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BOOK REVIEWS

Reading the Bible for All the Wrong Reasons. By Russell Pregeant. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011, x + 136 pp., $ 14.99 paper.

In this book, Russell Pregeant, a NT scholar, addresses the foundational issue of the nature of the Bible and how to read it in our contemporary world. The book contains seven chapters with an introduction and epilogue.

After establishing the need for interpreting the Bible in a non-mechanical way that promotes human liberation in his introduction, Pregeant offers two chapters on the Bible's nature and authority. Chapter 1 describes the Bible as the product of the Jewish and Christian communities that tells the story of divine-human reconciliation in God's kingdom. In Chapter 2, Pregeant rejects inspiration and inerrancy as the foundation for scriptural authority by showing contradictions in the Bible and by dismissing 2 Tim 3:16–17 as ambiguous. The Bible instead is a collection of "*human* testimonies to human experiences of the divine" (p. 31). The authority of the Bible does not rest on the conviction that it reveals God's truth; instead, authority lies in its usefulness in provoking dialogue and liberating people in their own pursuit of understanding the God and human relationship.

In Chapters 3–5, Pregeant addresses instances of "Bible abuse." Chapter 3 confronts the claim that the Bible provides a scientific explanation of creation. The Bible's "pre-scientific" creation accounts are different in kind from scientific explanations. This gives license for Christians to embrace evolutionary science while acknowledging the need for the Bible in addressing questions that science cannot answer regarding the purpose of creation. In Chapter 4, Pregeant refutes the practice of interpreting the Bible as an end times guide. He begins by debunking a dispensationalist articulation of the rapture. He then argues that later NT texts spiritually reinterpret (correctly, in his opinion) earlier expectations of Christ's literal return and instead emphasize Christ's spiritual reign on earth, a reign that results in lasting peace. In Chapter 5, the author takes on three controversial issues. Regarding women in ministry, he argues that Jesus and the early church have a radical impulse toward liberating women for ministry. As for 1 Tim 2:11–12, it is irrelevant because it is a later text (non-Pauline) that reflects the patriarchal institutionalization of the later church, which is out of touch with the early liberating impulse. As for divorce, early extreme prohibitions receive loosening in later NT treatments to address new circumstances. This development shows that God is eager to offer divorce for those needing a fresh start. As for same-sex relations, negativity toward homosexuality in Leviticus and Paul is not moral in nature but cultural. Christians today can discern by the Spirit that God is not against homosexuality; rather, he is against suppressing what we can now see (thanks to science) are natural relationships.

The final two chapters focus on doctrine. Chapter 6 dismisses the classical formulation of God as unchanging and all-powerful. Since a loving relationship includes a willingness to change and excludes coercive power, it is best to understand God as dynamic and changing and as exercising power through persuasion. This approach better explains evil in the world. Though God seeks to persuade humanity and creation away from evil, humans and the natural world will go in their own evil direction at times. As for the atonement, Pregeant favors *Christus Victor* among other theories and argues that Christ is the means for saving Christians. The Bible is not explicit, however, about how others are saved. In Chapter 7, he focuses on the Christian call to live life in the Spirit who liberates them from idolatrous ways of living. He then considers how this empowers Christians to adopt a bottom-up approach to reforming ecological and economic issues.

In assessing the book, several strengths are apparent. The book is quite readable and reflects richness in thought that derives from Pregeant's many years of teaching the Bible. Furthermore, the overall organization of this book is helpful as he begins with the nature of the Bible and then works out the implications of this in the remaining chapters. Also, the issues addressed are relevant though controversial and challenging, so his courage to take on these topics is commendable and their relevance makes the book engaging. Finally, whether or not one agrees with his positions, he raises many issues with which evangelicals need to continue wrestling.

I will limit my critique to two points. First, in response to his understanding of the nature of Scripture, even if Pregeant dismisses 2 Tim 3:16–17, he must account for the attitude of the prophets, Jesus, and Paul toward the OT. Do they view scriptural authority as residing in its ability to promote liberating dialogue or in its origin from God? Second, Pregeant is inconsistent in his exegetical practice. On women in the church, he favors early NT theology over later NT texts. On divorce and eschatology, he prioritizes later texts over earlier ones. On same-sex relationships and evolution, the contemporary situation is decisive and biblical texts discarded as irrelevant. This gives the impression that Pregeant does whatever it takes to establish a position corresponding best with contemporary sensibilities.

Though the theology in this book is non-evangelical, I recommend it for classrooms in subjects on hermeneutics, theology (doctrine of the Bible), and apologetics. Along with promoting discussion, students will have a rich learning experience by writing a thorough response to one of the chapters of this book.

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Wrestling the Word: The Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Believer. By Carolyn J. Sharp. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010, 154 pp., $20.00.

Carolyn Sharp, Associate Professor of Hebrew Scriptures at Yale Divinity School, invites her readers to "wrestle with Scripture." By "wrestling," she means

thinking through the problematic conclusions contemporary scholarship has come to about the OT. She writes, "Rather than aiming at comprehensive treatment, this book has been designed to provide a theologically sensitive map to some of the issues that can trouble Christian believers when they engage in critical study of the Hebrew Scriptures" (p. xiii).

In chapter 1, the longest of the book, Sharp treats authorial intent (she wants to respect it but is not sure we can always know it), readers' assumptions, the role of tradition, the bias of historical inquiry, literary criticism, and questions of history, text, and author. She concludes the chapter with sensitive and sympathetic introductions to the thought of Julia Kristeva (especially her notion of intertextuality and her exploration of foreignness) and Emmanuel Lévinas (especially his notion of attending to the Other in interpretation and his suggestion that interrupting normative discourse is an ethical imperative).

In chapter 2, Sharp treats the Documentary Hypothesis and the literary integrity of the text. In short, she is dubious of the theory. She surveys the traditional arguments and generally finds them wanting. However, this discussion of disparate voices in the text allows her to present a new way of thinking about "diverse witnesses." These different voices, she says, can represent different communities in ethics. To appreciate dialogical witness, she draws upon the work of Walter Brueggemann (especially his understanding of testimony and countertestimony in Scripture), and philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin and his theory of dialogical reading.

In chapter 3, Sharp surveys matters of historicity. She discusses the bias of various historians and how difficult it is to know about Israel's ancient history. She then investigates historical issues in three areas: (1) the relationship of the OT to other cultures of the ancient Near East; (2) the historicity of the exodus and conquest traditions and their adherence to standards of modern historiography; and (3) the sometimes conflicting portraits of King David. She concludes that "truth" does not depend on literal historicity and that "naïveté about the complexity of the historical task helps no one" (p. 106).

Before I review chapter 4, I need to discuss a couple aspects of Sharp's writing. Throughout chapters 1–3, she writes in a gentle, pastoral, even maternal tone, helping her readers face the challenge of reading Scripture in the contemporary world. "Scripture should challenge us as well as strengthen us," she says (p. 22). When discussing matters of historicity, she writes, "Each of us will have to decide which elements in these debates carry the most weight for us, given our intellectual and ethical commitments, our position within a particular ecclesial tradition, and what our own lived experience tells us" (p. 80). She goes on, "Use the resources of your faith tradition to reflect on the significance of everything that you learn about God's holy Word" (p. 89). Sharp writes forthrightly about her own faith "situatedness," referring to her baptism, and her "confessional affirmation of the unique revelation of God in Jesus Christ." For Sharp, "analyzing Scripture and studying diverse responses to Scripture … are acts of Christian devotion no less than prayer and worship are" (p. 33). These and other statements are refreshing, and they create a warm and affirming atmosphere, that despite the challenges each

reader encounters in the history of scholarship, it is possible to emerge with one's faith intact.

Another positive aspect to Sharp's writing is her awareness of evangelical scholarship. Although she writes from the perspective of the progressive wing of the Episcopal Church, she regularly cites respectfully authors sympathetic to, and even members of, the Evangelical Theological Society.

In the last major chapter, Sharp introduces the reader to various contemporary reading strategies. She discusses the Bible's acceptance of violence and tricksterism, Liberation Theology and political readings, racial and ethnic readings, Feminist and Womanist readings, African and African-American hermeneutics, Queer Theory, and Postcolonial Criticism. Though she has some helpful cautions about overapplying the exodus paradigm to every situation of injustice, her presentation of these reading strategies is largely positive and sympathetic. Gone from this chapter are the gentle, pastoral exhortations. Rather, she writes, "My position is that the misogyny, androcentrism, ethnocentrism, homophobia, and imperialism that we find in the Bible are distorted human perspectives not willed by God and disastrously harmful to human flourishing" (p. 116). A statement such as this does not leave much room for debate. I wonder, however, why practitioners of these reading strategies are spared the call to "wrestle with Scripture" and to have *their* presuppositions challenged. Nevertheless, the author offers helpful introductions to these approaches for students who may never have encountered them.

Sharp's book is a gentle introduction to the relationship between OT critical scholarship and traditional faith as well as to contemporary interpretive strategies. As such, *Wrestling the Word* helps students and laypeople alike to appreciate the complexities of OT interpretation in a non-threatening presentation.

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Shadow on the Steps: Time Measurement in Ancient Israel. By David Miano. Resources for Biblical Study 64. Atlanta: SBL, 2010, xx + 267 pp., n.p. paper.

This study takes its title from the reference to the episode in 2 Kings 20/Isaiah 38 in which the Lord offers to turn back the shadow on the steps of the "dial of Ahaz." The author will argue on the basis of the biblical text as well as archaeological evidence that these "steps" most likely corresponded to subdivisions of the day measured by a solar clock at the king's palace. The study is more comprehensive in scope, however, and examines a variety of systems of time measurement in ancient Israel, including daily, monthly, yearly, and larger units of time (e.g. generations), and also considers methods for reckoning genealogical and regnal chronologies.

In contrast to scholars who believe such systems to be largely irretrievable from the extant sources (e.g. Vanderkam), the author maintains that several can be reconstructed to a significant extent and with a reasonable degree of confidence.

The focus of the study is on the data from the Primary History (PH) rather than the Chronicler's account, and instead of seeking to discern one overall system capable of harmonizing all of the PH's chronological data, the author strives to delineate the particular time measurement system utilized by the various putative sources of the PH. To this end, the author takes as his starting point a fairly standard approach to the Documentary Hypothesis as represented by Friedman's *The Bible with Sources Revealed.* (One notes in passing that Friedman's work has been subjected to criticism; see, e.g., Christophe Levin in *Review of Biblical Literature* 6/2006, but this need not undermine the study's results entirely.)

After a brief introduction, the author proceeds in chapter 1 to examine the various calendars in use in ancient Israel and the intervals used for time measurement. In contrast to much popular opinion, the author argues that in most of the documentary sources the day is viewed as beginning in the morning rather than the evening, in accord with Egyptian reckoning and in contrast to Mesopotamian and Athenian Greek practice. The sole exception to this is the abundant Priestly material, which views the day as beginning in the evening, thus indicating that the "liturgical day" (represented by P) and the "secular day" were reckoned differently. The chapter examines the various terms used for divisions of the day (cf. the "steps," mentioned above) and night (e.g. "watches"), as well as the names and numbers used for designating months. He urges caution in assuming too quickly that the beginning and ending of months was based simply on the phases of the moon, as there are a number of pieces of evidence that run counter to this. In discussing the beginning and ending of the year, the author notes a variety of systems in use, and ultimately he argues for the existence of an "agricultural year," "civil year," "liturgical year," and "regnal" year. The chapter concludes with a discussion of lunar, solar, and lunisolar calendars and the use of intercalation (periodically adding an extra month to a year) in order to deal with discrepancies created by purely lunar calendars (pp. 47–48).

Chapter 2 begins by discussing the counting of time units, particularly whether the counting was inclusive or exclusive (he argues for the former on p. 55). The chapter's primary subject, however, is the reckoning of long spans of time such as eras and generations. The chapter contains especially noteworthy discussions of the "480th year" of the Exodus mentioned in 1 Kgs 6:1 (pp. 56–58) and "the fourth generation" of Gen 15:16 (pp. 59–62).

Chapter 3 examines the genealogical chronologies found in the various PH sources. The author argues that most of the PH sources show little interest in utilizing genealogical information for establishing chronologies. The Priestly material, on the other hand, utilizes genealogical information to a great extent and forms a major exception to this general pattern. In some cases, a relative chronology is established by dating an event with respect to the life of an individual (e.g. the Flood occurs in Noah's 600th year according to Gen 7:6), but the author argues that more absolute chronologies are established by the extensive genealogical lists found in such places as Genesis 5 and 11. The extended textual discussions of these two genealogies (pp. 67–76 and 76–83, respectively) are

particularly informative. The author then seeks to delineate the textual sources that contributed to the Priestly chronology.

Chapter 4 discusses the chronologies involving rulers, including not only kings but judges as well. Here the author faults scholars such as Thiele for attempting to discern one uniform system for reckoning rulership in the Hebrew Bible. Instead, the author organizes his discussion according to the sources of the PH and analyzes each chronological system separately, after which he attempts to reconstruct an overall chronology of PH that takes both biblical and extrabiblical sources into account. As one might expect, the discussion is detailed and complex, though the results are helpfully summarized in a series of tables throughout. A concluding chapter summarizes the results of the study, followed by appendices and indices.

This book will be a useful resource for biblical historians and those interested in questions of biblical chronology. While readers of this journal may have qualms about the author's heavy reliance upon source-critical presuppositions and methodology, it must be acknowledged that the biblical material itself makes explicit reference to a number of textual sources utilized by the compiler(s) of the PH, thereby requiring some consideration of source- and redaction-critical factors. By attempting to delineate the different chronological systems attested in the PH, the author has potentially helped to provide a sensible explanation for some of the "mysterious numbers" found in the Hebrew Bible.

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Stones and Stories: An Introduction to Archaeology and the Bible. By Don C. Benjamin. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, xix + 386 pp., $39.00 paper.

Stones and Stories is a unique survey of biblical archaeology written by Don C. Benjamin, who teaches Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Arizona State University. Unlike the standard surveys by Kenyon, Aharoni, Mazar, and Ben-Tor, Benjamin's work does not survey the archaeological discoveries chronologically through the Bronze and Iron Ages but instead approaches the field through five schools of thought: Popular Archaeology, Cultural History, Annales Archaeology, Processual Archaeology, and Post-Processual Archaeology. For the author, the Bible is the OT and the Apocrypha, but not the NT, and with the exception of a chapter on Qumran, the area of focus remains in the earlier periods.

The uniqueness of approaching what is popularly known as "biblical archaeology" through five stages in the history of archaeological theory and method is appealing. Indeed, Benjamin succeeds in presenting much material that has probably never been included in textbooks on biblical archaeology. The chapter on Cape Gelidonya and Uluburun introduces students to shipwrecks that reveal much about the ancient world but which are often overlooked in standard texts. The subject of antiquities dealers receives a chapter as does the archaeology of pilgrims. But as the book's subtitle suggests, this is not an introduction to biblical

archaeology or even archaeology, but rather to "archaeology and the Bible." This broader parameter provides the author the liberty to include word studies, theological excurses, and numerous narrative analyses. The broader focus of the book is apparent with a look at some of the sidebars included: Orientalism, the diary of Gertrude Bell, theodicy, a manifest for the ship at Uluburun, and the Hexapla.

This book was clearly designed to appeal to an undergraduate audience with an attractive and varied layout, nearly 100 illustrations, review sections, study questions, and frequent callouts and sidebars. Benjamin often provides the reader with the primary sources, such as the Mesha Stele and Egeria's fascinating account of her visit to the traditional Mount Sinai. Scripture translations are all by the author and are dynamic and interesting. In addition, a supplemental website provides resources for professors, including some sample syllabi and research assignments.

Some of the book's clear strengths are offset by other weaknesses and may prevent adoption of this as the primary text for an archaeology course in an evangelical college. A significant shortcoming is the lack of systematic treatment that a schools-of-archaeology approach provides. While the student finishing this book should understand the difference between Cultural History and Processual Archaeology, he or she probably will not know the difference between the Bronze and Iron Ages and the major characteristics of each period.

Benjamin regularly refers to the "world of the Bible," as though this "world" were a monolithic time and place. This approach does not facilitate or encourage readers to make chronological or geographical distinctions. In one instance, he suggests that references in Jeremiah about sacred space on a roof helps us to interpret Bathsheba's bathing (p. 193), and in another, that "in the world of the Bible, the relationship between a man and his uncles was as important as the relationship between a man and his father" (p. 194).

Stones and Stories will not strengthen the student's confidence in the historical accuracy of the Bible. The author asserts, for example, that an investigation of the site of Ekron and its seventh-century remains yields "the scenery against which the stories in the saga of Samson were told" (p. 239). A study of Gezer "clarifies little and confirms little about the biblical Solomon" (p. 94), though the author proposes the city was built by Tyre for Egypt, who then gave it to Solomon (p. 224). The author's view of Israel's origin from the coastal cities of Canaan is repeated many times throughout the text but never with any specifics or archaeological support (e.g. pp. xv, 25, 107, 168).

While the literature cited in this book is broad and the author's research is significant, factual errors are common. To cite a few, Benjamin describes "the conversion of the standard element of Carbon (C^{12}) into the isotope Carbon 14 (C^{14})" to date living material (p. 189); speaks of Kenyon's excavations at Jericho as being limited to "very small squares" (p. 216); says that *terra rossa* is "deposited" on limestone (p. 168); claims that Judah was "continuously threatened by Babylon" from 650–600 BC (p. 133); and gets the dimensions wrong for the Gezer Calendar (made of wood and gypsum!) and the Merneptah Stele (pp. 222–23). Benjamin says

Jericho was destroyed in 1350 BC and rebuilt by Hezekiah (p. 92), Aharoni and Amiran jointly excavated Iron Age Arad (pp. 129–31), and Medinet Habu is located in the Valley of Pharaohs and is Arabic for "funeral chapel" (p. 235).

Some interpretive issues raise even greater problems for use as a standard textbook. Benjamin claims that the reason that the Israelites were to destroy the standing stones was for military purposes, not religious (p. 218). The patriarch Jacob "anoints the stone to acknowledge the presence of Yahweh in the stone" (p. 218). David was "a temporary warlord elected to lead the tribe of warriors into battle" (p. 221). "An earthquake had a greater impact on life in Judah from 740 to 700 B.C.E. than did the prophet Isaiah" (p. 94). The Lord touched the prophet's mouth because "these new iron lips prepared Isaiah to help the rulers of Judah make economically sound decisions in their struggle with Assyria" (p. 78). In some ways, this book reflects the popular trends in universities today with emphasis on feminist approaches, sexual readings of biblical narratives, and the critique of male metaphors for Yahweh that make it "easy for males to feel empowered brutally to control women and their sexuality" (p. 54).

