader is through fourteen chapters. Chapter fifteen looks more precisely at the issue of Baptist identity. His context for discussion is the controversy that dominated the Southern Baptist Convention for the last three decades of the twentieth century. Its movement from consensus to fragmentation sets the stage for Bebbington's identification of seven distinct strands of Baptist life that should be considered when describing Baptist identity. The final chapter consists of a summary of the findings and its implications. These include

the necessity to have an international perspective on Baptists, seeing Baptists as shaped by and shapers of culture, and acceptance of a highly diverse and difficult-to-define identity.

The flow of this book is helpful in putting Baptists into the context of the development of Christianity since the Reformation. Indeed, Bebbington claims, rightly I think, that “Baptists were the people who took Reformation principles to their ultimate conclusion” (p. 24). His discussion of each century highlights the theological, cultural, and denominational challenges that continued shaping the Baptist witness. He gives helpful information about the major persons involved in each of the eras he discusses and then the leading thinkers as he begins his topical approach. One would expect Bebbington to be particularly interested in how Baptists have related to international evangelicalism and such is indeed the case (pp. 71ff, 80, 85, 100, 101, 118, 124, 125, 127, 131–32, 188, 262, 263, 266, 285, et al.). This becomes in Bebbington’s estimation one of the strongest enduring aspects of Baptist identity; “they turned into Evangelicals and remain overwhelmingly so” (p. 285). Bebbington has an admirable ability to describe phenomena within Christian history employing a vocabulary that is not inflammatory and that gives the greatest opportunity for objective discernment of the meaning of those phenomena. This ability is particularly useful in his description of the Conservative/ Moderate conflict of Southern Baptists (pp. 260–65). Another example of his success in achieving a balanced phenomenological approach to some difficult issues is in the closing words of the chapter on “Women in Baptist Life.” His last summary statements to that chapter note, “Yet, until the twentieth century, women were rarely allowed positions of leadership in the churches. Feminist developments in wider society encouraged fresh consideration of biblical guidelines so that women began to enter the ordained ministry. There was, however, a strong sense in some quarters that this interpretation did scant justice to scripture, and so conflict over the role of women ensued. All, nevertheless, agreed that churches could not exist without the varied forms of female ministry. Women were at the heart of Baptist life” (p. 175).

Tough chapters on the Baptists and Social Gospel and the Gospel and Race are full of excellent instruction, written with both vigor and sensitivity, and maintain an adequate interaction between the social agenda and the theological ideas involved in each. Each chapter also has observations that push us forward in our understanding of certain vital aspects of the Baptist story. One of these is in his brief description of the positive response of the Regular Baptists to the Great Awakening in the colonies and their development of an amicable relation with the Separate Baptists (pp. 78, 79). The eventual coalescing of these two did not involve the reconciling of groups with substantial differences but came from a recognition of substantial harmony.

This book will doubtless be a popular textbook for courses in Baptist history. Its thorough research, perspicuous style, even-handed treatment, and combination of chronology and issue-oriented chapters make it deservedly so. Because this is the case, it will be beneficial to raise some points at which readers might look further into differing viewpoints on conclusions yielded by the sources. Given all that is good, some issues, in my mind, should yield a different interpretation than that given by Bebbington. For example, the idea of sacramentalism in early Baptist theology and its recent recovery (pp. 179–85, 271) based on a difference between the Calvinist and Zwinglian understandings of the Supper is open to a thoroughly distinct interpretation. From my perspective, all the language used of the Lord's Supper may be explained in terms of the symbolic memorial understanding. Obviously, all the ordinances that God requires have within them the opportunity for a ministry of the Spirit in sanctifying believers in truth and holiness. When the Philadelphia Association adopted an article confirming the laying on of hands as an "ordinance of Christ" to be given to all baptized believers "that are admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper," the purpose was set forth candidly for the "farther reception of the Holy Spirit of promise, or for the addition of the graces of the Spirit, and the influences thereof; to confirm strengthen, and comfort them in Christ Jesus." And if the laying on of hands is an ordinance given by Christ for perpetuity in the church, it certainly should be seen that way. The Confession goes on to say that these ends also are served by meeting on the first day of the week, "that being the day of worship," "preaching the word," baptism, prayer, and singing of Psalms. In other words, every commanded aspect of church order and Christian worship is designed by God to be a means of spiritual growth, an opportunity for the work of the Spirit in confirming and strengthening the people. The Spirit's use of the believer's cognition of divine revelation combined with a meditation on the completed work of Christ gives spiritual sustenance in the way that truth always is the means of conviction and spiritual growth. The elements of bread and wine symbolic of Christ's once-for-all shedding of blood as a sacrifice for sin, combined with the act of remembering, blaze a path for the Spirit's work to make the benefits of his atonement "spiritually present to the faith of Believers" [Second London Confession]. The use of Spurgeon's view in support of this supposed "sacramentalism" (pp. 181, 185) shows that a more substantial investigation of this phenomenon is needed, for nothing is clearer in Spurgeon's sermons on this subject than his recognition of it as a symbolic memorial, the power of which is found in the "remembering" of the completed historical work of Christ for sinners.