The discussion of Israel's origin refers only to dead scholars who support a conquest theory and does not reflect a careful study of the issues and positions. For instance, Benjamin writes that "it became more and more clear that the Bible is the only evidence for an invasion or conquest of Syria-Palestine by the Hebrews from the east during the Iron I period" (p. 107).

The final sections on Processual and Post-Processual Archaeology provide several examples of how these two methodological advances are alleged to serve the interpretation of the text. An analysis of the woman of Thebez story in Judges 9 is said to be improved by a study of how, where, and by what authority bread was made, even though bread-making is never mentioned in the narrative (pp. 266–68). The study of the David and Goliath account does not reflect knowledge of archaeological discoveries but is the author's own reading of David's "shaming" of the giant by calling him "uncircumcised" (p. 248). Samson may be the first one to "seduce" a prostitute, and because a man's hair and beard are comparable to his pubic hair, "by shaving Samson's head, Delilah castrates him" (pp. 236–38).

Because of these and similar concerns, I would use this book selectively in an undergraduate setting, requiring certain chapters to address topics not covered elsewhere. Graduate students and those with more background in the field could more profitably benefit from the work as a whole. Professors will want to be familiar with this work and consult its extensive and up-to-date annotated 75-page bibliography.

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What Shall We Say? Evil, Suffering, and the Crisis of Faith. By Thomas G. Long. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011. xiv + 158 pp., n.p.

Thomas Long is Bandy Professor of Preaching at Candler School of Theology, Emory University. This book consists of five chapters, with an interlude between chapters 4 and 5, followed by an index. Chapter 1 uses the earthquake that destroyed Lisbon, Portugal in 1755 as a backdrop for discussing the term "theodicy," which had been coined by Gottfried Leibniz roughly forty years earlier. In that era, many theologians believed all events and occurrences came from the hand of a loving God in the best of all possible worlds. The destruction of Lisbon, a city known for its Catholic piety, made theologians and scholars question this view. It shook the foundations of faith and called into question the goodness of God and creation. At the same time, the Enlightenment also contributed to the questioning of the world under divine control as scientists discovered natural laws that governed the workings of the world. As science advanced, there was less room (or need) for God.

True to the book's subtitle, chapter 2 explores how evil and suffering affect the faith of believers. Theodicy, which was once the concern of intellectual elites in the eighteenth century, has now been "democratized" and is an active challenge to the faith of ordinary Christians. Long briefly tells of the faith journeys of some prominent Christians as they faced the matter of suffering and loss and how this squares with the belief in a loving and powerful God.

In chapter 3, Long presents two warnings to those who seek to deal with the question of God's goodness and power in relation to innocent suffering. The first warning is to speak the truth in love. Those who minister to people who suffer tragedy sometimes use trite or superficial theological statements in the attempt to comfort. What needs to be done is to eliminate from our theological repertoire those responses to the theodicy problem that are satisfying at the abstract level but become cruel mockeries when placed in the context of actual human suffering (p. 43). Long says this is not the time for a theological seminar. He encourages ministers to avoid the theoretical since the grieving person may be in no mental condition to discuss or consider the abstract when faced with devastating loss. The second warning is that many theologians believe that exploring the issue of theodicy is a fool's mission and may even be theologically dangerous. After a complex discussion Long comes to the conclusion that the task of theodicy is not to solve a logical problem in philosophy but instead to repair a faithful but imperiled worldview (p. 55).

Chapter 4 examines a representative sample of responses to the theodicy question, accepting salient points of these responses but also challenging each solution where it is perceived to fall short, as follows:

- that the innocent suffer because there is no God (atheism);
- that God is loving and just but not all-powerful (Harold Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*);
- that God is a "work in progress" and lacks the power to stop suffering (process theology);

- that humanity's initial impulse to rebellion brought sin into the world (free will);
- that the world was designed to encourage human growth toward maturity, making suffering an important part of humanity's growth toward God (John Hick's Irenaean theodicy).

In the interlude that follows chapter 4, Long examines the book of Job, and concludes that Job learned to trust the God he loves and love the God he trusts (p. 111). The book closes with chapter 5, where Long advises preachers on what can and should be said about theodicy.

One small critique of this book is that Long most often addresses preachers. He is, after all, a professor of homiletics and sometimes makes rather "sermonesque" statements. However, one might wonder why preachers are addressed and not pastors, unless Long is intending the terms as synonymous. In reality, many Christian professionals deal with people who face the theodicy question, including chaplains (military, hospital, law enforcement), counselors, and more. At times, non-professionals such as friends or family members must comfort those who question divine love and justice in regards to innocent suffering. In many cases those who are called on to console the hurting do not have a pulpit ministry.

This book provides many helpful observations on a difficult topic and I highly recommend it for pastors, counselors, and chaplains. It is not pop psychology or a self-help book. Though preachers are the primary audience, Long offers insights and guidance for all who stand beside those who ask hard questions about God's love and justice in situations of undeserved suffering.

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The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins. By Peter Enns. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012, xx + 172 pp., $17.99.

The title of Peter Enns's book, *The Evolution of Adam*, directs the reader immediately to his purpose in writing. Enns argues that our understanding of Adam must "evolve" in light of evidence from natural science and the study of Scripture. New scientific evidence shows the theory of evolution to be true "beyond reasonable scientific doubt" (p. ix). In addition, biblical research over the past two centuries has revealed both the ancient literary genre of Genesis and the ancient interpretive understanding of the Apostle Paul. Those who take Scripture seriously as God's Word and also accept the prevailing scientific thinking on human origins (those whom Enns identifies as his intended audience) must adjust their understanding of Adam accordingly.

After a brief introduction (pp. ix–xx), Enns divides his book into two sections that deal with two fundamental questions. Chapters 1–4 address how we are to understand the creation narrative(s) in Genesis, and chapters 5–7 address Paul's use of Adam as the historical first human, whose sin Paul believes caused all other

humans to fall into error. Enns concludes the book with nine theses regarding "Adam today."

In the first section of the book, Enns develops his thesis that the creation narratives were not, as is commonly supposed, written as stories about the origin of humanity. Instead, they were written in the context of Israel's exile and intended to describe and establish Israel's unique identity as a response to that crisis. Adam is presented in Genesis not as the first human but rather as proto-Israel, and the rest of the book of Genesis (as well as the entire Torah) is intended to develop Israel's unique identity and the character of Israel's God over against the gods of other nations.

Enns enlists two primary types of evidence to support his thesis on the meaning of the creation narratives of Genesis: the results of biblical archaeology and of the study of ancient Near Eastern literature. Based on this evidence, Genesis is to be understood as taking its final form during and after the exile. Enns accepts the results of modern biblical scholarship, briefly rehearsing the rise of the Documentary Hypothesis. He argues that even if it has been modified in some ways over the past 150 years, it still provides the most convincing and well-accepted approach to explaining Genesis.

Enns suggests that this approach, coupled with scholarly research comparing Israel's and other ancient peoples' stories of origins, equips us to do accurate "genre calibration," that is, to understand the creation stories in Genesis as they were intended in their ancient Near Eastern context. The central concern of the ancient authors and their readers was not human origins, but national identity. Recognizing the ancient genre of Genesis reveals the world of thought used by those who composed Israel's self-defining narratives and also highlights the unique and prophetic perspective of Israel's sacred writings over against those of other ancient peoples. While the Genesis narratives are rightly understood as the Word of God, they are not to be treated as history or science.

The second section of the book addresses Paul's understanding of Adam. Enns concludes that Paul was wrong in his view of Adam as a historical figure and as the cause of the ongoing human battle with sin. Paul's view is not that of the OT writers, but is rooted in the thinking of his time and in Paul's quest to explain Israel's Scriptures in light of his own transformative encounter with Christ. Paul, who is inspired by God, creatively reads and utilizes Adam to explain how Jews and Gentiles can now be one people of God in Christ. Enns supports his argument with examples of Paul's use of the OT, which Enns says demonstrate that Paul routinely ignores the grammatical-historical meaning of the OT text. Enns also argues that "losing" Adam as a historical figure does not undermine the Christian belief in the reality of sin and the need for God's intervention in Christ. In Enns's own words, "Christians who take Paul's *theology* with utmost seriousness are not also bound to accept Pau's view of Adam *historically*. How we today explain the origin and development of human life does not affect our acceptance of the reality of the human plight of sin and death or of God's unexpected, universal solution" (p. 135).

The *Evolution of Adam* is a bold attempt to change evangelical thinking on the subject of human origins and the problem of sin. The author is to be commended for making his case in a manner that is accessible to a broad range of readers. Many readers will take issue with his assumptions regarding the assured results of modern science and of biblical scholarship, and Enns at times writes dismissively of those who take other views on these topics. In addition, the evidence he amasses for his arguments is at times cursory and therefore unconvincing, such as in the section of Paul's use of the OT (pp. 103–13). For those who already embrace the naturalistic, scientific explanation of human origins and the historical-critical approach to Scripture, Enns's arguments should resonate well. For those less confident of these things, Enns's arguments are not as likely to prove convincing.

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Seven Days that Divide the World: The Beginning According to Genesis and Science. By John C. Lennox. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, 192 pp, n.p. paper.

Having appreciated John Lennox's debates with Hitchens, Dawkins, and other notable atheists and knowing his academic accomplishments as professor of Mathematics at the University of Oxford and lecturer in science and religion, I was excited to be asked to examine his thoughts on how the book of Genesis can be reconciled with science in *Seven Days that Divide the World.*

I was delighted by the first two chapters, which introduced the previously entrenched anti-heliocentric view and how all have now abandoned the idea that the earth is the center of the universe. This was a great way to slowly, simply, and gently call into question fundamentalist presuppositions about the age of the earth, and I could think of several in my congregation who would benefit from this gentle approach.

In chapter 3, Lennox lays out the different possibilities for dealing with the seven days, attempting to harmonize a gap, framework, and what appears to be a new take on the day-age theory. His new take is that of a *fiat* creation that begins the work in a literal 24-hour period but has it continue for uncertain lengthy periods of time, thus allowing him to be perfectly content in a billions-of-years-old universe and still take the Bible seriously.

In chapter 4, the author insists that humans are a special creation and that Paul's reference to no death before the fall is referring not to plants and animals but only to humans. Admirably, Lennox brings up many of the important biblical questions about potential immortality and animal immortality and what was happening outside of the garden. Chapter 5 is entitled "The Message of Genesis 1," and the message, apparently, is Jesus. I commend him for bravely centering the conversation on Jesus even though the book was about how science and Genesis can be read together as non-contradictory.

The book "officially" ends after chapter 5, but five additional appendices increase the book's length by a third and vary in helpfulness. Appendix A is a brief

background to Genesis and deals with questions of dating and the ancient Near Eastern comparative texts. Appendix B is a detailed critique of Walton's functional creation and his cosmic temple view. Appendix C focuses on the phrase "in the beginning" and quotes from several scientists about the plausibility of the Big Bang. Appendix D is not even four pages long, explaining some Hebrew intricacies that allow Lennox to harmonize the two distinct creation stories without chronological concerns. In Appendix 5, Lennox rejects Darwin's common ancestry view and theistic evolution in general, insisting that the supernatural can and must intervene in natural processes.

I commend the general tenor and intent of the book and the clear and readable style, but I did have considerable concerns as well. Rather than list every line that frustrated me as an OT scholar, let me instead stay with the more general overarching concerns that can be boiled down to the following: that which first excited me about the book—that Lennox was a non-specialist but very capable academic—ended up frustrating me as it seemed he was ill prepared to deal with the important questions regarding hermeneutics, the ancient Near East, and the NT use of the OT.

First, I was amazed at how quickly he dismissed particular interpretations by referring to Paul's view or even something Jesus did. For instance, the serpent had to be an actual snake (that stood upright I might add), because Paul made certain claims about the offspring of the serpent opposing the offspring of the woman and that was referring to Jesus (p. 83). Why does the NT automatically compel a certain understanding? Has Lennox not wrestled with the varying views of how NT authors use OT texts? Lennox also says that the fact that man is said to be created in "our" image "surely anticipate[s] New Testament teaching on the Trinity" (p. 97). "Surely anticipates"? Has he considered the Divine Council motif well known by OT scholars? These examples and the issues in general were not overly concerning, but they did give me a feeling that the author was not adequately abreast of the issues.

Equally frustrating was his general lack of appreciation for the ancient Near Eastern context. While he spends some time in appendix A discussing *Enuma Elish*, *Atrahasis*, and the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, he seems to dismiss these too quickly as not being correlative with the biblical texts. He seems intent on defending this view with quotes by conservatives like Kenneth Kitchen to show how very distinct the Bible is from these ancient Near Eastern myths. But do the differences really keep us from noticing the similarities? Granted, the comparative analysis has sometimes gone too far and the biblical story might not depend directly on these earlier myths. Still, could we not admit, with most OT scholars, that they breathe similar air and use this in our interpretive work? Lennox makes blanket statements like this one in Appendix A: "Genesis is written by someone who never did believe in a multiplicity of gods in the first place" (p. 124). This statement, which may or may not be true, along with the above concerns, points to a lack of understanding of authorship issues, a rather immature view of OT monotheism, and a naïve view of how historiography works.

I was quite happy with Lennox's language of divine accommodation when he asserted that Scripture was written to be "comprehended, not comprehensive" and that it was meant to be accessible to all, but frustrated again that he seemed to ignore this in his own interpretation. Much like Answers in Genesis and Hugh Ross, Lennox suffers from concordist tendencies. He has such high respect for the biblical text—a feeling I share—but in so doing never considers that literal intentionality in a text might not be the same as literal event. Where Walton says Scripture has nothing to say about science, Lennox insists that it says far more than we think. For instance, he spends considerable time showing that Genesis was right in saying "in the beginning," because scientists now believe that there was a beginning (Appendix C). This, for him, lends credibility to the Bible in a skeptical world (p. 142). In Chapter 4, Lennox discusses God making humans from the dust of the ground and insists that this implies a special creation act, rather than suggesting that humans arose, either by natural processes or by God's special activity, out of preexisting hominids. This theory simply cannot work because, so says Lennox, the text says that God created them, not that he revealed himself to them (p. 72). Even though I share this conclusion, it seems he has arrived at his conclusions through a rather fundamentalist approach; that is, his doctrine of accommodation is not well thought out. I consistently felt many of his concerns would dissolve if he at least considered that perhaps God was communicating so his hearers would sufficiently grasp the message in their time.

While it is safe to say this book added little to the discussion on creation, it is, perhaps, unfair to expect such a book to move the debate largely forward. Rather, Lennox does what he sets out to do: he asks scientists to reconsider the Christian faith by showing them that there are plausible answers to how the Bible and science might comfortably coexist. And he asks young earth Christians to recognize that those who conclude, with science, that the universe is quite old, may have legitimate grounds from Scripture to do so. While biblical theologians will not find this book very helpful, Lennox's chosen audience will find it immensely so and for this his contribution is to be commended.

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Ecclesiastes. By Peter Enns. Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, xiv + 238 pp., $25.00 paper.

Theological exegesis and theological reflection characterize The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary series to which this Ecclesiastes volume by Peter Enns belongs. The author approaches Ecclesiastes by making his theology and his exegesis interdependent (p. 117). In line with most recent commentators, Enns allocates 1:1–11 and 12:8–14 to that narrator and the intervening material to Qohelet (p. 4). The person of Qohelet exists as a literary creation, thus allowing the frame narrator to convey his theological agenda (p. 17). At all points, Enns interacts with the Hebrew text and with nearly all of the most well-known scholars who

associate Qohelet with skepticism, pessimism, frustration, anger, or resignation. While he recognizes differences of opinion, he nonetheless makes no reference to the more positive interpretations of Ecclesiastes by Michael A. Eaton (*Ecclesiastes: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, Inter-Varsity 1983), Daniel J. Estes (*Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*, Baker 2005), Daniel C. Fredericks ("Ecclesiastes," in *Ecclesiastes & the Song of Songs*, AOTC, Apollos 2010), or Walter C. Kaiser Jr. (*Ecclesiastes: Total Life*, Everyman's Bible Commentary, Moody 1979). Of these, Enns only mentions Fredericks, and that with regard to Fredericks's linguistic arguments for a pre-exilic date for the book (pp. 21–22).

The commentary proper (pp. 30–116) fills out Enns's opinion that Qohelet's theme focuses on life's total absurdity (p. 43). "Absurd" represents Enns's preferred meaning for *hebel* (p. 31), which traditional translators render as "vanity" or "meaningless." He observes that Qohelet's emotions, frustrations, and confusion seem to result in a jumbled and belabored tone in some sections of the biblical book (pp. 36, 85). Enns concludes that scholars should resist the temptation to emend such textual disjunctions, since they might arise out of Qohelet's emotional and mental state (pp. 84–85). He compares Qohelet's anger at God with some of the psalms of lament (p. 39). However, this analogy only provides an approximation, since the ultimate praise (or renewal of faith) that seems to characterize most biblical lament psalms is absent in his view of Ecclesiastes (pp. 125, 156). Part of the reason he finds no such resolution in Ecclesiastes coincides with his coloring the *carpe diem* passages (2:24–26; 3:12–14; 5:18–20; 8:15; 9:7–9; 11:7–10) with a tone of resignation to absurdity, rather than an appreciation of God's good gifts (pp. 49, 132).

According to Enns, Qohelet's anger and vexation do not indicate that the ancient spokesman lives apart from knowing God or that he "is trying to make sense of life apart from him" (p. 40). Qohelet "knows how things are supposed to be, yet his experience does not mesh with the ideal" (p. 40). On the other hand, Qohelet's knowledge of God should not be associated with a covenantal concept of the fear of God typical of other biblical wisdom literature. Rather, Qohelet's fear of God is "something dysfunctional, born out of frustration. God is not to be trusted, so keep out of his way" (p. 84).

Regarding the theological significance of Ecclesiastes (pp. 117–219), Enns points out that even people who have a good relationship to the covenant God may experience the darker side of life (p. 156). He believes that Ecclesiastes gives voice to the nation of Israel in exile, a time of extreme despair—its people have had enough (p. 166). This message concerning God's people ties in with the gospel message regarding the suffering of Christ. Being a Davidic king like Qohelet, Christ enters into Qohelet's sense of abandonment (p. 169). Experientially, both Qohelet and Christ are exemplary for God's people (p. 171). Enns rejects any typological or prophetic sense requiring direct reference to the life and ministry of Christ in the words and experiences of Qohelet (p. 168). In addition, he denies any borrowing of ideas from Qohelet (p. 179). The frame narrator's summary statement at the conclusion of Ecclesiastes (12:13, "fear God, keep his commandments") calls Israelites to press on in covenant obedience regardless of circumstances (pp. 114,

191). In the same fashion, Jesus himself remained steadfast in obedience in spite of tremendous suffering (p. 187). Thus Enns distances himself from any who might consider Ecclesiastes vacant of theological value or who might attribute the book to a thoroughly secular pessimist.

Concluding his theological thoughts with respect to the role of Ecclesiastes in Scripture, Enns challenges readers to recognize the place of counterpoint. The book of Ecclesiastes, as part of the canon of Scripture, reveals a believer's struggles and doubts. Qohelet articulates his frustrations and ascribes to God "the limited and fallen view of his creatures" (p. 201). Although many commentators and theologians agree with him, Enns builds his entire system upon assumptions that the book is post-exilic and that a more positive reading violates what he considers to be a legitimate hermeneutic.

Occasional paraphrases in the commentary section help to clarify what Enns believes Qohelet intends (e.g. pp. 41, 51, 59). The commentator writes engagingly, rather than academically or pedantically. For example, in his discussion of Qohelet's emphasis on the reality and inescapability of death, he picturesquely concludes that "Qohelet slams your face against the mortuary's front window" (p. 131). Elsewhere, describing Qohelet's protest against the injustices and absurdities that God gives mankind, Enns likens it to "a soldier firing his pistol at a wave of bombers: 'Do your worst, I'm going down fighting'" (p. 97). This volume makes a substantial contribution to the ongoing study of Ecclesiastes. Even readers who disagree with Enns will find the exegetical and theological discussions thought provoking and worthwhile.

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The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament. By Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles. Nashville: B & H, 2009, xxi + 954 pp., $59.99.

The publication of a NT introduction is by no means a rare event. A wide number of new introductory texts and revised versions of previously-produced texts have been published in the twenty-first century alone. In the present instance, Andreas J. Köstenberger and L. Scott Kellum of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest, NC) have collaborated with Charles L. Quarles of Louisiana College (Pineville, LA) to produce a detailed text of nearly 900 pages. It also includes a lengthy glossary and three indices: names, subjects, and Scripture. Following a brief preface, the text is structured in five parts: "Introduction" (chaps. 1–2); "Jesus and the Gospels" (chaps. 3–7); "The Early Church and Paul" (chaps. 8–15); "The General Epistles and Revelation" (chaps. 16–20); and "Conclusion" (chap. 21). Each chapter begins with a segment entitled "Core Knowledge," divided into three tiers: basic, intermediate, and advanced knowledge. Each chapter likewise closes with summary points regarding the contribution of the given book(s) to the canon (except for more general chapters—e.g. chaps. 1–2, 3, 9, 21), study questions,

and bibliographic resources for further study. Book outlines, sidebars, tables, meditations (something to think about), key facts, summaries, and maps are speckled throughout the text.

In the preface, the authors note that their title attempts to capture the essence of NT theology: the cradle (Jesus' virgin birth and incarnation), the cross (narrated in the Gospel passion narratives and explained in the NT letters), and the crown (the triumphant return of Christ and believers' reign with him; p. xiv). They further delineate six distinctive characteristics that mark their volume: user-friendly, comprehensive, conservative, balanced, up-to-date, and spiritually nurturing and application orientated (p. xvii).

Part 1, "Introduction" (pp. 1–99), consists of two chapters: "The Nature and Scope of Scripture" (chap. 1), and "The Political and Religious Background of the New Testament" (chap. 2). The initial chapter addresses matters of canon, text transmission, and inspiration. The second chapter, as the title suggests, provides an overview of background information relevant to the formal study of the NT.

Part 2, "Jesus and the Gospels" (pp. 101–327), begins with an introductory chapter on "Jesus and the Relationship between the Gospels" (chap. 3), followed by respective chapters covering the four Gospels: Matthew (chap. 4), Mark (chap. 5), Luke (chap. 6), and John (chap. 7). The initial chapter introduces readers to the formal study of Jesus, including references to Jesus outside the NT, the various quests for the historical Jesus, contemporary models of Jesus, chronological matters, historical Jesus criteria, and models regarding the interrelationship among the Gospels. The subsequent chapters on the Synoptic Gospels favor traditional authorship (the apostle Matthew; John Mark as interpreter of Peter; and Luke the physician) and early dating (Matthew: 50s or 60s; Mark: mid- to late 50s; Luke: c. 58–60). Each chapter also provides a unit-by-unit discussion of the content of these Gospels and an overview of their respective theology. The chapter on John contends for traditional authorship (John, the son of Zebedee and apostle) and favors a dating range of mid- to late 80s or early 90s. In addition to a unit-by-unit discussion of its content and a survey of its theology, the authors also discuss the relationship of this Gospel to the Synoptic Gospels and the larger Johannine corpus.

Part 3, "The Early Church and Paul" (pp. 329–666), the proportionately longest section of the book, encompasses "The Book of Acts" (chap. 8), an introductory chapter on Paul (chap. 9), followed by an overview of the traditional thirteen letters of the Pauline corpus (chaps. 10–15). The authors treat the letters of Paul in relation to Acts because it forms the basic framework for the discussion of Paul's life, ministry, and letters (cf. p. 329). Regarding Acts, they hold to traditional authorship (Luke), early dating (early 60s), and a high view of its historical accuracy. They characterize Acts as "theological history" (drawing on C. L. Blomberg; p. 340, n. 27). They identify four theological themes in Acts: salvation history, the universal scope of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit, and the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The introductory chapter on Paul surveys "The Man and His Message" (chap. 9). The authors include in their discussion a survey of the New Perspective and its variations as well as a critique of them. Their subsequent treatment of the

traditional thirteen letters of Pauline corpus is organized according to their understanding of the chronological sequence of these letters. The authors maintain traditional Pauline authorship of all thirteen letters. They believe Galatians (chap. 10, pp. 405–29) was the earliest of Paul's letters. They thus favor a Southern Galatian destination and a date of origin before the Jerusalem council. The remainder of Paul's earlier letters are delineated along a familiar chronological sequence: 1–2 Thessalonians (chap. 11; c. 50 for both, favoring the traditional sequence), 1–2 Corinthians (chap. 12; c. 53 or 54 and c. 54 or 55 respectively), and Romans (chap. 13; c. mid- to late 50s). The authors adhere to a Roman provenance for the captivity letters (Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon; chap. 14), though they consider Philippians most likely prior (c. 59) to the other three (c. 60). The authors additionally maintain Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Letters (1–2 Timothy, Titus; chap. 15) and further contend that the instructions of these letters transcend their original context and hence apply to the church of all ages (p. 642).

Part 4, "The General Epistles and Revelation" (pp. 667–872), as the title suggests, surveys the remaining books of the NT in their common canonical order: Hebrews (chap. 18), James (chap. 17), 1–2 Peter and Jude (chap. 18), 1–3 John (chap. 19), and Revelation (chap. 20). The authors date Hebrews in the mid-60s (c. 65) and suggest that the description "homily" or "sermon" certainly seems to fit it well. They call attention to the rhetorical devices employed in it and survey representative proposals regarding its structure. It was most likely written to a congregation of Jewish-Christians whom the author urged to move on to maturity in the face of looming persecution. They consider James a circular letter written (possibly from Jerusalem) in the mid-40s (c. 45) to diaspora Jewish Christians living outside of Jerusalem. The evidence indicates that the author was James, the son of Joseph and half-brother of Jesus. They identify the following theological themes in James: the relation between faith and works, wisdom and ethics, and Christology and eschatology. First and Second Peter were written from Rome to the same recipients in Northern Asia Minor. Simon Peter is the author of both letters (c. 62–63 and 65 respectively). The recipients were encouraged to stay the course in the face of persecution (1 Peter) and to combat false teachers (2 Peter). Jude was authored by Jude, a brother of James. The authors suggest a date of origin in the mid-50s to early 60s (c. 55–62). They do not consider Jude a Catholic (General) Epistle because it was addressed to a particular group of people (Jude 1–4). The authors consider it more likely that Jude was the source for 2 Peter 2 than *vice versa* or that both drew on a common source. 1–3 John are products of the apostle John (c. 90–95) to churches in and around Ephesus occasioned by the recent departure of false teachers (1 John), itinerant false teachers (2 John), and the autocratic actions of Diotrephes (3 John). Revelation was by the same author addressed slightly later (c. 95–96) to churches in Asia Minor to encourage them to remain faithful amidst persecution. The authors suggest that since the book makes explicit claims about future events relative to the return of Christ, "preference should be given to a form of the futuristic approach" (p. 852).

Part 5, "Conclusion" (pp. 873–95), offers an essay on the subject of "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament" (chap. 21, pp. 874–95). The authors suggest

that the one God, Jesus Christ, and the gospel are the three major pillars of NT theology. They characterize the NT documents not as a "disparate collection of ill-fitting parts," but rather as "a well-composed symphony in which the different elements combine to a harmonious work that echoes into all the world to the glory of God and the edification of those … who respond to the divine revelation … in faith" (p. 893).

This is one of the most detailed NT introductions presently available. The authors self-consciously take their place along a trajectory of conservative introductions represented by scholars like Theodore Zahn (1838–1933), Donald Guthrie (1915–1992), and D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo. The scholarship is informed, irenic, well organized, and clearly presented throughout. The bibliographies, with some exceptions (e.g. Brendan Bryne, *Romans* [SP; Collegeville: Glazier, 1996]; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006]), are typically up to date and well representative. Given the conservative orientation, level of detail, and length of the text, its primary audience is likely to be seminarians in evangelical institutions, but surely graduate students of the NT from any orientation will benefit from giving it a careful reading. The authors and publisher should also consider making web and/or electronic resources available to supplement the text. A planned abridged edition of the text (*The Lion and the Lamb: New Testament Essentials from* The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown [Nashville: B & H, forthcoming in July of this year]) should additionally make it a more viable option for undergraduate students and interested general readers.

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The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart D. Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue. Edited by Robert B. Stewart. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011, xx + 220 pp. $22.00 paper.

The showpiece of this collection of essays is a transcript of two lectures, one by Bart Ehrman (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and one by Dan Wallace (Dallas Theological Seminary), followed by interaction with the audience. Although the lecturers say little to each other, the "dialogue" continues as seven other scholars contribute chapters, some responding to Ehrman and others taking up text-critical issues. The editor includes an introduction, which is actually most meaningful if read last.

The Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture—designed to engage an evangelical Christian in dialogue with a non-evangelical or non-Christian—is to be commended for providing the venue for these lectures and papers. The forum was held April 4–5, 2008 on the campus of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. This collection merits close attention, particularly given the number of people influenced by Ehrman's bestsellers.

For those already familiar with their work, Ehrman's and Wallace's lectures are predictable. The evidence is not a point of controversy; the differences between them go deeper. They both practice a methodology of reasoned eclecticism and agree that:

- The estimated number of variants in the text of the NT is 300,000 to 400,000, based on the presently analyzed manuscripts (the number of words in the NT is about 140,000). The reality is, the more manuscripts, the more variants … the more evidence, the more complicated the situation. Most variants, however, "don't matter for anything. They are absolutely irrelevant, immaterial, unimportant" (Ehrman, p. 21). Wallace states, "Less than 1 percent of the differences are both meaningful and viable. [Yet] there are still hundreds of texts that are in dispute" (p. 41).
- Some variants resulted from intentional changes, specifically orthodox scribes altering the text to align it to their theological viewpoints (see Ehrman's book, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1996]). Wallace says the shaping of the text by orthodox scribes "occurs in hundreds of places" (p. 41).
- The majority of the 5,500 extant NT manuscripts were produced 700 years or more after the originals were written; Ehrman says this majority is 94 percent (p. 19; cf. p. 61). Wallace focuses on the minority: "We have today as many as a dozen manuscripts from the second century, sixty-four from the third, and forty-eight from the fourth. That's a total of 124 manuscripts within 300 years of the composition of the New Testament" (p. 34; cf. pp. 61, 109). Yet that number represents only 2 percent of the 5,500 manuscripts. Wallace also notes that "there are more manuscripts from the third century than there are from the fourth or fifth century" (p. 36).

For Ehrman this evidence demonstrates that the text of the NT cannot be trusted to be accurate. "We don't have the originals of any of the books of the New Testament …. Why should one think that God performed the miracle of inspiring the words in the first place if he didn't perform the miracle of preserving the words? …. It's hard to know what the words of the New Testament mean if you don't know what the words were" (p. 14). He continues, "Is the text of the New Testament reliable? The reality is there is no way to know" (p. 27). Rather than referring to "variants," Ehrman commonly talks of "mistakes." For those who have read Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus: The Story behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), or *Jesus, Interrupted: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know about Them)* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), there is little new in the tone or content of his lecture.

In Wallace's view, the evidence clearly favors the reliability of the text of the NT. His lecture largely responds to Ehrman's viewpoint, particularly as presented in *Misquoting Jesus*. "I have tried to show that there is no ground for wholesale skepticism about the wording of the original text …. So, is what we have now what they wrote then? Exactly? No. But in all essentials? Yes" (p. 46; a fuller version of

Wallace's lecture can be found in *Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011]).

A transcript of the Q&A records Ehrman and Wallace's responses (often with humor) to a variety of seemingly unstaged questions from a popular audience. Wallace has the most to say and offers several helpful explanations, including why he does not believe in a doctrine of preservation; why he believes the original Gospel of Mark ended at 16:8; why he holds his own theological views about the text in limbo as he works through it; and why Ehrman is correct regarding the conflated and inauthentic pericope of the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53–8:11).

While it is difficult for anyone to be entirely objective when interpreting the evidence amassed by textual critics, Wallace's faith seems to simplify the issues; Ehrman's doubt seems to amplify them. The difference is worldview, a hermeneutic of suspicion versus a hermeneutic of assent. While Ehrman never accuses Wallace of misinterpreting the evidence, Wallace critiques Ehrman: "Bart sees in the textual variants something more pernicious, more sinister, more conspiratorial and therefore more controlled than I do" (p. 29). However, Wallace also engages in friendly fire: "To be frank, the quest for certainty often overshadows the quest for truth in conservative theological circles. And that's a temptation we need to resist. It is fundamentally the temptation of modernism. And to our shame, all too often evangelicals have been more concerned to protect our presuppositions than to pursue truth at all costs" (p. 30).

Of the seven chapters that follow, four were presented on the second day of the forum; three were added to the collection later. The chapters range from technical, with close examination of textual evidence (Heide), to shallow, with considerable dependence on secondary sources (Raquel). Four include responses to Ehrman; none to Wallace.

In "The Necessity of a Theology of Scripture," Dale B. Martin contends that there is a crisis in churches and seminaries caused by "a lack of education in theological reasoning and theological interpretation of scripture" (p. 82), with the result that "Bart Ehrman and most American evangelicals are both wrong" (p. 90). He concludes, "Ehrman allowed textual criticism to destroy his faith in scripture because he had an inadequate theology of scripture. Most evangelicals mistakenly insist on the reliability of the historically constructed text of the Bible also because they have an inadequate theology of scripture" (p. 93). Martin calls for a theology of Scripture that does not depend on the original wording of the text.

In "Who Changed the Text and Why? Probable, Possible, and Unlikely Explanations," William Warren offers a qualified definition of what it means to say the text is *reliable*. "What I suggest as a working definition is that in the field of New Testament textual criticism, the term *reliable* generally means that the text is attested sufficiently so that we can ascertain what is most probably the original form of the text or at least a very early form of the text such that it can serve as a suitable foundation for talking about what the text means" (p. 105). While arguing in favor of the reliability of the NT text in the absence of foolproof evidence—and noting

that Ehrman accepts the majority of the text as reliable—Warren admits that reliability is a probability (p. 122).

In "Assessing the Stability of the Transmitted Texts of the New Testament and the *Shepherd of Hermas*," K. Martin Heide compares the number of variants between editions of the NT, such as the Byzantine text vis-à-vis the Nestle-Aland or vis-à-vis a selection of early papyri, and finds an average of 92.6 percent stability. He concludes, *contra* Ehrman, that one cannot deduce "that the New Testament is distorted, theologically discolored by early and latter scribes, thereby making the reconstruction of the earliest attainable form of the text very difficult if not impossible" (p. 139). Using the same methodology, he proceeds to analyze the stability of the text of the *Shepherd of Hermas* between the third and fifteenth centuries and finds a value of 83 percent stable. (Special thanks are due to the editor, Robert Stewart, for including this essay.)

Michael W. Holmes, in "Text and Transmission in the Second Century," confronts the absence of evidence about the most crucial period in the history of the transmission of the NT—the first one hundred years or so. After responding to several theses about the gap between the original manuscripts and manuscripts of the third century, he suggests teasing out of later manuscripts what was likely for the earlier period (pp. 74–75). He concludes that it is likely that variants only affected part (or less) of a verse in the manuscripts not extant, and unlikely that there were wholesale changes; also, that we can "be reasonably optimistic about the possibility of recovering earlier forms of text on the basis of our extant witnesses" (p. 78).

In "What Is the Text of the New Testament?" David Parker posits that it would not have mattered to NT authors that later copyists would make alterations in their texts. "Early Christians were used to the uncertainty of manuscript copies that differed from each other. They lived in fact in a textually rich world in which, if they consulted different copies, they would find different wordings" (p. 103). He concludes that it is actually moderns who live in an impoverished textual world. Other chapters in the collection are "Textual Criticism and Textual Confidence: How Reliable Is Scripture?" by Craig A. Evans and "Authors or Preservers? Scribal Culture and the Theology of Scriptures" by Sylvie T. Raquel.

Some portions of this book target a popular audience (especially the initial lectures), and many of those readers will find parts of the book helpful. For college and seminary students, the lectures and essays provide an easy entry into the issues of textual criticism, although students may need guidance regarding the implications of the various positions. For students already familiar with textual criticism, there is little new in these chapters (with the exception of Heide's study).

This book brings to the foreground many important questions. Should scholars help Christians understand that—truth be told—we cannot be sure about every word written in the original manuscripts? That copyists could not, even if they tried, make perfect copies? That finding more manuscripts will not likely add much to our present understanding of the words in the NT? That the best available text is in reality the earliest attainable form of the text (dated to the third century)? That we can only infer how the original manuscripts were transmitted for the first

100–150 years? That the insistence on a single, authoritative text has much in common with the King-James-only group? That Ehrman is technically correct that we cannot be completely certain about the reliability of the NT text, but that at the same time we have plausible reasons to have faith in the essential reliability of the text? That with all the thousands of variants and even portions in our Bibles not in the original manuscripts, nothing is at risk in the defining doctrines of the Christian faith?

Maybe Ehrman's books can work in our favor as a teaching moment—an occasion for us to guide Christians toward a more mature faith. Actually, that kind of faith might have saved Ehrman's faith. Although this book has many highlights, no single element offers a trump card to settle the issue. In the absence of conclusions, readers are left to come to their own.

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'Who Is This Son of Man?' The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus. Edited by Larry W. Hurtado and Paul L. Owen. Library of New Testament Studies 390. London: T & T Clark, 2011, viii + 191 pp., $ 130.00.

What could possibly justify yet another book on the Son of Man, and can anything new be said about a subject of countless articles and monographs? The present volume, however, is not just another Son of Man book; it is a valuable work by eight qualified scholars that provides a fruitful contribution and offers an important evaluation of Son of Man scholarship.

In "Issues concerning the Aramaic behind ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου: A Critical Review of Scholarship" (pp. 1–27), Albert L. Lukaszewski gives a survey of two millennia of changing proposals from Wellhausen to Casey. The essay invites the reader to rethink the conventional perspective of reverting ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου into a hypothetical source language and to allow for the possibility that the phrase might have a Greek origin. Through a retroversion of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου into Qumran Aramaic, Lukaszewski offers several proposals himself (e.g. בר אנשא; בר אנש), but he argues that before any attempt to uncover the Aramaic or Hebrew behind ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, the expression must first be demonstrated "to be dissonant in relation to the bulk of Greek usage at that time" (p. 17). Researchers who want to pursue this fascinating task are then offered specific guidelines with the warning that evaluating ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου against a wide linguistic milieu has great limitations. In the end, the reader is left pondering: How much more linguistic research is still needed, and will it bring us deeper into the labyrinth of speculations?

In the next essay, Paul L. Owen finds "Problems with Casey's Solution" (pp. 28–49), which he argues is driven by a low Christology and an anti-orthodox agenda. Casey has forcefully insisted that the Aramaic expression בר אנשא behind ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου was simply an ordinary and generic term for "man." Owen, on

the other hand, objects to this position on numerous grounds: (1) the generic use of the emphatic singular בר אנשא is nowhere attested in Aramaic texts predating or contemporary with Jesus; (2) the generic idea is always employed by the use of the plural construction בני אנשא or אנשא; and (3) the generic meaning of בר אנשא leads to novel interpretations of the "Son of Man" Gospel sayings. On the whole, the essay is replete with observations on the development of the Aramaic language, the authenticity of the Son of Man sayings, and the messianic interpretation of this expression in Jewish apocalyptic literature.

The quest against Casey's solution continues in "Re-Solving the Son of Man 'Problem' in Aramaic" (pp. 50–60), where David Shepherd seeks to assess whether the singular emphatic form of בר (א)נשא was a common way of generally referring to a man in the Aramaic of Jesus' time. To do so, Casey extends the search for this form in Targum Onkelos, Targum Jonathan, and other relevant Aramaic corpora. The findings make Casey's position less than compelling and "utterly bereft of relevant evidence" (p. 60).

No one should miss "Expressing Definiteness in Aramaic: A Response to Casey's Theory concerning the Son of Man Sayings" (pp. 61–77) by P. J. Williams. Considerable doubt is cast against the view that the Aramaic language is stable and allows us to reconstruct the Aramaic behind the "Son of Man" Gospel sayings. Aramaic is a very flexible language that can express definiteness in a variety of ways with the result that if Jesus wanted a reference to a "son of man" to be understood as definite he would be quite capable of denoting this, whether or not there was a definite concept of a son of man (p. 76). Instead of reconstructing the Aramaic behind Gospel sayings, Williams recommends relying on the meaning and intentions of those who recorded the words that now appear in the Gospels (pp. 66–68).

With "The Use of Daniel 7 in Jesus' Trial, with Implications for His Self-Understanding" (pp. 78–100), Darrell L. Bock gives this volume a distinctively historical perspective. Did Jesus of Nazareth appeal to the Son of Man imagery of Daniel 7? Based on the use of Ps 110:1 in Mark 12:35–37 in conjunction with the use of Daniel 7 in Mark 14 (pp. 78–88) and based on the availability of the Son of Man imagery in first-century Judaism (pp. 84–86), Bock gives an affirmative answer. The Son of Man designation in the Gospels is not a theological innovation of the early church; rather, it goes back to the historical Jesus, who as a Jewish apocalypticist used the Danielic Son of Man imagery to point to his own vindication (Mark 14). In fact, the apocalyptic Son of Man appears in every level of the Synoptic tradition (Mark; Q; M; L), and while an association with Daniel 7 is less attested, it is the only biblical text that supplies the elements in the Synoptic texts that treat Jesus' vindication (pp. 90–92).

No one is more qualified than Benjamin E. Reynolds to write on "The Use of the Son of Man Idiom in the Gospel of John" (pp. 101–29). The essay summarizes his well-researched monograph on the topic and, together with the John, Jesus, and History Group of the Society of Biblical Literature, claims for John a place at the table of historical Jesus studies (pp. 101–6). Reynolds successfully argues that the

ascent and descent (John 3:13; 6:62), the lifting up (8:28; 12:34), and the glorification (12:23; 13:31–32) of the Johannine Son of Man all indicate his heavenly origin and pre-existence (pp. 106–13). Clearly, the designation does not function to highlight Jesus' humanity (p. 120), and it is not synonymous with "Son of God" (pp. 121–22), but rather functions to highlight Jesus' apocalyptic roles (1:51; 5:27; 6:27).

Darrell D. Hannah's essay "The Elect Son of Man of the *Parables of Enoch*" (pp. 130–58) represents one of the greatest contributions of this volume. The author distances himself from Black (who expressed doubts about the value of the *Similitudes*) and offers an important scholarly word of advice: "no one can hope to come to terms with the New Testament 'Son of Man' without some understanding of the Parables of Enoch" (p. 136). The Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the Davidic Messiah, the Danielic Son of Man, and the Anointed One of Psalm 2, all reemerge in the Enochic Son of Man who looks much like Jesus of Christianity (pp. 142–45). This makes him an exalted figure beyond human limitations "who enjoys certain privileges which elsewhere in Second Temple Judaism are reserved for the Deity" (p. 148). Still, Hannah argues that the Son of Man is never the recipient of worship but only of supplication. The evidence, however, does not support this claim. In 48:5, the phrase "will fall down and worship before him" (i.e. before the Son of Man, according to 48:2–4) is parallel with "will praise and bless and celebrate with song the Lord of Spirits" and is found almost *verbatim et literatim* in 57:3 and 63:1 with God as the object. In other words, the Son of Man receives the same kind of worship as God himself. Hannah's enquiry also proceeds to challenge the view popularized by Casey and VanderKam that the Enochic Son of Man is identified with Enoch (*1 Enoch* 71:14), and instead looks to emphasize his preexistence. By interacting with the Ethiopic text, providing manuscript evidence, and engaging with the latest scholarship, he does so successfully (pp. 148–58).

After presenting the diversity of "the son of man" sayings in the Gospel tradition, Larry H. Hurtado closes this volume arguing that the expression's linguistic function is "*to refer, not to characterize*" (p. 166). This means that "the son of man" refers to Jesus, but does not function as a Christological title, nor does it "associate him with prior/contextual religious expectations or beliefs" (pp. 167–69). It does not relate Jesus with the figure of Dan 7:13 as Bock argues, but rather indicates specificity, something like "this man" or "the man." This conclusion, however, is open to discussion. If this is the case, then how does one explain that "son of man" is a *reference* to two other messianic figures from two (independent) Jewish texts that engage in creative interpretations of Daniel 7 to *characterize* their apocalyptic protagonist (*Similitudes*, 4 Ezra)? Is it pure coincidence that more than one Jewish messianic figure is a "son of man"? Or is it more likely that the expression identifies them with the tradition of Jewish messianic expectation from Daniel (a popular book in Judaism; see Josephus, *Ant*. 10.267–68)?

From the myriad of works on the Son of Man, this collection of essays stands as one of the most important. Its greatest contribution is its detailed interaction with and critique of Casey's work. In fact, when put together, the essays of Owen, Shepherd, and Williams form a solid iceberg that brings Casey's ship to a halt. Now,

the scholarly community awaits with anticipation to see whether this ship will ever sail again. All in all, while too technical to be of use to general readers, it is a must-read for any individual engaged in research related to the historical Jesus, Christology or early Christianity. Its editors are to be congratulated for bringing together such a stimulating collection of essays.

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The Messiah, His Brothers, and the Nations: Matthew 1.1–17. By Jason B. Hood. Library of New Testament Studies 441. London: T & T Clark, 2011, xii + 193 pp., $110.00.

Reading biblical genealogies is like watching cricket. To some, adjectives like "uneventful" and "stodgy" come to mind. Yet to others, the subtle and almost unperceivable moves of authors and athletes alike invite unabating fascination and scrutiny. To be sure, this is the case with Matthew's genealogy; it seems there is no end to the interpretations of its intriguing annotations. Some organization and clarification is needed, not to mention more convincing readings. To those who find biblical genealogies more fascinating than boring and who are particularly interested in Matthew's entrée into his narrative world, Jason B. Hood's work is a welcomed monograph.

As the title suggests, Hood is interested in Jesus' vocation as ὁ Χριστός (1:1, 16, 17), the annotation καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ at 1:2 and 1:11, and the significance of the four Gentile (?) women (?) in 1:3–6. He also touches from time to time on the role of Abraham (1:1, 2, 17), David (1:1, 6, 17 [x2]), and τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος (1:11, 12, 17 [x2]). He does not address the genealogy's structure, orthographies, or numbers. His composition-critical approach produces a reading of Matthew's genealogy as a "summary of Israel's story" that necessitates a conclusion directly related to the house of Judah: the Messiah receives the worship of "his brothers" (Gen 49:8) after achieving the right to rule over them (Gen 49:10) because of his sacrifice on their behalf (Gen 43:8–10; 44:1–34)—exemplified in Jechoniah "and his brothers" (Josephus, *War* 6.2.1)—which also results in the inclusion of righteous Gentiles (Gen 49:10; like Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and *Uriah*) among a restored Israel. The finale to Israel's story is found, then, in the story of Jesus ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός (1:16), culminating in the reception of worship (28:17) from "his brothers" (28:10; note that there are eleven [28:16] just as Judah had) after his sacrificial death which opens the door to include righteous Gentiles (28:18–19a) among the restored Israel.

Hood's contributions are several. First, he reminds us of the work of Marshall Johnson (*The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: With Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* [2d ed.; SNTSMS 8; London: Cambridge University Press, 1988]) who argues that, in addition to their oft-recognized legitimizing function, genealogies are often also narratives *in nuce*. Specifically Matthew's genealogy, Hood contends, is a "summary of Israel's story" which itself legitimizes Jesus as its intended end. Furthermore, Hood challenges us to consider adding "summaries of

Israel's story" to our list of typical NT practices for referencing the OT. The value could be in new understandings of texts like 1 Chronicles 1–9, Matthew 1, Acts 7, Romans 9–11, Hebrews 11, Revelation 12, and *1 Clement* 9–12.

Second, moving specifically to Matthew's genealogy, Hood is right to explore whether there is a link between καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ in 1:2 and in 1:11. His reading is also very plausible. He contends that the phrase evokes episodes from Israel's story that legitimate persons as kings over Israel. Judah deserved to reign over his brothers (Gen 49:8–10) because he moved from being wicked (Genesis 37–38) to righteous by becoming surety for them (Gen 43:8–10; 44:1–34; note that Gen 44:14 is the LXX's only use of Ιουδας καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ). Jechoniah is an example of such sacrifice and moral reformation in the house of Judah (cf. 1 Kgs 24:12; *War* 6.2.1 [cf. *Ant.* 10.11.2, 10.7.1]; *b. Sanh.* 37–38). Jesus, then, while in no way wicked to begin with, is legitimated as Judah's great son and king over the rest of Israel by virtue of his atonement. Hence he receives the worship (compare the uses of προσκυνέω in Matt 28:17 and LXX Gen 49:8) of his brothers (note ἀδελφοῖς μου in Matt 28:10). This reading is helpful in that it deals with the genealogy's identical annotations in 1:2 and 1:11 in a coherent manner. While it may be overreaching to say the Gospel's conclusion *corroborates* this reading, a few details do comport well with each other.

Third, before turning to the annotations in 1:3–6, Hood's fifth chapter provides a helpful *Forschungsgeschichte*, summarizing where we currently are in understanding the role of the "women" in Matthew's genealogy. In the following chapter he provides his own plausible reading. He contends that the four *named* individuals are the link between them. Since Uriah, and not Bathsheba, is named in 1:6 the common tie between the annotations in 1:3–6 does not have to do with gender (and therefore nothing to do with Mary) but the praiseworthy righteousness of four non-Jews. If Matthew cared, after all, so much about *Bathsheba* and *her story* why did he not just mention *her* by name? When Uriah is given the attention, a new link is found: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Uriah are all (1) Gentiles; and (2) praised in the Jewish literature. Again, this fits well with where Matthew ends up in 28:18–19a.

Finally, this reading of Matthew's genealogy and conclusion helps bring together the evangelist's not-so-contradictory emphases: the restoration of Israel *and* the inclusion of the Gentiles through Judah's great heir. "[T]he problem of exile is perhaps in some measure obviated … and Israel is gathered under their 'brothers' (disciples as under-shepherds, as in the first mission, 9.36–10.4) and their royal 'brother.' The son of David and Judah, the royal Christ of Israel, claims authority over Israel and the whole earth, in fulfilment of the promises to David and Abraham" (p. 155).

For all the plausibility of Hood's interpretations and valuable contributions, however, a few questions do arise from his work. For one, did Judah *earn* his status as the first among his brethren through his changed behavior? Or is it more natural to read Gen 49:8–10 in light of the rest of the book's strong emphasis on divine election? And how natural is it to read Judah's actions as a *sacrifice*, not the least on a comparable level with Jesus' sacrifice?

Also, are Josephus's comments enough to suggest with confidence that Matthew viewed Jechoniah in such a positive way? It is true, Jechoniah was viewed favorably in the rabbinic tradition (a point Hood could be a lot more thorough on instead of relying nearly exclusively on Josephus). However, Louis H. Feldman (*Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* [JSJSup 58; Leiden: Brill, 1998] 444–49) contends that the rabbis and Josephus, the "protégé of the Romans," had contradictory motives for rehabilitating Jechoniah—the former to preserve hopes for a Davidic king who would oust the Romans; the latter to defend the rival claims of the Hasmoneans and satisfy his benefactors. For Hood's interpretation to stick we would need some argumentation for *why Matthew and his community* would have viewed Jechoniah in this more positive light and not in the negative light in which the OT casts him.

Moreover, the rabbinic tradition is clear that, though he tried, Jechoniah *failed* to save the nation through his self-sacrifice, a point our good Flavius seems to overlook; the sanctuary *was* delivered over to the enemy. Most significantly, this is reflected *in the narrative of Matthew's genealogy itself*. In Matt 1:11, Jechoniah does *not* save his brothers; they were deported to Babylon with him. While Hood's interpretation remains plausible, I wonder if attention to the genealogy's structure (and less concern to tie the annotations καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ *so* tightly together) might yield more certain results. That is, the *placement* of this annotation—right at the end of the second table, just before the exile—might be more illuminative than its thin similarity to Judah's story. (If Judah's actions are rightly understood as a sacrifice, it is questionable whether the rabbis saw Jechoniah's as the same; in *b. Sanh.* 37b it is the exile that atones, not Jechoniah's actions. In addition, as mentioned above, Josephus's reading is a little too self-serving to reflect a wide tradition.) Structure is, after all, also a composition-critical concern.

While, again, I affirm the plausibility of Hood's reading of the four annotations in 1:3–6, it is hard to agree that it "has no weaknesses" (p. 118). Yes, Uriah is Matthew's person of interest, not Bathsheba. However, Uriah's reputation as a righteous non-Jew is immaterial to "summarize Israel's story." Instead, it is Uriah's story *as it relates to David* that matters. David, after all, surpasses even Jesus in the amount of attention he receives in the genealogy. It is only natural, therefore, to read τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίου as a statement about David, thereby making Joel Kennedy's reading (*The Recapitulation of Israel* [WUNT 2/257; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck], 93–102) seem more plausible. He contends that τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίου draws attention to the fact that it was the sins of the kings (even the great king David) that eventuated in the exile. (Solomon was, after all, *not* begat by the wife of Uriah. Bathsheba was *David's* wife when Solomon was born. This comment, then, suggests something between David and Uriah before Solomon's birth.) Again, less concern with packaging these four annotations together and more on the structure and the annotations' relative positions would be helpful here. It is also worth noting that if consistency between similar annotations is still desired, then τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίου is different enough to be considered *apart* from the three women in 1:3–5.

While some of us may have to continue to admit ignorance on what is really happening when the cricketer bowls down the pitch to the wicket's stumps and

bails, Hood has provided needed clarification, plausible interpretations, and helpful direction to continue in our endless fascination with Matthew's genealogy.

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The Writings of John: A Survey of the Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse. By C. Marvin Pate. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, 558 pp., $44.99.

The author of this comprehensive theological survey of the five Johannine writings in Scripture, C. Marvin Pate, is chair of the department of Christian theology and professor of theology at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, AR. This is the second major work on the theological treatment of the Johannine literature by evangelical scholars in recent years, following Andreas J. Köstenberger's volume, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), in the Biblical Theology of the New Testament series, edited by Köstenberger. While these two volumes have some similar points, they are written from different approaches. Köstenberger's book is more of a biblical theology of John's Gospel and Epistles, while Pate's work is more of a biblical/theological survey of John's Gospel, epistles, and apocalypse. Köstenberger's volume is written for a more biblically/theologically advanced audience (e.g. a third-year seminary student); Pate's book is more written as a textbook for an upper-class Bible college student or a beginning seminary student. Both volumes are welcome additions to Johannine scholarship and useful resources for the classroom.

Pate's excellent book is a user-friendly textbook designed to introduce the writings of the apostle John without being elementary or superficial. This impressive textbook is divided into three major sections: Part 1–The Gospel of John; Part 2–The Epistles of John; and Part 3–Revelation. Each section begins by dealing with introductory issues such as authorship, date, background, structure, etc. Pate displays an unusual ability to cover these issues adequately without becoming bogged down with minutiae. This section even includes the theology of John identified in the following categories: theology, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. This biblical theology survey of John's writings is presented for the Gospel, the epistles, and the apocalypse. A brief review of this book will be given in the three sections that are outlined in the book.

The first major section of the book covers the Fourth Gospel. This section begins with introductory issues such as the book's authorship, its canonicity, its conceptual background, its historical setting, purpose, and date. It also includes an important discussion on how to read the "Gospel" as a literary genre. This introductory section closes with a discussion on the structure of the Fourth Gospel, its manuscript evidence, and its theology. In addressing the important topic of the book's authorship, while acknowledging and surveying the more modern proposals of John the Elder, Lazarus, an "ideal figure," or even the theory that this book was the product of a "Johannine school," Pate unashamedly defends the traditional authorship of the apostle John. He provides the internal and external evidences that

support apostolic authorship. In addressing the important topic of John's conceptual background, he adequately surveys the proposed options of Greek Hellenism, Hellenistic Judaism, and Palestinian Judaism, and concludes Palestinian Judaism to be the main cultural milieu behind the Fourth Gospel, with the Dead Sea Scrolls and Rabbinic Judaism providing the most likely background for John's thought.

The body of the Fourth Gospel is covered through twenty-three chapters in Pate's book (chaps. 2–24), with just about a chapter being devoted to each of the chapters in the Gospel. Each chapter is laid out with user-friendly features, such as objectives, callouts, sidebars, photos, charts, review questions, and key terms. These features are designed to "make the more intense material engaging to the audience" (p. 11). The author divides the Gospel into two major sections in a way that is consistent with the modern trend: The Book of Signs (1:19–12:50) and The Book of Glory (13:1–20:31), bracketed by the Prologue (1:1–18) and the Epilogue (21:1–25). The Book of Signs is structured mainly around the seven miracles of Jesus. Interestingly, however, Pate includes the temple cleaning of Jesus (2:13–22) as one of the "signs/miracles" in place of the more common option of including Jesus' walking on water (6:16–21). Regrettably, the author only provides a glancing reference to Andreas J. Köstenberger's article to suffice in defending this decision. Apart from this minor criticism of Pate's treatment of the Johannine signs/miracles in these chapters, I was thoroughly impressed with its adequate coverage of important and pertinent issues surrounding these beginning chapters of the Fourth Gospel.

The author's treatment of the second half of the Fourth Gospel, often referred to as the Book of Glory (John 13–20), is also impressive. He covers this section through ten chapters in the book (chaps. 14–23). While Pate's work in this section of John's Gospel is admirable, there are some minor criticisms. One example will suffice. When the author addresses the sometimes controversial passage of Jesus' comparison of himself and the disciples as the vine and the branches in John 15, he neglects to take a clear stand on the spiritual condition of the branches that are "cut off." He simply concludes by saying that "whether the branches of John 15:2, 6 should be considered genuine Christians or no more than professing believers is a matter of debate" (p. 159). The author describes the fate of the "cut-off branches": "While the imagery of fiery destruction is figurative, the gravity of the fate of such individuals should not be downplayed. They have committed apostasy." However, he is reluctant to describe their fate conclusively. Again, this is a minor criticism of an otherwise impressive work.

The second major section of this book focuses on the three epistles of John. While many works on John's writings neglect the importance of the three epistles, Pate admirably devotes over one hundred pages (pp. 223–332) to them. Chapters 25–38 are given to the epistles in the book. The section begins with an introductory chapter covering important issues surrounding the epistles such as, the genre of epistles, their canonicity, their authorship, their historical setting, etc. The author also carefully identifies some notable differences in the theologies of John's Gospel

and his epistles. The author demonstrates an exemplary treatment of these three epistles in these chapters.

The third major section of the book is devoted to the Apocalypse of John. This section is covered in nineteen chapters (chaps. 39–57) and through some two hundred pages (pp. 333–514). This impressive section begins with introductory matters highlighting many pertinent issues, such as, identifying the mixture of genres in the Book of Revelation: apocalyptic, prophetic, and epistolary. Pate also provides extensive support in favor of John's apostolic authorship. In addition, Pate discusses the important issue of identifying the major schools of interpretation of how John's Apocalypse has been interpreted throughout church history. He identifies the four schools of interpretation as: preterist, historicist, futurist, and idealist. Because the historicist view restricted itself to the battle between the Protestant Reformation and the papacy in the sixteenth century, that school of interpretation long ago fell out of favor with readers of Revelation, according to Pate. After carefully describing the three remaining views (the preterist, the idealist, and the futurist), Pate offers his own "eclectic" approach to interpreting Revelation. The author describes his "eclectic" approach as "finding an element of truth in all of the above viewpoints (with the exception of the historicist interpretation)" (p. 348). He further explains, "The preterists are correct to root much of Revelation in the first century, especially the early church's battle with Caesar worship. Yet, with the futurist, I believe that the parousia did not happen at the fall of Jerusalem. Rather, it awaits the future return of Christ. And the idealist perspective helps one to vigilantly apply the message of Revelation until that day, especially the challenge therein to worship Christ alone." This introductory chapter closes with a survey of John's theology in the Apocalypse.

The author's treatment of the often-debated chapters that focus on the apocalyptic or visions of God's future judgments on the earth (Revelation 6–18) is indeed presented with an "eclectic" approach, although he seems to suscribe closest to the futurist approach. Pate is judicious in referencing the possibilities of other views throughout these debatable chapters, while suggesting his own preference. The problem of Pate's sometimes-offered eclectic approach is that it poses the danger of not being consistent in one's interpretation throughout the book. Again, one example will suffice. When it comes to identifying the 144,000 in Revelation 7 and its background, Pate tries to walk a fine line of offering a "both/and" approach, which leads to a hermeneutical landmine. For example, the author attempts to tie the seal judgments in Revelation 6 to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and, therefore, also includes Revelation 7 in that same historical setting. Also, he sees 144,000 as a figurative number for the Jewish Christians who fled from Jerusalem to Pella before AD 68. Furthermore, he identifies the innumerable host in Revelation 7:9–17 as mainly Gentile Christians who were martyred for their Christian faith in Rome during the Neronian persecution in the 60s. The problem with an "eclectic" approach like this is that Pate had already identified the rider of the white horse in Rev 6:2 as being the antichrist during the tribulation era. To jump back and forth from the future tribulation period to the historical AD 70 date seems to be inconsistent and unwarranted in the text. However, these minor

criticisms notwithstanding, Pate does a masterful job of surveying the entire landscape of the Book of Revelation and pointing out the pertinent biblical/theological issues within the text.

In summary, C. Marvin Pate has produced an exemplary work in providing a biblical/theological survey of the five Johannine writings in Scripture. It is thorough but not technical. It is succinct but not superficial. This textbook strikes an ideal balance of an introductory survey to the Johannine literature written by a keen and seasoned biblical theologian. I enthusiastically endorse the book and plan on it as a text in my Johannine literature course.

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Remember the Poor: Paul, Poverty, and the Greco-Roman World. By Bruce W. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, ix + 380 pp., $25.00 paper.

Arising from lectures on Galatians in the mid-1990s while he was teaching at the University of Cambridge, the work of Bruce Longenecker on Paul and poverty has continued through a series of articles. This volume does more than collect these articles. Longenecker has rewritten much of the material, elaborating his argument and responding to previous critiques. Despite Paul's exhortation, "Remember the poor" (Gal 2:10), Paul is often interpreted as disregarding the poor. Longenecker contends that Paul was solidly within the early Jesus movement and its concern for the poor.

To make his case, Longenecker argues (in several sections but about one-fourth of the book) that there was a larger middling group (those between wealth and poverty) in the ancient world. It is widely accepted that the wealthy comprised 3% of the population. Traditionally, the remainder was assigned to "poor," both *ptōchos* (the desperately poor) and *penēs* (one who must live quite sparingly). See the significant study by Moses Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), who placed about 90% of the population at the bottom. This very binary understanding of wealth dominated discussion. Recently, Steve Freisen argued for a non-binary approach, creating a sliding economic scale. Many scholars now follow Steve Freisen's 2004 Poverty Scale.

Some familiarity with the nomenclature will help. While the view persists that there was no "middle class" in the ancient world, this is anachronistic, likely grounded upon Marxist theories of distinct social strata (p. 55). Greco-Roman society differentiated by patron and client, not social class (p. 56). Yet in order to discuss wealth and poverty (as part of the larger discussion of the Jesus movement in urban contexts), Freisen established a poverty scale (PS) [now termed an economic scale, ES] with seven levels. The wealthy class held both the ultra-wealthy (ES1), perhaps 1%, and others of great wealth (ES2-ES3), another 2–3%. (These numbers are not really debated.) The very poorest (ES7) were followed by those nearly as poor (ES6). In Freisen's system, these five levels compose 71% of the population. Freisen estimated ES5 to be 22% of the remaining 29%. Often ES5

is included with the bottom two, thus describing ES5-ES7 as "the poor." Thus, in Freisen's framework, the "middling class" (ES4) is 7%. Walter Scheidel initially disputed such a small middle but then later changed his mind and coauthored with Freisen an influential article in 2009 in support of this very small middling class. Longenecker responded also in a 2009 article. This book fleshes out his argument.

Longenecker argues that Freisen was still influenced by the traditional bifurcation (wealthy/poor) commonly assumed of antiquity. Longenecker notes (correctly) that Freisen uses the general estimates of Whittaker, "The Poor in the City of Rome," in *Land, City and Trade in the Roman Empire* (Aldershot: Variorum Ashgate, 1993), which are not generally disputed. However, "when compiling his percentages for ES7 and ES6, Freisen has simply applied Whittaker's *upper* estimates in each case" (p. 319). Longenecker then opts to take basically Whittaker's *lower* estimates, giving the category of the poorest (ES7 and ES6) 13% less than Freisen. Since the middling group is determined by the "leftover" from ES1-ES3 and ES6-ES7, Longenecker's estimate of the middling class (ES4-ES5) is 42%, quite different from Freisen's 29%. Furthermore, Longenecker argues Freisen shifts most of the 29% into the poorer side of the middling class, leaving only 7% to ES4 "because of the endemic character of poverty in the Roman empire, because of structural impediments in the economy, and because of the large amounts of wealth required to move up the poverty scale" (Freisen, "Poverty in Pauline Studies," *JSNT* 26 [2004] 346).

Longenecker suggests more lived in the ES4 range. For example, he argues the *apparitores* and the *Augustales* were prominent but middling groups, locating "the *Augustales* primarily within the ES4 economic band rather than placing them among the economically elite" (p. 318). This will also give the middling group more political character, at least at the upper end of ES4. He suggests the following percentages (pp. 46, 53, the explanatory labels are mine):

	Freisen's Percentages	Longenecker's Percentages (2009 article)	Longenecker's Percentages (2010 book)
ES1-ES3 (the wealthy classes)	3%	3%	3%
ES4 (the upper middling class)	7%	17%	15%
ES5 (the lower middling class)	22%	25%	27%
ES6 (the subsistent poor)	40%	30%	30%
ES7 (the desperately poor)	28%	25%	25%

Longenecker is not the sole voice for a larger middling group. Ever since Finley, a minority voice has argued that wealth was less bifurcated in the first two Christian centuries.

Longenecker notes that the preponderance of ancient evidence (and modern scholarly opinion, such as Paul Veyne, *Bread and Circuses* [New York: Penguin, 1990] and Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* [Hanover: University Press of New England, 2002]) suggests that social action for the poor

was basically restricted to Jews and Christians. He recognizes traditional hospitality was more to appease the visitor's gods and to showcase the host's generosity than to assist the traveler. Also, "there is little in the material record to suggest that hospitality was regularly extended to the poor" (p. 71). It is unlikely the corn dole or the alimentary provisions targeted ES6 and ES7. He notes generosity by the wealthy was actually to bring honor to the giver, and not to alleviate suffering. As Pliny the Younger noted, "Those who boast of their own good deeds are credited not so much with boasting for having done them, but with having done them in order to be able to boast of them" (*Ep.* 1.8).

Yet Longenecker disputes that broader concern was post-Christian, arguing there was a Greco-Roman movement in the first century toward charitable actions. The persistent presence of beggars (and of con artists) attests that at least some ancients were giving, and Longenecker suggests the middling group also gave (pp. 77–80). Voluntary associations commonly were generous to members, particularly when one came upon hard times, and such associations were largely ES4-ES5. Nonetheless, it seems (to me) that Longenecker must appeal to "generosity" on the part of scholarship when he argues first-century ancients (outside Jews and Christians) had a concern for the very poor. He contends it would be "churlish" (p. 84) not to read some humanitarian concern into ancient Greco-Roman society. Longenecker acknowledges attested reasons for giving to beggars (to enforce a sense of superiority, to placate, or to demean) but suggests that "despite a spectrum of motivations such as these, it would be crass to rule out some of the simplest explanations for charitable initiatives in the Greco-Roman world—i.e., genuine humanitarian concern" (p. 86). He suggests this is neither "wishful thinking" nor "anachronistic ethnocentrism" (p. 86) but offers no justification other than that a historian should consider it. *Pace* Longenecker, his implication that early Christian charity was part of a larger first-century movement (and not the cause of it) seems to me less convincing.

Longenecker expounds well a chapter on Jewish and Christian (non-Pauline) concern for the poor, noting a variety of passages (Philo, *Spec.* 2.107; Tobit 4, 12; *CD* 7:5–6; Wis 3:30; 12:3; 29:8, 12; 40:24). Longenecker makes a compelling argument that Helena's gift (Josephus, *Ant.* 20) was not motivated by politics but piety. He clearly demonstrates a prevailing concern among early Jesus groups, exegeting the sayings of Jesus (whom Longenecker places in ES5; p. 117) and James (following Dunn's view of posthumous authorship; p. 128) as most stridently concerned for the poor. "Even if low-level forms of charitable initiatives are evident"—a point I doubt is so clear—Longenecker concurs with Finley that Jesus' contention that the poor were blessed "points to another world" (p. 125).

This brings us to the second half of the book: Paul's view of the poor. Here Longenecker makes an important contribution to the field, arguing against the prevailing view (even among evangelicals) that Paul disregarded the poor, often by excusing Paul (noting his imminent eschatology, as Longenecker accuses Peter Davids; pp. 3, 138) or by highlighting other ethical concerns that Paul and Jesus shared (as Longenecker concludes of David Wenham; p. 137). Conceding that John Knox likely overstated that there is "plenty of evidence in Paul's letters that the

churches were expected to care for their poor" (p. 140), Longenecker makes a detailed case "that consistent traces of 'theological DNA' show Paul to have been uncompromising in promoting care for the poor as integral to the practice and theology engendered within Jesus-groups" (p. 140). While I am persuaded, not all will be. For example, in 1 Thess 5:14, "help the weak" (*asthenōn*) is argued to include the economically weak, since the "strong" in Corinth are called wise, powerful, well bred (p. 143). Longenecker draws parallels between the Pauline communities and voluntary associations (sharing food, helping each other). Thus the Jerusalem offering (1 Cor 16:1–4) "might have been a variation on (or an addition to) the expectation that, instead of paying membership fees, ES5 members would voluntarily contribute to the communal funds" (p. 271). This may not be quite the stretch it might appear to be. If there was a cultural expectation of providing for needy members, then Paul is merely expanding their view of membership to include those in Jerusalem, thus, one body (p. 281). Likewise, Paul was drawing upon a Jewish heritage of almsgiving. Longenecker summarizes his argument in nine points (pp. 298–99).

Longenecker's best contribution is in his economic analysis of Paul's world. He argues that Paul's communities (pp. 236–49) were a mix of groups: ES4 (Erastus, Gaius, Phoebe), ES4 or ES5 (Stephanus, Philemon, Crispus), ES5 or ES6 (Prisca, Aquila), fitting well with his earlier argument for a larger "middling group." He is careful not to presume prosopographic reconstructions where the data is too slim, such as Chloe, Nympha, or even Philemon. He compiles his data and suggests the following economic profile (p. 295):

	Longenecker's Percentages for general population	Longenecker's Percentages for "Urban Jesus-Groups"
ES1-ES3 (the wealthy class)	3%	0%
ES4 (the upper middling class)	15%	10%
ES5 (the lower middling class)	27%	25%
ES6-ES7	55% (30+25)	65%

Longenecker notes this is not a "template" for any particular congregation; rather, he suggests that Paul "would have sensed the overall advantages of building communities around the ES4 households wherever possible" (pp. 296–97).

Longenecker has written a helpful and informed study; Bauckham calls it "important" and "realistic." I found convincing his argument for Paul's concern for the poor and his case for a larger middling class (although perhaps not as large as 42%). The text (316 pp.) concludes with 3 appendices (of which the first is technical but essential reading), the best comprehensive bibliography on this topic, and indexes of ancient and modern authors.

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Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul's Most Famous Letter. By Richard N. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, xxvii + 490 pp., $40.00 paper.

Now an octogenarian laurelled with faculty stints at Wheaton (College), Deerfield (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), Toronto (Wycliffe College), and Hamilton, Ontario (McMaster Divinity College), and boasting past ETS presidencies in America and Canada, Richard Longenecker is birthing a commentary on Paul's epistle to the Romans (NIGTC). *Introducing Romans* is its critical introduction, swollen to become a volume in its own right. By no means, however, is it merely a conspectus of *Critical Issues*. The parts of this monograph unite to sketch—leaving demonstration for the commentary—a particular line of interpretation on Paul's masterpiece.

Longenecker's thesis is that the core of Romans lies in chapters 5–8, where Paul articulates what he elsewhere calls "my gospel" (Rom 2:16; 16:25) contextualized for Gentiles. A secondary stress comes in chapters 12–15, applying the Christian love ethic to Christians living at Rome. Knowing that these predominantly Gentile house churches were molded to Jewish (not Judaizing) Christianity, Paul judged it would be beneficial for them to hear his alternative voice, both for the good of their souls and, Paul hoped, for them to become sending partners for his next missionary venture. To shore up this proposal, Longenecker taps many of the wide interests he has demonstrated in a lifetime of publications.

Introducing Romans has five parts. Part 1 reviews the relatively uncontroversial matters of the letter's authorship (by Paul, dictated verbally to his amanuensis Tertius), integrity (it included chaps. 15 and 16 in their present order, with a possibly authentic doxology at 16:25–27), and provenance (from Corinth [16:1–2, 23b], corresponding to Acts 20:2–4, in AD 57–58 [15:25]).

Part 2 inquires into what kind of people the recipients were, as a pointer to Paul's purpose in writing. Most significant was not their ethnicity, but a catechetical "axis that runs from Roman Christianity back to the Jerusalem church," stamping even the Gentile converts (p. 82). In the second-longest chapter (topped by the last), Longenecker critiques scholarly theories about the end(s) Paul meant to achieve. As keys, Longenecker sensibly points to Paul's statements of intent in the epistolary frame (1:1–17 and 15:14–16:27). Paul wanted primarily to give his readers "some spiritual gift" (1:11; cf. 15:15) and to seek their support for his planned evangelization of Spain (15:24). (Should more weight be given to the clauses "to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome" [1:15] and "that I may reap some harvest among you" [1:13]?) To defend his gospel from misconstruals, to advise Christians to comply with rapacious Roman tax-collectors (13:1–7), and to address brewing factionalism over *adiaphora* (14:1–15:13) were subordinate purposes.

Part 3 catalogues literary conventions in the epistle. A chapter on those drawn from the Greco-Roman atmosphere builds on Longenecker's earlier analysis of Galatians (WBC, 1990) following Betz. Longenecker pegs the main body of Romans as a *logos protreptikos* ("word of exhortation") bristling with oral and rhetorical features enclosed within a letter, hence a "letter essay" (pp. 200, 216–17).

This yield, so modest after the long and learned treatise that leads to it, hides a wallop for the final chapter. Informing a shorter study of Jewish and Jewish Christian features are Longenecker's sensitivity to use of the OT in the NT (cf. *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) and to embedded early Christian confessions (cf. *New Wine into Fresh Wineskins* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999]). In Romans, biblical quotations concentrate in two sections of the body (1:16–4:25 and 9–11), are sparser in 12:1–15:13, and are few and tangential in 5–8, a pattern that will likewise feed into the conclusion. Longenecker identifies doctrinal formulae in the usual places (e.g. 1:3–4; 3:25–26a; 4:25; bits of 8:33–39; 10:9; 11:33–36; maybe 14:9).

Part 4 opens with a précis of the current state of the art of textual criticism, leaving discussion of specific problems for the coming commentary. The remaining bulk of this part highlights exegetical issues and themes important for theological interpretation. Here Longenecker decides, for example, that the debated phrase "righteousness of God" both presupposes God is righteous and accentuates his gift of righteousness to believers (3:26); that the recurrent tag "in Christ" is local and personal (without Deissman's "mysticism"); that πίστις Χριστοῦ ("faith of Christ") denotes Christ's faithfulness (rather than people's faith in Christ); that, while the post-1970s perspective on Second Temple Judaism is correct about nomistic piety at its best being a response to grace (anticipated in Longenecker's *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* [New York: Harper & Row, 1964] chap. 3), Paul in inveighing against "works of the law" targeted a legalistic underbelly, *pace* Sanders and Dunn; and that Paul, when communicating with Gentiles, focused on God "reconciling" people.

Part 5—outlining the gist of Romans—pulls the threads together. A preliminary probe into the letter's "central thrust," curiously restricted to 1:18—8:39, locates the burden in 5–8. The function of 1–4, peppered with OT verses and intra-Jewish diatribes, is, according to Longenecker, to win over a reserved audience steeped in a Jewish-Christian outlook, by expressing truths Paul holds in common with them (divine impartiality, universality of sin, impotence of the law to justify, and justification by faith). Those stock themes give way in 5–8 to an impassioned exposition of "reconciliation" with God and "life" in Christ as opposed to "death" in the flesh under the law, to apprise Roman believers of Paul's distinctive slant. Rom 7:14–24 presents striking parallels to "tragic soliloquies" of the Greek world (p. 371). All these concepts had resonated with Paul's Greco-Roman hearers.

The last and longest chapter ("Structure and Argument") works out this proposal through a whirlwind tour of the letter. Harking back to the characteristic three elements of a *logos protreptikos*, Longenecker takes 1:18–4:25 as the standard "negative" blast against an opposing position (justification by works), 5–8 as the "positive" avowal of the author's chief point, and 12:1–15:13 as the "hortatory" consequence. From a theological perspective, 5–8 can be seen as crowning the Pauline "indicative" in Romans, 12–15 as the "imperative" (p. 437).

Longenecker's carefully developed case leaves questions. How does 9–11 fit? Wrestling to explain why Paul inserted 9–11 before the third major section of the body middle, Longenecker concedes it seems "somewhat unusual," and is driven to

conjectures (p. 421). Is the protreptic model a procrustean bed? Doubt clouding that, how sustainable is the case for 5–8 as the letter's nub?

If Rom 1:16–17 is the topic sentence for just 1:18–4:25 (p. 394), where is a comparable thesis for the alleged main section (chaps. 5–8)? Given that Paul conducts a running dialogue with Jewish (-Christian) concerns in Romans 1–4, does it follow that he is merely agreeing with his readers? Has he here nothing fresh to break to them, to prove? Longenecker has an eye for "patterns of distribution." The NT concordance associates the complex of "justification" language especially with Paul. Might its very frequency in precisely these chapters, where after all Paul first mentions "my gospel" (2:16)—as well as in Galatians 2–3 ("the gospel I preach," Gal 2:2)—indicate Paul built "his" gospel around this word group as its keynote? The density of prooftexts in Romans 1–4 and 9–11 suggests Paul establishes his platform in these sections.

Do the units 5:1–11 and 8:31–39 with their shared vocabulary and motifs really form bookends that set off a structural *inclusio* (p. 403)—or is not 5:1–11 a summary of the present consequences of justification, and the Adam/Christ schema in 5:12–21 an elegant synthesis of 1:18—5:11? On the face of it, Romans 6–7 looks like Paul's replies to a series of possible objections to what he has laid down (6:1, 15; 7:7, 13), with 8:1 ("therefore … no condemnation") resuming the thread from 5:18–19. Might the paucity of biblical quotations and the direct address here (p. 369) mean Paul is fencing off misunderstandings, rather than launching into a specimen of his essential proclamation?

Introducing Romans is, true to its author, bold and independent, erudite and informative, never less than challenging even where we cannot concur, and everywhere warmly evangelical and pastoral.

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A Jew to the Jews: Jewish Contours of Pauline Flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23.) By David J. Rudolph. WUNT 2/304. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011. xii + 290 pp., €69.00.

This monograph is an updated version of David Rudolph's doctoral thesis at Cambridge University in 2007, which won the Franz Delitzsch Prize from the Freie Theologische Akademie. In 1 Cor 9:19–23, Paul seems to regard his Jewishness as a cloak, which can be put on or taken off as the situation demands. His claims such as "I became like a Jew, to win the Jews" and "I became like one not having the law" sound to most Western ears like one who had abandoned a Law-observant life. Furthermore, this interpretation is often used as a hermeneutical key to explain Paul's more Jewish actions (e.g. Timothy's circumcision; Acts 16) as momentary expedience rather than abiding conviction. Rudolph argues in his monograph that this consensus reading of Paul can no longer bear the weight that interpreters have placed on it and that in fact "scholars overstate their case when they use 1 Cor 9:19–23 as incontrovertible evidence that Paul was not Torah observant" (p. 18).

He also provides an alternative interpretation of the passage demonstrating how it "can be read as the discourse of a Jew who remained within the bounds of pluriform Second Temple Judaism" (p. 19).

His first and major concern in part 1 (chaps. 2–4) is to challenge the current consensus that Paul had burst the bounds of first-century Judaism. Chapter 2 begins with a broad survey of major texts in the Pauline corpus and Acts thought to be supportive of the consensus view. Rudolph systematically challenges the typical reading of these passages and, by offering other biblical and first-century parallels, makes the case that the traditional view is not irrefutable. In regard to Paul's erasure language such as "circumcision is nothing" (1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:6; 6:15) or "no longer Jew or Greek" (Gal 3:28), he argues that by comparison these things are less important than being in Christ. In salvation, the unity that is found in Christ is more important than, but does not preclude or erase, the diversity of the constituent parts (male/female, Jew/Gentile). Paul's "former way of life" in Judaism (Gal 1:13) could easily refer to a right-wing form of Pharisaic Judaism wherein he violently persecuted the church of God. In addition, he argues that language such as "live like a Gentile and not like a Jew" (Gal 2:14) should be seen as intra-Jewish sectarian language (p. 51). He then examines other key texts (Acts 21:17–26; 1 Cor 7:17–24), which suggest that Paul viewed his Jewishness as an abiding calling in Christ, rather than an expedient move to assuage public perception.

Chapter 3 focuses on contextual issues in Corinthians, specifically Paul's stance on food offered to idols in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1. The traditional view understands Paul's loose stance on eating idol food as an abandonment of his Jewish lifestyle. Rudolph argues compellingly that Paul in fact could have worked within Jewish contours of flexibility to respond to the issue of idol food in Corinth (p. 109). He sees Paul's approach to idol food as consistent with the apostolic decree of Acts 15 even if it was a more contextualized application of the principle (p. 108). He argues that Paul's teaching is not as original or un-Jewish as scholars often assume because early rabbis adopted a similar approach by focusing upon the intention of the person rather than the intrinsic impurity of the food. He shows that Diaspora Jews participated in table fellowship with their Gentile neighbors and that there is no evidence that all Jews avoided *macellum* food. This would seem to suggest that Diaspora Jews other than Paul maintained some degree of halakhic flexibility when it came to indeterminate food (pp. 93–103).

Chapter 4 engages the setting and language of 9:19–23. Given Paul's use of Jewish sources and nomistic language in 1 Corinthians 8–10, Rudolph argues that the setting of Paul's "all things to all men" teaching is the first-century Jewish practice of accommodation in table fellowship. A variety of views existed with regard to proper table fellowship in Jesus' and Paul's day consisting of at least three categories: the strict Pharisee, the average Jew, and the less strict "sinners." He gives ample evidence of Jewish people being willing to associate with and share meals with others without compromising their own ritual purity. He then offers an interpretation of the most critical language from this perspective ("free," "I became as," "under the law," "without the law," "though I am not without the Law of

God," "in Christ's Law," "win," and "weak"). For example, when Paul says he is not "under the law," he does not speak abstractly about abrogation in general as though he had left the bounds of the Mosaic Law but rather specifically, with regard to table fellowship, he does not live "under it" as "a strict Pharisee" would have. Again, when he says he is "under the law of Christ" he means that he is interpreting the Mosaic laws of table fellowship as understood and practiced by the Messiah, Jesus.

By the end of chapter 4, he has actually made his first point, and in chapter 5 he sets forth his alternative understanding of 9:19–23. Paul is not a free radical but merely a Torah-observant Jew who has taken his cues from Jesus' own practice. With the food-related context of 1 Corinthians 8–10, and Paul's reference to dominical sayings that point back to Jesus' example and rule of adaptation "eat what is set before you" (1 Cor 9:14; 10:27/Luke 10:7–8), it is argued that 1 Cor 9:19–23 reflects Paul's imitation of Christ's accommodation and open table fellowship. It is well documented that the Pharisees often found fault with the ritual purity of Jesus' disciples and yet Jesus frequently shared table fellowship with Pharisees and with common Jewish people and also tax collectors and sinners. When Paul says he "became like a Jew" this means nothing more than that he was the ideal guest in Jewish culture and received the hospitality of a variety of Jewish hosts. As Jesus became all things to all people through eating at the tables of ordinary Jews, Pharisees, and sinners, Paul became "all things to all people" through eating with ordinary Jews, strict Jews (those "under the law"), and Gentile sinners.

Ultimately, I believe Rudolph has succeeded at his primary objective: he has destabilized the consensus reading that 1 Cor 9:19–23 necessarily precludes a Torah-observant Paul (p. 209). While not all will agree with Rudolph's conclusions, his reassessment of the traditional view in chapters 2–4 still stands as a significant and original contribution to scholarship. Exegetes should not merely presume that 1 Corinthians 9 is a hermeneutical key that interprets other Pauline texts and actions as those of a supersessionist. He has built his case by carefully reading these texts with the help of first-century halakhah, so that we can hear Paul as a first-century Corinthian might have. A second contribution is the correlation of Paul's lifestyle with the portrait of Jesus' accommodation in the Gospels. Paul's references to the dominical sayings (Luke 10:7–8) strengthen his claim to "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (11:1).

In his final thoughts Rudolph muses, "Did Paul value Jewish continuity?" (p. 211). He does so because the trajectory of the monograph leads in this direction. Rudolph's sketch of the apostle in the pages of this work is that of a more consistent Paul whose letters seem to match his actions without undue explanation. He proposes a Paul who remains true to his calling as a Torah-observant Jew (his "rule in all the churches"; 1 Cor 7:17–20) but who does not require the same of Gentiles even as he preaches and argues for their equal standing among God's people. He has correlated the passages dealing with social interaction (1 Corinthians 8–10; Romans 14–15, Acts 15, 21) with this portrait of a Jewish Paul, but what remains to be done is to reconcile and relate the more soteriological passages where

Paul often expresses a negative view of the place and destiny of the law in the salvation story. Until this work is done those musings must remain tenuous.

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Galatians: A Commentary. By Martinus C. de Boer. NTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011, xxxiv + 461 pp., $50.00.

Martinus C. de Boer, Professor of New Testament at VU University Amsterdam, offers a new commentary on Galatians in The New Testament Library series. The structure of the commentary is fairly intuitive, but it can be difficult to navigate through when trying to isolate individual verses since it is organized around paragraphs. In addition, it includes nineteen supplementary excurses addressing various interpretive issues along the way. For this review of the commentary, I will focus on the major themes and emphases of de Boer's interpretation of Galatians rather than atomistically address the exegesis of selective passages.

In a manner similar to J. Louis Martyn's famous Anchor Bible commentary, de Boer argues that the key to understanding Galatians is to recognize Paul's apocalyptic language. Taking this approach, de Boer provides a unique analysis with many surprising interpretations along the way, and so this commentary is not a mere repackaging of Martyn. For de Boer, Galatians is an "apocalyptic sermon" (p. 71). Certainly, there is no denying that there are apocalyptic elements in Galatians. For instance, the letter begins with a strong statement of temporal dualism ("the present evil age" in Gal 1:4). There is also a contrast between "the present Jerusalem" and "the Jerusalem above" (Gal 4:25–26), and Galatians contains key apocalyptic vocabulary (e.g. ἀποκάλυψις and ἀποκαλύπτω in Gal 1:12, 16; 2:2; 3:23).

However, when reading de Boer's commentary one wonders how historical his presentation of apocalyptic actually is. For one, de Boer mistakenly assumes that apocalyptic carries strong connotations of discontinuity. The "fullness of time" when Christ was born (Gal 4:4) marks the "end" of that time; "a clean break with the past" (p. 262). One can see a glimpse into the nature of de Boer's emphasis on discontinuity in his comments on Gal 1:16 where Paul states that the Son was *revealed* (ἀποκαλύψαι) "in me." Rather than interpreting "in me" as implying "to me" or "through me," as most commentators do, de Boer offers the idiosyncratic interpretation: "in my former manner of life" (p. 93). For de Boer, Paul personifies the discontinuity between the ages; his former manner of life was brought to an end. The emphasis on radical discontinuity in de Boer's commentary is likewise expressed through the language of "divine inbreaking" when describing certain apocalyptic acts of God in Galatians. For instance, commenting on the reference to "faith" in Gal 3:23, de Boer calls this an "eschatological *novum*" because it has "invaded the human cosmos from outside" (p. 239; cf. n. 353). Likewise, he refers to the presence of the Spirit as part of God's "invasive" activity (p. 266). De Boer's language here is far too dualistic to represent a Jewish worldview that did not make

these distinctions in its cosmic geography. As a corollary to historical discontinuity, de Boer also undermines the covenant made with Abraham. However, within the literature designated as apocalyptic, there is a strong emphasis on the covenant and history. For instance, apocalyptic visions regarding the judgment of the wicked and the vindication of the righteous are covenantally defined. Furthermore, the prayer of Daniel 9, which is situated in a highly apocalyptic context, acknowledges God's covenant faithfulness and the covenant unfaithfulness of Israel. Although God may be acting in new and climatic ways in apocalyptic texts, it is still the same covenantal God.

A further problem with de Boer's understanding of apocalyptic is his distinction between cosmological and forensic forms of it. As de Boer explains, there are two variations within apocalyptic depending upon the understanding of how sin was introduced into the world (pp. 31–35). If the introduction of sin is linked with the fall of the angels (e.g. the Watchers), then the perspective is *cosmological*, but if sin is introduced through Adam, the perspective is *forensic*. de Boer suggests that elements of both are present within Paul's writings, but he concludes that Paul stands closer to the cosmological perspective (p. 33). Yet by de Boer's own criteria, Paul's perspective ought to be more forensic since he identifies Adam as the one who introduced sin (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21–22, 47–49). It is this overemphasis on cosmological apocalypticism that creates multiple problems in the interpretation of the letter for de Boer.

The most noteworthy example of a cosmological overemphasis is in de Boer's discussion of justification. Rather than use the term "justification," de Boer prefers to speak of *rectification*; the way in which God makes everything right (pp. 34–35). The forensic connotations often associated with justification, especially by Protestants, are said to be the very thing that Paul is arguing *against* (p. 153). For de Boer, a forensic understanding of justification is the perspective of the new preachers (his term for the "agitators"). This sort of drastic dichotomy between Paul and his opponents is rooted in de Boer's understanding of Gal 1:7. There Paul says that his opponents have "distorted" the gospel. Yet de Boer takes the verb μεταστρέψαι to mean "to change into its opposite" rather than merely distort (p. 43; cf. BDAG 641). This understanding of the verb greatly affects de Boer's mirror-reading, since it causes him to make stronger contrasts than are warranted.

Related to justification is the much-debated issue of *pistis Christou,* which de Boer takes to be a subjective genitive; denoting Christ's faithful obedience to God, especially in his death (p. 150). de Boer goes on to argue emphatically that *pistis* is consistently a shorthand for *pistis Christou*. He claims that the only instance where the noun *pistis* refers to human faith is Gal 5:22 and that the verb is used sparingly for human faith; only in Gal 2:16; 3:6, 22 (p. 192). Again, I find this deemphasis on human participation in faith to be a misunderstanding of Gal 1:7, which de Boer interprets to mean that Paul's gospel is the *opposite* of his opponents. Thus, if the "agitators" preach human effort *at all* (i.e. through the law), Paul must be preaching against *all* human activity (including faith). Of course, de Boer would not deny that the Galatians express faith in Christ, but his consistent exegesis regarding *pistis* and his interpretation of Gal 1:7 relays de Boer's prejudice against Paul advocating

human activity (including faith) as the means of justification. This version of *pistis Christou* is to be sharply distinguished from the positions of Richard Hays and N. T. Wright, for instance, who do not advocate the subjective genitive interpretation to undermine human faith in any way.

Throughout de Boer's commentary he makes several negative statements about the nature of the law. For example, de Boer states that Paul "drives a wedge" between the law and God (p. 164) and that Paul puts the law "in a very bad light" (p. 168). In de Boer's understanding of Paul's thought, the law was never a part of God's plan. Based on his interpretation of Gal 3:19–20, de Boer argues that the law originated with angels who were trying to tamper with God's promise. According to de Boer, Paul believed that "God had nothing to do with the law" (p. 226). However, the Jewish tradition regarding the mediation of the law by angels was not originally intended to cast the law in a negative light. Rather, it likely had positive connotations that pointed to its divine origins (see Suzanne Nicholson, *Dynamic Oneness* [Cambridge: James Clarke, 2011] 124–36). Furthermore, within the text of Galatians itself Paul simply attempts to demonstrate that "justification," the "promise," and "life" do not come through the law. In so doing, he focuses on the temporary nature of the law. The law was added "because of transgressions" and this was "until the seed would come," referring to Christ (Gal 3:19). That this was intended by God is made clear when Paul refers to "the date set by the father" in another analogy (cf. Gal 4:2). Paul never claims that the law is something negative. On the contrary, he affirms in Rom 7:12 that the law is "holy, righteous, and good," although de Boer is hesitant to allow Romans to illuminate Galatians (p. 2) and so does not appeal to this text.

De Boer's comments on Gal 5:14—the reference to fulfilling the law through love—demonstrate how problematic his view of the law is for understanding Galatians holistically. He identifies the "law" in this verse as "the promises God made to Abraham" (p. 342). Thus, loving one's neighbor is not a Mosaic commandment for Paul ("you shall"), but a promise ("you will"). De Boer does something similar with his comments on the "law of Christ" in Gal 6:2. Carrying one another's burdens brings to realization "the scriptural promises concerning Christ" (p. 380), rather than being the fulfillment of Christ's law. Surprisingly, he omits any reference to 1 Cor 9:20–21, which contains a similar reference to the law of Christ and one that most likely explains Paul's meaning in Gal 6:2.

Overall, de Boer's commentary is an intriguing read that is worth engaging. There is a clear scholarly value to this commentary, but a value that is unfortunately blighted by the noticeable dearth of interaction with scholarly literature on Galatians and broader studies on Paul (although he does interact with a lot of primary sources). For instance, it is possible that someone reading de Boer's commentary could walk away without ever realizing that the "New Perspective on Paul" had ever become an influential force in scholarship. In terms of its homiletical value for sermon preparation, it is not a very accessible read, especially for pastors with limited time, and it contains little in regards to applicational insight. As a final assessment, de Boer's commentary is certainly a necessary read for

serious students of Paul, and it will doubtless contribute to ongoing discussions and provoke many debates regarding the interpretation of Galatians.

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Ephesians. By Clinton E. Arnold. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010, 538 pp., $36.99.

Arnold's volume is a fine contribution to a commentary series that looks to be as useful for the lectern as for the pulpit. His volume represents the fourth of the series following contributions by C. Blomberg and M. Kamell on James, G. Osborne on Matthew, and T. Schreiner on Galatians. Arnold was an apt choice for this volume as he brings a long history of scholarship and teaching on Ephesians to the task. His thorough, seasoned familiarity with the text and the literature relevant for its discussion and exposition is evident throughout. In addition, his track record of bringing his scholarship into the pew makes the "Theology in Application" sections rich and thought-provoking.

The commentary itself is bookended by 46 pages of introductory material (introduction and select bibliography) and 23 pages summarizing the major theological themes of the letter (followed by four indices dealing with Scripture and apocryphal material, other ancient literature, subjects, and cited authors). In between, 400+ pages are dedicated to the commentary proper, punctuated occasionally by "In Depth" sections where Arnold provides extended discussions of texts that are particularly challenging exegetically (e.g. the use of Psalm 68 in 4:8), where a deeper look into the historical background seems necessary (e.g. the role of wives in Roman-era Ephesus), and when texts call for especial clarity and sensitivity in terms of their current applicability (e.g. Paul's teaching on the roles of husbands and wives). In the text of the commentary, the reader is taken through Ephesians paragraph by paragraph. Each paragraph is uniformly treated in terms of its literary context, main idea, and structure (where the author's own translation is visually displayed as a phrase diagram and then immediately followed up by a verbal walk-through). These sections are then followed by a suggested exegetical outline, a verse-by-verse explanation (for the most part) of its contents, and finally a brief theological synthesis that is selectively and broadly brought into contact with the life of the church today.

By design, readers best prepared to benefit from Arnold's work are those who have a working grasp of Greek vocabulary and grammar and the related skills necessary for exegesis of the Greek text. As such, upper-level undergraduate Greek students, seminary students engaging in entry level exegesis, and church leaders with Greek training as a part of their preparation will benefit most directly. At the same time, professors teaching Greek exegesis will mine this volume as a treasure trove of exemplary material even as they raise their guard against its slavish use by their students. Additionally, even specialists will find much that will repay their attention. They can look forward to a robust and current bibliography, informed

discussion of crucial primary sources, careful interaction with current scholarship, and judicious, well-argued exegetical positions. The non-Greek reader will benefit from the results of Arnold's work, though they will often struggle to appreciate the discussion underlying those results.

In keeping with the purpose of the series, introductory matters are handled in a concise, summary fashion though with a clear awareness of the broader scholarly discussion. As such, with the exception of the extended treatment of the setting, there is little here that will advance the discussion over the perennial interpretive challenges surrounding Ephesians. By way of summary, Arnold reads Ephesians as a letter written by the apostle Paul during his Roman imprisonment to Ephesus and its environs in AD 61–62. "In Ephesus" in 1:1 is authentic and a careful attention to the cultural dynamics of Ephesus and the surrounding environs goes a long way toward explaining the letter's theological emphases. Notably, Paul's ministry in Ephesus as recorded in Acts provides a rich resource for Arnold as he sets out his vision of the letter's backdrop and corresponding purposes. The overlap between Ephesians and Colossians stems from Paul giving "a fresh exposition of a similar theme (with different emphases) a short time later for a different audience" (p. 53). For Ephesians, this means that Paul is inoculating the church in Ephesus and the surrounding churches against problems similar to those causing the conflict presently raging in the Lycus valley churches, even as he extends the conversation to other issues pertinent to the nexus of churches with Ephesus as the center. For this Ephesian nexus, Paul is certainly interested in further solidifying their identity in Christ but as a means to enable them in their struggle with the powers of darkness, to promote greater unity between Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ, and to spur the primarily Gentile congregation on to greater conformity to Christ over against their pagan environment.

It is impossible to give a full review of the wide range of issues addressed in any full-scale commentary such as this. At the same time, the following observations are offered with the hope that the reader can gain a better sense of Arnold's work by looking at his take on some of the better-known and controversial passages as well as, in some cases, their points of contact with the life of the church today. The reference to "faith" as the appropriate response to the gospel and the means of access to the Father in the opening eulogy (1:13) as well as the similar emphasis in the broader context of the τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ of 3:12 (3:8–12) suggests that "belief in Christ," not "Christ's faith/faithfulness," is in view. The digression in 3:2–13 serves to address concerns that may have arisen from Paul's imprisonment. Paul is keen to show that his imprisonment "in no way hinders the ministry but actually serves to magnify the triumph of God because God accomplishes his purposes in weakness" (p. 179). On Paul's use of Psalm 68 in Eph 4:8, Arnold argues that Paul sees an analogy between the depiction of God in Psalm 68 and the triumphant work of Christ when, after he ascends to his throne, he blesses his people with gifts. "Paul depends on a variant textual tradition (attested by the Aramaic Targum and the Syriac Peshitta)" to bring out "the true christological meaning" of Psalm 68 (p. 252). Ephesians 5:18 is best understood as a command to be filled "with the Spirit" as opposed to "by the Spirit." As new

covenant people, believers are now God's temple, and Paul desires an ever-increasing reception of the Spirit by believers, something that can be hindered by sinful behavior. The immediately following participles are the means by which the filling with the Spirit is accomplished. Ephesians 5:21 calls for mutual submission of every believer to every other believer. At the same time, however, this call to an "attitude of submission" of each toward the other does not "obviate the truth that we live these relationships out in a set of socially structured relationships—and this by God's design" (p. 357). Finally, with regard to the contemporary relevance of Paul's instructions to husbands and wives, Arnold argues against attempts to explain Paul's instructions in terms of an accommodation to cultural patterns of his day. Paul's instructions are Christologically shaped and motivated so that they cannot be relativized or dismissed. Paul calls the husband to a "servant leadership" that partakes of the "caring and self-denying form of leadership" modeled by Christ himself (referencing Mark 10:45; p. 407).

Throughout, Arnold is clear, concise, and irenic. Positions are thoughtfully argued and articulated in grateful and respectful, yet pointed, dialogue with kindred and dissenting voices alike. Pastors, Greek students, and their professors will find much to appreciate in Arnold's work no matter where they may stand on the important issues arising from Paul's counsel to the Ephesians. Arnold's work is a warm invitation and a wise guide for the exploration of the "riches of God in Christ by the Spirit" so powerfully on display in this letter.

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They Went Out from Us: The Identity of the Opponents in First John. By Daniel R. Streett. BZNW 177. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011, xvii + 462 pp., $195.00.

They Went Out from Us: The Identity of the Opponents in First John is a revision of Daniel R. Streett's dissertation at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. As the title implies, Streett offers a reevaluation of whom the author of 1 John opposes. He argues against the dominant proposal that the author's opponents are progressives who split from the community and advances the case that the opponents are former members of the Johannine community who have renounced their belief in Jesus as the Messiah and returned to the synagogue. The essential boundary marker for the community is the confession of Jesus as the Messiah. The situation is Jewish, similar to the Fourth Gospel, as the opponents who reject this confession return to their Jewish synagogue observance. Streett offers a positive argument and also shows the inadequacy of other proposals to reconstruct the opponents in 1 John. In line with Streett's re-evaluation of the opponents, issues related to the purpose of the letter and the degree to which it is polemical or pastoral are discussed. His assessment is that the "material usually considered polemical is quite limited and actually serves a primary pastoral function by assuring the audience that the apostasy was expected and predicted, and that the crisis in fact has served to confirm the audience's status" (p. 121).

The volume is comprised of six chapters with an introduction and conclusion. Chapters 1 and 2 provide a summary and critique of previous proposals and their methodologies. Chapters 3–6 deal with the exegesis of specific texts, with each chapter also containing an evaluation of previous proposals. In chapter 1, Streett surveys the major approaches to identifying the opponents and the conclusions that each of these makes. He helpfully categorizes previous explanations of the opponents into five general groups: Gnostics, docetists, proponents of separation Christology in the vein of Cerinthus, those who devalue the ministry and death of Jesus, and apostate Jews. His categorization and critiques are fair and helpful. Chapter 2 critiques the maximalist mirror-reading approach, which detects opposition in more places than the author likely intended and results in a polemical interpretation of the letter. Streett, however, proposes that the letter is not essentially a polemical but rather a pastoral letter urging those in the community to be faithful. He limits the polemic to 2:18–27 and 4:1–6. The next four chapters discuss the four passages that figure into most reconstructions of the opponents with each chapter containing four parts: summary of previous explanations, a critique of those explanations, an exegesis of the passage, and an alternative explanation. Chapter 3 discusses 2:18–27 in which the opponents are labeled "antichrists," which buttresses Streett's assessment of the primary issue being the messiahship of Jesus. Even here the intent is pastoral as the author reminds the audience that the apostasy was not unexpected and assures the audience of their standing. In chapter 4, Streett, arguing against the prevailing understandings of 4:1–6, contends that the passage is a restatement of the foundational confession of the community with the point being that Jesus is the Messiah. First John 5:6–12 is addressed in chapter 5 where Streett again rejects the dominant explanation that the belief that Jesus "came in water only" is a quotation of the opponents. Rather, he argues that the author appeals to three witnesses (in accordance with Jewish legal practices regarding valid testimony) to assure the readers of the validity of their own confession: the water (baptism of Jesus), the blood (death of Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. In chapter 6, Streett rejects the interpretation of 2 John 9 that the opponents were progressives; rather, the issue is the same as in 1 John, the denial of Jesus as the Messiah.

There is much that is commendable in this book. The proposal is fresh, the argument is generally well made, and the writing is clear and concise. As one would expect from a revised dissertation, the arrangement of the material proceeds almost formulaically, and the table of contents is a bit tedious. The length of the chapters, perhaps out of necessity, is weighted heavily to chapters 1, 4, and 5. His work is also given to content footnotes. On the whole, the presentation of the material flows well and does not obscure the author's points.

Streett interacts thoroughly with both secondary and primary sources. He presents both a positive argument for his own position and a careful and even-handed refutation of previous positions. His proposal is refreshing in that he does not repeat the overemphasis of certain passages in 1 John that plagues the work of many of his predecessors. Even though it is not his own position to argue for Gnostic underpinnings of the opponents, Streett interacts with a broad range of

Gnostic texts and summarizes their content appropriately. Streett's critique of maximalist mirror readings of 1 John is a welcome chastening of the overly ambitious claims of previous scholars. He offers a realistic and restrained approach that results in more defensible conclusions.

He may, however, be guilty of downplaying certain elements of 1 John, especially the polemical nature of certain passages. His discussion of 1 John 4:1–6 illustrates some of these concerns. In contrast to 2:18–27, Streett argues that the opponents in 4:1–6 are not apostates from the community but itinerant Jewish prophets. The opponents are different, but the author, according to Streett, responds with essentially the same affirmation of Jesus being the Messiah. Streett deemphasizes the significance of "in flesh" and argues that the emphasis is on "the fact of his coming, and his identity as the Messiah" (p. 255). Streett understands this confession to be an early summary of Christian belief and not a new confession directed against the opponents. It is not anti-docetic but a standard early Christian way of describing the Messiah's earthly coming. Thus, the opponents here are to be identified with the Jews of the Fourth Gospel who rejected the identity of Jesus as the Messiah. Nevertheless, the words "in flesh" are absent from the previous confessions in 1 John 2:22 and John 20:21 that Streett sees as parallel. While I agree with Streett that it is unwarranted to jump from "in flesh" to anti-docetic conclusions, his argument left me wanting a better explanation for the presence of "in flesh" here and not other places in the Johannine literature. In response to previous scholarship's overemphasis on "in flesh" as a governing polemic of the larger letter, Streett in my judgment has gone too far in explaining away the polemical thrust of 1 John 4, even if the overriding intent might be described as pastoral. Streett's corrective is well received, but the best explanation perhaps should leave more room for polemics.

Overall, Streett has convinced me to reevaluate the opponents of 1 John and the intent of the letter. I think his proposal offers the best explanation of 1 John 2:22, but I am slightly suspicious of the idea that the Fourth Gospel, 1 John, and 2 John all have basically the same setting and thrust. Streett's contribution is the most thorough examination of the opponents as Jewish apostates, and it is a welcome counter-proposal to existing views. Even if one does not agree with Streett's conclusions on some issues, the reader will appreciate Street's thoroughness in addressing nearly every question and possible solution related to the identity of the opponents. While the price of the volume will discourage most from purchasing it, *They Went Out from Us* is well worth the read and offers a fresh and convincing proposal for identifying the opponents of 1 John.

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The Conversion of the Nations in Revelation. By Allan J. McNicol. Library of New Testament Studies 438. London: T & T Clark, 2011, xvii + 155 pp., $110.00.

Allan J. McNicol, Professor of New Testament Studies at Austin Graduate School of Theology, has addressed the problem of the nations in the Book of Revelation in a monograph in the Library of New Testament Studies series. As has often been observed, there are two, seemingly irreconcilable, views of the nations in Revelation: in 19:11–21, they seem to be thoroughly judged and even annihilated, whereas in 21:1–22:5, they are seen streaming into the new Jerusalem and bringing their glory and honor therein. In a study that emphasizes exegesis, literary/narrative analysis, and an eye to John's "method of selection and modification of OT material" (p. 21), McNicol asks the following questions: (1) How do we reconcile the conflicting pictures of the nations' lot in Revelation (he believes we can)? (2) What is the reason for their change or conversion? (3) Why is the fate of the nations important to John in the context of his book?

His answer to the problem of the nations and why they convert is as follows: there is a logical continuity to the story of the nations throughout the Book of Revelation, including the movement from chapter 19 to chapters 20–22. This continuity stems from the fact that John the Seer is grounded in a complex of eschatological prophetic models (the *Völkerwallfahrt* of Isaiah 60, 66; Zechariah 14) describing first the nations' oppression of God's people, then their defeat (but not annihilation) by an appearance of the Lord (pictured as the Divine Warrior), followed by their compliant recognition of Yahweh as Lord of all. The last part of the picture sees the surviving nations coming to a renovated Jerusalem to pay *appropriate* homage (p. 15). As McNicol clarifies at the end of his book, this is not a view of universal salvation; only those from the nations who subjugate "themselves to Christ at the parousia" find themselves entering the gates of the new Jerusalem (pp. 137–38). He calls his view "eschatological covenantal restitution" because the OT complex entails the renewal of God's relationship with all peoples (Isaiah 60; cf. Rev 21:3).

He puts his view over against those who argue that John is laying out choices for the readers in a purely rhetorical or hypothetical fashion (J. P. M. Sweet and Dave Mathewson) and also the view of Richard Bauckham that it is the suffering witness of the Lamb's followers that converts the nations (chap. 1; pp. 3–14). He takes an objectifying or material view of much of Revelation and the fate of the nations. He says that John foresees an actual Day of the Lord that will occur in the future (p. 15), and it is only by this real event in John's mind that the nations subjugate themselves to the Lord.

The nations are oppressors of the people of God for most of Revelation, but, as Satan's power is eliminated (Rev 20:3), "their situation is much more ambiguous" (p. 66). The bulk of the study is divided into five categories (listed on p. 20) that look at the nations within each of their roles: (1) the constituency of the Lamb as coming from all nations and peoples (Rev 5:9; 7:9); (2) the nations opposing the people of God, while under the sway of the beast (examining for instance their participation in emperor cult); (3) a kind of excursus on the use of

Psalm 2 in Revelation; (4) the description of the Lamb and his allies destroying the beast and his allies and exercising dominion over the nations (focusing on the parousia of 19:11–21 but where some of the people groups are left alive); and (5) an explication of the renewal of God's covenant with the nations (where John uses and modifies key *Völkerwallfahrt* passages of Isaiah 60, 66, and Ezekiel in Rev 21:3, 21:24–26, and 22:2–3). Categories 1, 2, and 3 are discussed in chapter 2 ("The Role of the Nations in Revelation") and categories 4 and 5 in chapter 3 ("The Ultimate Destiny of the Nations in Revelation"). A key part of the analysis is the discussion of the meaning of Psalm 2 (and its exegetical descendants, especially *Pss. Sol.*) for John, where he concludes that it is all but an outline of the entire Apocalypse, "previewing the transfer of earthly power from Rome to God's anointed one," breaking of the defective jar of Gentile rebellion, calling to the nations to shift their allegiances, and giving the nations as an inheritance of God's people, the latter thereby vindicated (p. 41).

In chapter 4 ("The Scriptural Framework of the Conversion of the Nations"), McNicol addresses directly the question why the nations repent in Revelation, examining briefly five themes (p. 93) found in post-exilic (Zechariah 14 and Isa 66:18–24) and late Second-Temple Judaism (*Pss. Sol.*, Tobit, and *1 Enoch*) and examining John's use of these themes in the Apocalypse. His conclusion to the chapter sums up the reasons the nations convert as seen in this literature: the nations come to Zion sometimes through compulsion, sometimes because they admire the beauty of Zion, and many times subsequent to the theophanic appearance of Yahweh (p. 104). I think of Herms's statement, after considering the perspective on the nations in Jewish apocalypses, that admiration and compulsion are two ways of stating the same thing: the vindication of Israel and Israel's God (Ronald Herms, *An Apocalypse for the Church and for the World* [BZNW 143; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006] 136).

In chapter 5, McNicol addresses another way that the conversion of the nations fits in with the central message of Revelation. John's message is at heart a pastoral message to the churches not to accommodate to the worldly life of the culture (i.e. [sexual] immorality, lying, and worship of idols; pp. 111–12). McNicol discovers this exhortation directed to *both* the churches and the nations. He finds this in the similar terminology of the chastisements against the dissidents in the churches in Rev 2:2, 14, and 20 and the lists of vices he says are directed to the nations in Rev 21:8, 17, 22:15. For McNicol, this is another demonstration of the positive destiny of the nations in Revelation (p. 121). Finally, in chapter 6, the author reexamines those views that stand against his own on the nations and considers the theological question of universal salvation.

I welcome McNicol's attempt to interpret the language of Revelation about the nations in a logically continuous and objective manner. The striking juxtapositions of 19:17–19, 21, 20:7–10, and 21:24–26 still cry out for explanation, and I do not see Bauckham's or Rissi's solutions borne out by the text. The rhetorical approach has been an attractive option for many, but it, too, leaves questions. I would evaluate the success of McNicol's thesis from two aspects: first, with regard to the OT complex with which John is said to be in touch; and second,

with regard to the cogency with which McNicol has explained the transition from chapter 19 to chapters 20–22. On the former point, many scholars readily agree that John is in touch with portions of the *Völkerwallfahrt* passages (21:24–26; 22:2). It is also obvious that there are many passages of total judgment of the nations in Isaiah (Isa 49:23–24; 52:1; 59:18–19; 63:1–6) and elsewhere. The question McNicol must answer, given his thesis, is: Do the two complexes (judgment and compliance) come together in any passages where the one eventuates in the other and where the theophany of the Lord is at the center point? Furthermore, he must show that John has employed this complex in the Apocalypse. I felt that the weak link in McNicol's argument was that he failed to show John's employment of the "judgment-leading-to-compliance-by-way-of-theophany" complex (of Zechariah 14/Isaiah 66/Psalm 2) in his primary judgment scene (19:11–21). To cite John's use of Ps 2:9 ("he shall rule them with a rod of iron and break them") in isolation from the rest of the "complex" is not enough. The nearest he comes, in my estimation, to showing John's use of the complex in 19:11–21 is in his argument on pages 59 and 61, where, by way of appeal to John's allusion to Zech 12:10 in Rev 1:7 (the latter of which is a bookend to 19:11–21), he argues that the themes of purging of Jerusalem and defeat of the nations are brought together.

His results are more promising when it comes to demonstrating the coherence of the story of the nations. If his thesis is correct, we should see some indication of the potential for redemption in the "nations" in contrast to other people groups. Terminology is addressed cursorily (pp. 18, 31–33, 78), and this lack may be why many will ask just who it is who is redeemed from among the people groups. He plausibly separates out people groups throughout the book (Rev 13:7b–8 [pp. 32–33]; 16:19c [pp. 38–39]; and in 14:6–19:10 [fall of Babylon; pp. 33–41; see esp. 41]). I found him implying in the section "nations under the sway of the beast" that the power structures are evil and beyond redemption, but the "little people" can be redeemed, though he never stated it that way (see pp. 31–41). His exegesis of Rev 19:11–20:10 is plausible: (1) the nations are defeated, though not all perish in 19:11–16 (p. 97); (2) the "earth dwellers" (including "kings of earth"), forever given over to the power structures, are destroyed in 19:17–21; (3) the people of God rule over the nations in 20:4–6, as signified in Ps 2:8; and (4) the nations in 20:7–10 are not to be considered as consumed, for the section is employing the Gog prophecies to attest to "God's protection from the profanation of the nations" (see Ezek 36:6–7, 15, 2–24, 30; p. 67). Nevertheless, some may still be troubled by the totality of the destruction of the kings when put over against their entry into the New Jerusalem (21:24–26).

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The New Testament: A Literary History. By Gerd Theissen. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012, xvi + 311 pp., $49.00.

This volume is a translation of Gerd Theissen's 2007 *Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments als literaturgeschichtliches Problem*. Theissen is Professor of New Testament at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, and has authored numerous books in the area of early Christianity.

Due to the fragmentary nature of the transmission, most have deemed it impossible to write a complete literary history of the NT. However, Theissen argues that a literary history of the NT is not only possible, it is an important component for understanding the text of the NT. He explains, "The texts have effect not only by *what* they say theologically, but also *in the way* they say it. The formal language of the New Testament literature gives them a solid location in interpersonal communication and in religious communication between human beings and God. This *formal language* is the primary object of a literary history of the New Testament. Its content cannot be separated from it. Only where there is plausible agreement between statements of content and particular forms has a literary critique achieved its goal" (p. 4). Despite the importance of understanding the NT's formal language, Theissen regrets there is no established literary history that distinguishes phases and follows the lines of the NT's development. This volume is Theissen's attempt to remedy this problem by providing both a description of the NT's formal language and an overview of the four phases of its literary history.

With regard to the forms of early Christian literature, Theissen discusses the two basic forms: Gospels and letters. He explains, "It (early Christian literature) may be characterized in summary as the literature of a religious movement that, in the brief history of its origins, programmatically crossed many boundaries—between oral and written literature, Jewish and non-Jewish culture, and upper and lower classes" (p. 253).

Based on the charismatic influence of Jesus and Paul, the first Christians produced literature most commonly seen in the form of letters and Gospels, as "fictive self-interpretations of the two founding fathers," then developed a formal language, and finally founded a canon corresponding to the LXX. The development of the formal language is seen in the four stages of the literary-critical history, labeled by Theissen as the charismatic, pseudepigraphic, functional, and canonical phases. Each of these stages corresponds to the four sections in the book.

First ("The Twofold Beginnings of a History of Early Christian Literature"), NT literature began with two charismatics, Jesus and Paul, in the genres of Gospels and letters. The NT is "primeval literature" as it looks back on the work of Jesus and Paul. In this way, the biography (the Gospels) and the letter (Paul's epistles) with their person-centered nature are unlike the writings of Judaism. Theissen argues these were borrowed from pagan forms and then transformed in creative ways. In the case of Jesus, he contends that while the actual words and actions of Jesus are uncertain, the actual forms of Jesus' preaching ("he taught as a prophet, a wisdom teacher, a teacher of the Law, and a story teller"; p. 19), as seen in the

canonical Gospels, are authentic. The forms of Jesus' preaching were passed down in Q and Mark's Gospel (where a narrative base was added so that the form became analogous to *bios*), and then were repeated in the rest of the Gospels. On the other hand, Paul "developed the letter of friendship, by fleshing it out liturgically and rhetorically, into a community letter, and increasingly endowed it with an authoritative 'public' claim—perhaps inspired by Jewish letters for community leaders, but essentially through a creative transformation of the private letter of friendship, following models in the literary and diplomatic letters of pagan antiquity" (p. 254).

Second ("The Fictive Self-Interpretations of Paul and Jesus: The Pseudepigraphic Phase"), this literature continued through the pseudepigraphic writings, "fictive self interpretations of Paul in the non-genuine Pauline letters and a fictive self-interpretation of Jesus in additional gospels" (p. 13). These pseudepigraphic writings (in which Theissen includes six of the NT letters ascribed to Paul and all the Gospels) were meant to preserve traditions and correct the original authorities. The pseudepigraphy of the NT contributes to the evidence of it being "minor literature." This means it was literature best described as an exchange between the literary upper class and non-literary lower class. Accordingly, Theissen explains the purpose of early Christian pseudepigraphy: "its bases were the awareness of the authors that they were representatives, rooted in the oral messenger culture, and the initially perceptible link to the words of the Lord and the letters of the apostle in the work of the people whose formal literary abilities were limited" (p. 255).

In the third phase ("The Authority of the Independent Forms: The Functional Phase"), Theissen argues that genres were created from functional standpoints. This means that "texts gained their authority not only from being traced to known charismatics, but also through the material demands of particular genres. To the authority of persons and traditions was added to the authority of form" (p. 14).

Finally ("The New Testament on Its Way to Becoming a Religious World Literature: The Canonical Phase"), the last phase was the construction of the canon, which was at least in part a response to the rival canon proposed by Marcion in the second century. Theissen rightly argues due to the LXX's importance in Hellenistic Judaism, the NT not only included interpretations based on the LXX but that the LXX also functioned as a model for the development of the NT canon.

Theissen writes as a seasoned scholar, and this volume is clearly a product of years of research within mainstream scholarship. Not surprisingly, evangelical readers will have difficulty digesting many of the claims. According to Theissen, after the three most important Christian leaders (Peter, Paul, and James) died in the 60s, the early church responded by writing pseudepigraphic letters in the name of apostles and by shaping the Jesus traditions redactionally in the Gospels in order to provide community guidance (p. 103). The Gospels are deconstructed to find the historical motives and the situation of each community behind each particular redaction of the tradition. None of the traditional names ascribed to the canonical Gospels were the original authors. He assumes a post-AD 70 date for Mark largely

on the assumption that words predicting the destruction of the temple in Mark 13:1–2 had to have been placed on the lips of Jesus by the early church in view of the temple's fall (p. 49). The formation of the Gospels were not overseen by apostles but instead were written for the purpose of critiquing community authorities, which is seen "in Mark in the form of the disciples' lack of understanding, in Matthew by emphasis on the fact that Jesus is the sole legitimate teacher, in the Lukan corpus by critique of the community leaders who allowed themselves to be supported, and in John through the devaluation of Peter" (p. 105).

Concerning Paul, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus are all considered pseudepigraphic writings. Paul's theology changes from his early to latter letters (p. 83). The "catholic" epistles were pseudonymous and often written to correct Paul's teachings. Furthermore, according to Theissen, one of the reasons Paul did not say much about Jesus is that Jesus' radical message was out of place within Paul's communities. In other words, at numerous points Paul is in contradiction with Jesus (p. 66). Due to space constraints, a comprehensive response from a conservative perspective is impossible here. Needless to say, these criticisms are not new, and credible responses are readily accessible.

Theissen's overall case is based on his confidence that he is able reconstruct the development of NT documents. Certainly some things can be hypothesized with a higher degree of confidence than others. However, I remain skeptical that one can reconstruct the development of the NT with the kind of detail Theissen claims. For instance, with the current information available, can scholars confidently provide detailed information about a theoretical Sayings Source, which includes its chronological structure and its theological location? Or assuming the Gospels are products of a combination of diverse traditions, can historians reliably deconstruct them in order to understand where the various traditions originated? Or is it legitimate for scholars to use the Gospels to reconstruct the particular community for which it was intended rather than primarily to gain information about Jesus, which is what the Gospels were transparently intended to do? Certainly, there are large swaths of scholarship that answer affirmatively to these questions and ones like them. For those who find themselves in these groups, Theissen's work will certainly wield some influence. However, for those who answer negatively to these and other similar questions, this volume will likely have little impact.

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Understanding the Times: New Testament Studies in the 21st Century, Essays in Honor of D. A. Carson on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday. Edited by Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough. Wheaton: Crossway, 2011, 400 pp., $31.99.

The twelve essays and one appendix in this volume form a fitting tribute to a man who has contributed to the Christian faith in numerous ways in North America and around the world. Carson is a spokesman for evangelicalism, a fine

NT scholar, and a great teacher and mentor. I have benefited from all three of these contributions. As Carson's first doctoral student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (1987–92), I remember well his classes, his scholarship, and his encouragement in the dissertation process, including the speed at which he returned comments to me even though he was in England on sabbatical, and this before the days of e-mail. Carson's work ethic has often inspired me, though I have never been able to match the ideal he has set.

The essays in this *Festschrift*, written by Carson's colleagues and former students, are grouped into three parts. Part 1 deals with methods and ancillary studies. Stanley Porter offers a lengthy discussion of Greek lexicography and linguistics. The essay begins with a review of the current state of lexicography and then discusses some new approaches. There continue to be advocates for a polysemic approach to the meaning of words, but there is a renewed advocacy for a monosemic approach. Porter thinks the latter is worth exploring more thoroughly, in order to mitigate the complexity of lexical meanings. He may be correct, but we have to take for granted that language is complex and any sort of reduction of its complexity will inevitably not be able to account for all past, present, and future uses of words. Porter also reviews current linguistic theory as it applies to NT studies. He rightly asserts that the desire to help students learn to translate the NT into English has had too much influence on discussions of the syntax of Koine Greek. He advocates a "formal-elements approach" as the most useful entry point for a purely epigraphic language like that found in the NT. His brief proposal merits extension and application in future studies.

Grant Osborne discusses the notion of "theological interpretation" that has developed in the past two decades. He notes that this hermeneutical approach arose in response to the historical method that has its roots in the Enlightenment. Theological hermeneutics prioritizes the theological dimensions of Scripture and interprets accordingly. Osborne correctly notes that when one chooses between historical and theological methods, biblical study is artificially bifurcated. Scripture is at the same time a theological and historical text and must be interpreted using both rubrics together. He cautions that one false road sometimes taken in theological interpretation is the elevation of theological tradition so that it has the same authority as Scripture itself. Some who practice theological interpretation also mitigate the importance of the historical author in validating meaning. Osborne's cautions should be considered carefully by those who have moved away from historical interpretation; nevertheless, they should not negate the positive construction of meaning that has been achieved. Mark Dever is the only contributor who is a pastor. His chapter deals with definitions and operations of the church. It reads like a sermon, more than a research article.

John Woodbridge asserts that biblical inerrancy has been a central church doctrine in Western Christianity and that those who affirm this doctrine are not theological innovators. To prove his point he draws on Catholics (Augustine, John Eck, Richard Simon's testimony to the beliefs of his contemporaries, Leo XIII, *et al.*) and Protestants (Luther, Calvin, William Whitaker, *et al.*). He also draws on statements of those opposed to inerrancy who asserted that inerrancy was the main

belief of a majority of Christians in their day. Woodbridge asserts that evangelical self-identity and the church doctrine of biblical inerrancy or infallibility are intimately linked.

Part 2 is entitled "Special Topics in New Testament Studies." Andreas Köstenberger offers a study of John 3:16 from historical, literary, and theological perspectives. He draws a contrast with Jewish literature of the time that asserted God's love for Israel, but not for the world. One wonders if a comparison with the OT might have been an appropriate "background" study for the passage (the connection with the OT is brought out more in the literary section). Attention is drawn to the literary connections within John that show John's concern is the universal proclamation of the gospel. Finally, John 3:16 fits well into the theology of the NT in its statement of God's universal love for the world. Douglas Moo studies justification language in Galatians and concludes, in opposition to N. T. Wright, that justification denotes a right standing before God, that it is accomplished by faith alone in (the cross work of) Christ, and that it is a "now and not yet" reality for the Christian. The latter assertion he suggests as an avenue for further exploration. Peter O'Brien notes the centrality of the speaking God for the message of the Book of Hebrews. He concludes that in Hebrews God's word is personal, living, and trustworthy. This oral word in the end was written. Eckhard Schnabel studies the language of baptism in the NT. He concludes this thorough study by noting that βαπτίζω in the NT has a narrower semantic range than in Koine Greek in general. It can mean to immerse, to cleanse, or to be overwhelmed. It does not always denote the Christian ritual. Thus the word should not always be translated (or transliterated) as "baptize."

Perhaps the most significant part of this Festschrift is Part 3 in which various authors highlight the state of NT studies on the various continents of the world. This is not only an important contribution for those of us in North America, but it is also a fitting tribute to Carson, who is a geographically universal Christian. A full one hundred pages is given over to this topic. Robert Yarbrough surveys Africa and Europe (in two separate chapters), Craig Blomberg North America, and David Pao Asia. For some reason South America is not included. Rather than review each chapter individually, I will give my overall impressions. First, it appears that the hegemony of Europe and North America over NT studies is being challenged. Fine work is being done by NT scholars all over the globe. In terms of churchly influence, non-European and non-North American scholarship has not yet caught up with the move of the church to the global south, but it is fast doing so. Second, the work that is being done by these "non-Western" scholars brings new and much needed perspectives to the meaning of the NT. We might not always appreciate this. Since the so-called Enlightenment, public life in the West has been divorced from religious life. Emergent political and public theologies may make us uncomfortable, but they address part of the reality in which we live. Third, these studies show that a biblical faith has certain universal characteristics, but these characteristics are manifested in different ways in different parts of the world (note, e.g., the discussion of Asian Christologies). Biblical faith and biblical scholarship do not

demand one cultural manifestation but in fact are malleable, so that they fit many and diverse cultures.

The book concludes with a helpful section on the work of Carson with some personal anecdotes about his life and ministry, including an eight-page bibliography of Carson's work, which has undoubtedly grown by now. Köstenberger characterizes Carson's work as international, holding to a high view of Scripture, for the church, centered in the gospel, and I would add eclectic. All in all, this is a fitting tribute to Dr. Carson.

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