To take another example: Roger Williams, so claims Bebbington, did not write his view of liberty of conscience from a Baptist, but from a Seeker, standpoint, and his *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* cannot be claimed, therefore, as a Baptist book (p. 201). Chronologically and strictly

phenomenologically he is right, but the Baptist element is much stronger than the millennialist Seeker element. The book was written in defense of the treatise by John Murton, the General Baptist writing from prison, on liberty of conscience. Its theological moorings are clearly a new covenant concept as defended by the Baptists in the writings of John Smyth in *The Character of the Beast*, Thomas Helwys in *The Mystery of Iniquity*, and in Leonard Busher's *Religion's Peace*, as well as the work by Murton. The hermeneutic is a Baptist hermeneutic seeing discontinuity between the covenants precisely at the places where the provisions of the new covenant depart from the fleshly principle of the old covenant. His Calvinist application of this principle, showing that the saving of the people of God is a matter of divine covenant and sovereignty rather than the function of the sword of steel and embracing the new-birth rather than the flesh-birth, reflects a concern for the purity of the church and its worship consistent with a Baptist ecclesiology. Isaac Backus borrowed much of his defense of liberty of conscience and his call for separation of church and state from Williams, though some of the details are different. I am not sure Bebbington makes his case that "the text cannot legitimately be used to illustrate authentic Baptist views on its themes" (p. 201).

Finally, the concept of Baptist identity Bebbington asserts makes the whole idea of "Baptist" history problematic. Early on, he states that "It must not be assumed that Baptists possessed a single, consistent, identity." His next to the last sentence is "In the end, therefore, the Baptist identity, a phenomenon of the flux of history, may elude definition" (p. 285). Of whom, then, is this book a history? In my opinion, the issue of Baptist identity is not a "phenomenon of the flux of history." It is, rather, based upon a defense of certain theological and ecclesiological principles derived from the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura* applied rigorously in the context of the Reformed understanding of the regulative principle. Baptists entered the evangelical stream from that dynamic and defined themselves with a high degree of clarity and maturity from a confessional standpoint very early. The divide between Calvinists and Arminians did not materially affect their identity as Protestant evangelicals that believed in preaching of the gospel as fundamental to the communication of grace through faith for the salvation of sinners. Calvinism, in my view, is a more consistent application of evangelical faith and less prone to the introduction of errors, but both are a defensible part of the evangelical commitment of historic Baptists.

Certain temporary permutations or positions made necessary by political necessities have always created unique practices or relationships not applicable in other situations. "The Supreme Magistracie of this Kingdome we believe to be the King and Parliament" in the First London Confession would certainly not be universally accepted as a principle of Baptist identity. It is merely accidental, local, and alterable without

anything of true substance being changed. Bebbington's strength as a historian has pressed him at this point to accept virtually every phenomenon that has occurred in Baptist history as an element of Baptist identity. In his view, the boots worn by the Baptist minister mean as much as the baptism that he is dressed to administer (pp. 1, 2). This esteemed author (and I am sincere when I indicate esteem for Bebbington), therefore, can weave together seven strands, including liberals, as constituent elements of Baptist identity, rendering the entire phenomenon so diverse, so cloudy, so nebulous, so open-ended that he finds it to defy definition.

In my view, Baptist identity can be stated clearly in terms of historic orthodoxy, Protestant evangelicalism, confessionalism (both of personal conversion and of corporate theological commitment), and a theologically integrated separatist ecclesiology, each of these categories having several substantial parts to explain them. Bebbington resists that kind of certainty in moving toward an alignment of ideas that constitute Baptist identity. He stays carefully with the historian's task of description and might contend that I have compromised historiographically by establishing a rubric of evaluation. I might respond that in resisting such definition, he also has established a rubric. Some persons and events that have appeared within the circumference of Baptist life, so my view would assert, have taken positions that place them outside that circumference—we should make no attempt to embrace them by changing the idea of what a Baptist is. A person who denies the necessity of the new birth before baptism is not a Baptist; the person who denies the deity of Christ is not a Baptist; the person who prefers subjective personal autonomy over the authority of Scripture is not a Baptist, for he cannot hold a Baptist ecclesiology principally but only as a present tradition of convenience; a person who rejects Christ's death as a satisfaction for our sin for all who receive him by faith is not a Baptist. Bebbington, not as a theologian but as a historian, would not endorse the drawing of such lines as warranted by a historical study of Baptist identity. Baptist principles, as few and as broadly conceived as they may be, in Bebbington's summary, are neither universal among them nor unique to them (p. 285). While his work is filled with interesting, entertaining, instructive, and provocative ideas in his sweeping and panoramic picture of the Baptist story, it seems that at the end, he wants the reader to be less certain, rather than more certain, as to what a Baptist is. What else does "elude definition" (p. 285) mean?

Tom J. Nettles

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY