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BOOK REVIEWS

Prepare, Succeed, Advance: A Guidebook for Getting a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies and Beyond. By Nijay Gupta. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011, 156 pp., $19.00.

As a doctoral candidate in Biblical Studies, I know that earning a Ph.D. is a difficult and sometimes frighteningly mysterious enterprise. As an academic advisor for a major American seminary, I am aware that many aspiring Ph.D. students are unaware of the preparation necessary for doctoral work. Many of my fellow students are profoundly disoriented in their attempts to pursue a Ph.D. and become involved in the academy. Thankfully, prospective and current Ph.D. students now have a sure guide to get them from orientation to graduation. Nijay Gupta's guidebook *Prepare, Succeed, Advance* is a thorough introduction to all things doctoral. Gupta, who earned a Ph.D. in NT from the University of Durham, draws from his own deep well of personal experience and research to provide potential Ph.D. students everything they need to know about the next several years of their lives. He deconstructs the myths and unravels the mystery surrounding applying, enduring, and achieving a Ph.D. His work is a concise and practical guide to doctoral studies and life in the academy.

As the title suggests, the book consists of three sections. The "Prepare" section unpacks all the issues pertaining to the application process. Gupta explains the factors to consider when choosing between doctoral programs. He describes the benefits and limitations of different types of schools (e.g. British universities, American universities, American seminaries). He also provides readers with a list of first- and second-tier institutions in the US and the UK (pp. 16–24). He then identifies the "eight factors" that determine a student's preparation for doctoral studies: (1) institutions of education; (2) GPA; (3) preparatory coursework; (4) references; (5) standardized test scores; (6) research/publishing record; (7) teaching experience; and (8) overall diversification (pp. 25–40). He concludes by explaining how to construct an eye-catching application and offers advice on cover letters (pp. 44–45), obtaining references (p. 46), submitting a research proposal (pp. 48–50), and other related subjects.

The "Succeed" section addresses the task of actually earning a Ph.D. Gupta explains how to find a viable research topic and where to look for research ideas (chap. 4). He also offers advice on the task of researching and writing the dissertation and discusses everything from common pitfalls to working effectively with one's supervisor (chap. 5). Chapter 6 describes the process of defending the dissertation. As Gupta indicates, the defense process is "mysterious and intimidating" to many Ph.D. students because it "happens … behind closed doors" (p. 87). Gupta aims at assuaging any irrational fears about the defense. He provides a full description of the defense process and also gives wise counsel on both preparing for and surviving the defense (pp. 92–96).

The "Advance" section explores life beyond the Ph.D. Chapter 8 answers every conceivable question about participating in conferences and publishing articles. Chapter 9 explains how to accrue teaching experience and also the teaching task itself. Gupta offers advice on every matter from being a teaching assistant (pp. 124–25) to teaching introductory Greek and Hebrew courses (pp. 125–27) to developing great syllabi (pp. 128–29). In chapter 10, Gupta concludes his survey of doctoral life with advice on "job hunting." Again, Gupta is remarkably thorough, offering advice on cover letters (pp. 135–37), CVs (pp. 137–38), the interview process (pp. 139–44), and also on publishing completed dissertations (pp. 144–47).

Little in Gupta's book is worthy of criticism. His section on the GRE is now outdated since the GRE began using a revised scoring system in 2011 (pp. 36–38). Gupta does, however, warn his readers that revisions to the GRE will soon take place and that his own analysis will be dated shortly after the book's publication (p. 36). Further, in his section on "Finding Jobs," Gupta lists five websites that post academic positions in Biblical Studies but omits the Evangelical Theological Society's "Career Connections" website (www.etsjets.org/job_opportunities), which would no doubt be of great interest to the vast majority of his readers.

The strength of *Prepare, Succeed, Advance* is its insider perspective on academic life. Gupta explores each issue from his own wealth of personal experience. He understands the joys, pressures, and fears of doctoral students. As a Ph.D. student, I found myself consistently challenged to perform at a higher level of academic excellence and encouraged to persevere in the difficulties of doctoral study. Gupta's conclusion is particularly helpful in this regard, offering a host of practical steps to remaining humble, grateful, and sane in the midst of doctoral labors (pp. 148–51). Gupta also understands that earning a Ph.D. is just as much about developing certain habits and virtues as it is about checking off the academic to-do list. In his words, "Getting a Ph.D. is one part brains, two parts ambition" (p. 42).

The value of Gupta's practical wisdom is hard to overestimate. Students in need of counsel on almost any matter related to academic success (e.g. publishing, CVs, references, cover letters and conference participation) will find more than enough instruction in these pages. Further, Gupta often highlights aspects of doctoral work many students may overlook. For example, he advises students to remember the quality of a school's library when choosing a doctoral program since an inadequate library could severely impede a student's writing progress (pp. 13–14). He also wisely advises students to invest their time in advanced hermeneutics courses and biblical backgrounds, not merely exegesis courses. Large portions of students' dissertations will discuss background and method, so students should equip themselves with these tools early in the education process (pp. 28–30).

Prepare, Succeed, Advance is a tremendously helpful reference tool. As an academic advisor, I will make this the first resource I recommend to colleagues who may not have the advantage of personal experience in a Ph.D. program. As a student, I will regularly return to Gupta's work for counsel on the next stage of academic life. Doctoral students should rejoice at having such a sure guide to academic success and commend Gupta for his contribution.

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Sacred Word, Broken Word: Biblical Authority and the Dark Side of Scripture. By Kenton L. Sparks. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xii + 180 pp., $20.00.

Kenton L. Sparks is professor of biblical studies at Eastern University. His previous writings include *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible* (Baker, 2005) and *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Eisenbrauns, 1998). Sparks describes *Sacred Word, Broken Word* as similar to his previous book on this subject, *God's Word in Human Words* (Baker, 2008), but this present work is shorter, more focused, and falls within the subject of theological interpretation.

Sparks believes it is time to reconsider the doctrine of Scripture. In reconsidering the doctrine of Scripture, Sparks is not concerned with the tensions and contradictions he sees in the Bible. Instead he is concerned with the "texts of terror" (p. 6). Throughout the book, Sparks addresses what he refers to as the dark side of Scripture. He does this in a variety of ways. First, he discusses creation and the problem of evil and follows that with a discussion of Christology. In these chapters, he draws an analogy between creation and the doctrine of Scripture. Creation is good, but fallen because of human actions, and is in need of redemption. He cautions against those who would draw an analogy between Christology and the doctrine of Scripture.

Sparks then spends the next seven chapters discussing Scripture. It is in these chapters that he lays out the problem of Scripture and his proposal to better understand the Bible. He refers to his approach as providential adoption, and likens it to accommodation but with some nuance. He believes that "the human authors of Scripture were colluding partners in the act of accommodation" and that "*all* Scripture is accommodated discourse" because it is the divine speaking to humanity (pp. 53–54). Since accommodation seems more divinely active, Sparks prefers the term "adoption" and explains this by saying that "God has canonically *adopted* human authors as his speakers and ... in doing so, he has permitted these authors—fallen as they were—to write the sorts of things that ancient fallen people would write about their enemies" (p. 54).

In his final three chapters, Sparks addresses issues of biblical and theological interpretation. In doing this, he discusses how one can glean theology beyond the Bible and gives some guidelines for theological interpretation.

Before beginning my critique, I must say there were a few things that I deeply appreciated about this book. First, the so-called texts of terror have not been dealt

with adequately by many, and the author's concern for understanding these texts is admirable. Second, while he does not hold to biblical inerrancy, his affinity for Scripture is evident. His care for Scripture comes out best in the fifth chapter where he discusses the beauty of Scripture. Third, throughout the work, Sparks appeals to a history of believers, with the intent to stay within the fold of orthodoxy. Indeed, the book does not read like Sparks is trying to be sensational, but that he is deeply concerned and honestly seeking answers to difficult questions.

Despite these positive aspects, there are multiple concerns I have about the content of this book. Due to space limitations I have chosen to focus on two. First, Sparks's discussion of Christology is outside of the realm of orthodoxy. In the third chapter, Sparks cautions against drawing an analogy between Christology and the doctrine of Scripture. He cautions against this because he believes an orthodox understanding of Christology includes Jesus having a fallen/sinful nature. My critique is not on whether the analogy is apt, but that Sparks does not have an orthodox understanding of the person of Christ. Sparks seems to understand this when he notes that "early Christian tradition denied that Jesus shared in our fallen nature" (pp. 24–25). Furthermore, within most confessions and statements of faith, a fallen/sinful nature necessitates the action of sin. This is also taught plainly in Rom 5:12. By these quick proofs alone it can be shown that Sparks does not hold to an orthodox understanding of the nature of Christ. Another problem is that he says that Christ's fallen nature affected his teachings. In saying this he notes, "Orthodoxy only demands that Jesus was sinless, not that his teachings were wholly insulated from the human condition" (p. 27). The difficulty here is in reconciling how Jesus could teach something that is incorrect, but still be without sin. In the end, we are left with a Jesus who simply taught "the theology of a first-century Jew" that was "limited in its vision" (p. 27). With these two claims—that Jesus had a fallen nature and that he taught erroneously—Sparks devastates Christology.

Second, Sparks's methodology is problematic for at least two reasons. First, there is a sense in which it assumes people today are somehow more enlightened and civilized than the biblical authors. His methodology assumes we will be able to see terror in the texts of Scripture that were not obvious to the biblical writers. This seems strange since within the last hundred years, the world has witnessed and in some cases overlooked some of the greatest human atrocities. Second, Sparks does not provide a clear way to discern which parts of Scripture are good and which parts need to be redeemed. This leaves readers with the need to parse the Bible as they see fit. The end result is that we are left with a canon within a canon and no way to definitively arbitrate what is authoritative.

Despite the few positives present in this book, I cannot recommend it for a wide readership. It may serve as profitable reading for the discerning graduate student or the biblical scholar. For a wider readership I would instead recommend Gregory Beale's *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Crossway, 2008).

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What the Bible Really Tells Us: The Essential Guide to Biblical Literacy. By T. J. Wray. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011, 247 pp., $24.95.

Biblical illiteracy has become a cultural norm for twenty-first-century America and Europe. In light of this reality, Dr. T. J. Wray has tried to provide readers with an "essential guide to Biblical literacy" and a "tried-and-true method … that leads to biblical competency" (p. 4). The content of the book, originally used in her undergraduate Bible introduction courses, is an orientation to biblical studies. Wray's goal is to help readers "understand the communications of the ancient Jewish and Christian communities whose struggles were so different from and so similar to our own" (p. 4).

In the first three chapters, Wray explores the problem of biblical illiteracy. In the first chapter, she encourages readers to take her "Sixty-Second Super-Easy Bible Quiz," which is designed to show readers just how inadequate their knowledge of the Bible is. Chapter 2 surveys the historical causes of biblical illiteracy, identifying Darwinism, the scientific revolution, and materialism as the major socio-philosophical movements which crippled it. Chapter 3 unpacks introductory matters necessary for reading the Bible: ANE history, geography, canon, authorship, and more.

Chapters 4–10 are Wray's effort to solve the problem of biblical illiteracy. In these chapters, Wray introduces her readers to seven themes in Scripture she considers particularly important: suffering, heaven and hell, money, sexuality, justice, the environment, and prayer and worship. She also models the hermeneutics she hopes her readers will replicate. Each chapter follows the same format. First, Wray lists a few common assumptions about the Bible's teaching on a particular topic. Then she analyzes each assumption with respect to the biblical data and either affirms or denies its validity.

Wray addresses common assumptions such as "the Bible tells us that good people go to Heaven and bad people go to hell" (pp. 87–103) and "the Bible says that sex is bad" (pp. 139–46). She also does not shy away from more controversial subjects like "the Bible says that men are more important than women" (pp. 133–39) and "the Bible says that it is a sin to be gay" (pp. 148–59). Wray's exegetical analyses are typically quite brief. Her practice is to survey each section of the canon, noting how different authors propose varying and often contradictory theological positions on each issue.

Wray's work has some significant problems. In accord with her historical-critical presuppositions, Wray analyzes each text as a unique literary unit isolated from every other text in the Bible. Further, Wray assumes that unless the biblical authors employ the exact same language to describe a topic, then they most likely held competing theological convictions. As a result, the Bible is portrayed as little more than a smorgasbord of conflicting theological ideas. Each author's (or more appropriately, each redactor's) theological convictions are contradictory to every other author. For example, when it comes to the subject of hell, Wray asserts that Mark believed in a temperate hell since his descriptions are not as detailed as the other synoptic gospels (pp. 94–95), Paul was an annihilationist since he never uses

the term "hell" (p. 94), and the author of Revelation is the only figure in the Bible who believes in the notion of hell since he describes it in such vivid detail (pp. 97–98).

Even interpreters who believe, as Wray does, that the Bible contradicts itself must deal with the fact that the authors of Scripture consciously reused language from earlier parts of the canon to describe their situation and shape the content of their writings. The prophets, for example, regularly employ the language of the Creation narrative, the Exodus, and particularly the Sinai covenant in order to set their own writings and ministry in the larger context of Israel's story. The Gospels likewise tell the stories of Jesus in such a way that they portray him as the climax and fulfillment of Israel's narrative. If "the best hermeneutics are grounded in solid exegesis," as Wray herself proposes (p. 56), then interpreters who disavow the unity of Scripture must at least read the Bible as self-consciously *connected* pieces of literature. Yet, Wray's analysis of the biblical texts smacks of atomism and ignores context. Thus, even though Wray submits that she has "tried to remain faithful to the thoughts, ideas, and intentions … of the biblical author or authors" (p. 7) she neither engages the authors on their own terms nor reads them as they want to be read.

Further, if Wray has in fact tried to produce a book that increases biblical literacy, why does she focus on money, sex, the environment, and other themes that play only small roles in the biblical storyline? While Wray treats matters that are no doubt of concern to her and her twenty-first-century audience, she fails to explain—or even mention—the major themes that arise out of the Scriptures themselves (e.g. creation, sin, exodus, covenant, kingdom, salvation, and messiah). Readers will not find Wray's book an "essential guide to Biblical literacy" but a survey of themes that are particularly interesting to Wray herself.

Methodological assumptions aside, there are also significant problems with the content of Wray's book. She fails to distinguish between Gnosticism and Christianity, referring to the Nag Hammadi library as non-canonical "Christian" works (p. 51). She asserts that Jesus was not the founder of Christianity (that honor belongs to Paul) but a "religious reformer" who was only seeking "to rectify some of the problems of Judaism" (p. 49). Yet, Wray never explains Jesus' self-proclaimed messianic identity or the early church's fracture with Judaism on account of those claims. She states that the Bible has "no specific stipulations for male virginity" (p. 146) prior to marriage, but fails to note any of the prohibitions against sexual immorality and fornication in the Pauline literature. She asserts that the Bible nowhere condemns homosexuality but fails to engage in any sort of meaningful exegesis of Romans 1 or 1 Corinthians 6. She proposes that Christians are never commanded to gather for public worship (p. 226) but fails to mention the most important ecclesiological texts in the NT, particularly Heb 10:25.

What the Bible Really Tells Us is not particularly helpful, nor is it a guide to greater biblical literacy. Wray's exegesis is sloppy, and her conclusions are poorly supported. She fails to familiarize her readers with the biblical storyline or with sound hermeneutical principles. Ultimately, Wray brushes aside the Bible's main themes, leaving behind for her readers only the principles and ideologies that she herself has read into the text.

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Formation of the Bible: The Story of the Church's Canon. By Lee Martin McDonald. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012, 192 pp., $24.95 paper.

Lee McDonald, President Emeritus of Acadia Divinity School, has written extensively on canon formation, having authored or edited six different books on the subject in addition to other scholarly publications. In his new book *Formation of the Bible*, he provides a popular-level introduction to the subject. The book is similar in content to several other Bible introductions available, but provides a contribution to the field in its brevity (166 pp. of text), incorporation of the latest scholarship, and unique perspective. McDonald makes clear that his goal for this book is "to fill an important need in churches" (p. xi). That is, his primary audience consists of "laypersons and others who are *beginning* their study of the Bible and even those more advanced in their understanding of it .... This volume is *not* for biblical scholars" (p. 8). He maintains this pastoral tone throughout the book. McDonald also states that he is presenting the story of the Bible without reference to the role of the Holy Spirit in the canonical process. Not that he denies the Spirit's role, rather, he is writing the story of the Bible from a historical perspective, not a theological one (p. 8).

The book contains an introduction and eight chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of what the Bible is and how the terms "canon" and "Scripture" were conceptually understood in the ancient world. Chapter 2 describes the origin of the OT, while chapters 3–4 discuss how the OT canon was formed in both Jewish and Christian communities. Chapter 5 relates the story of the origin and canonization of the NT. Chapter 6 provides the reader with a brief overview of scribal practices and technological developments from the biblical period through the advent of the printing press, discussing throughout the impact of these technologies and practices on the canonical process. Chapter 7 details the role of church councils and canon lists in the fixation of the biblical books. McDonald then concludes with a short epilogue that addresses the relationship between the canon and the Church today.

While dealing evenhandedly with different perspectives on how the process of canonization occurred, McDonald argues for his own interpretation of the evidence throughout. Regarding the OT canon, McDonald avers that the Torah was recognized as canonical at least by the time of the translation of the LXX c. 280 BC (p. 40). The Dead Sea Scrolls provide evidence that the OT canon was not fixed

during the time of Jesus (p. 43). In line with recent scholarship, McDonald does not believe the counsel at Jamnia closed the canon for the Jews. Rather, the earliest evidence of a closed canon for the Jews dates from the second century-text *b. Baba Batra* 14b (pp. 51–52). For Christians, the canonization of the OT was a longer process. McDonald believes that while early Christians used the OT as Scripture from the beginning of their existence, there was not a fixed OT canon for the church until the fourth or fifth century (p. 63). Indeed, given the diversity between Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant canons, there is still not unanimity in the church today on the scope of the OT canon (p. 64).

Regarding the NT canon, McDonald argues that the process of canonization did not begin until the mid- to late second century with the Gospels and Paul, although they were used as Scripture before then (pp. 88–89). The NT canon was effectively closed by the middle of the fourth century (p. 105).

McDonald is able to date the conclusion of the canonical process later than many other scholars by refusing to rely on "faulty assumptions" commonly made in this discussion (p. 25). These are as follows: if an ancient writer claimed a book was sacred Scripture, all other writers of the same era believed the same (p. 25); "early Christians responded to the second-century heresies by producing a fixed or set collection of sacred scriptures" (p. 26); "whenever an ancient writer cited ... a particular text, that text must be regarded by that writer as sacred Scripture" (p. 27); "the total number of books cited by the early Church fathers equals their canon" (p. 28). When one does not rely on these assumptions, but instead looks at the evidence more broadly, it becomes difficult to affirm an early canon.

Formation of the Bible is well written and presents a wealth of helpful information on the story of the Bible in a brief, non-technical format. Additionally, the book includes many helpful charts and tables. For example, table 4 displays nineteen different Christian lists of the OT canon side by side (pp. 82–86). The book is also brimming with wise and informed insights on the canonization process that reflect a lifetime of scholarship devoted to this area of study.

Since this book is aimed at the laity and beginning Bible students, more theological reflection on the implications of his survey of the history of the Bible would have been beneficial. The epilogue where he begins to address these issues suffers from brevity (7 pp.). For example, he states, "If the biblical canon continues to call us to a life of transforming faith, offers to us an identity as the people of God, offers hope in this life and the next, and provides guidance for living today, then it has continuing validity" (p. 162). This is the type of statement that raises questions about the role and authority of Scripture in the life of the church that are not ultimately resolved.

Even if one does not agree with all of the arguments or perspectives in the book, McDonald has filled a gap by providing an engaging and informative book on the formation of the Bible that will surely lead many to further study and reflection in this important area.

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Law, Power, and Justice in Ancient Israel. By Douglas A. Knight. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011, 328 pp., $40.00.

Author Douglas A. Knight is Drucilla Moore Buffington Professor of Hebrew Bible and Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University. He also is the general editor of the Library of Ancient Israel. This series publishes works that use diverse methodologies and draw on multiple disciplines to investigate social surroundings and historical processes in ancient Israel. It consists of nine books, and this book about the legal systems at work among the people of ancient Israel during the Iron Age is the latest one. The author uses archaeological data and comparative historical evidence to substantiate his reconstruction of the legal systems used in villages, cities and states, and cultic settings.

In the introduction, Knight states that his method is to look at ancient Israelite society from the modern sociological approach, not focusing on kings and dynasties, but on ordinary people, social norms, and societal systems. The author emphasizes that the legal systems in Israel were not developed as an extension of Mosaic Law, but came into being through a gradual process of interactions between different power groups. He applies the hermeneutics of suspicion and recuperation. The former came from postmodernism; there is no truth and justice, but different perspectives and hidden agendas. The latter came from hypothesizing or speculation, using limited data to reconstruct the possible scenario. Knight admits uncertainty exists in reconstruction.

Part 1, "The Dimensions of Law," has four chapters that develop the method and approach to be used in Part 2. Chapter 1 differentiates between Israelite law and biblical law. The author claims that biblical law given in the Pentateuch was written very late as literature and was not the law the Israelites used. The legal systems in use are called Israelite laws. Knight gives a summary about the usual classifications of biblical law into Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, Holiness Code, Priestly Code, and Decalogue. He disagrees with the postulated historical periods associated with these different codes and raises questions about these standard historical hypotheses. Knight's main concern is that these biblical laws are just literature, not the actual laws practiced in the ancient Israel. His assumes the Hebrew Bible includes only those laws and traditions the biblical authors preferred, and therefore compiled. He appeals to the principle of Critical Legal Studies that all law is politics.

In chapter 2, "The Power of Law," the author discusses general theory about law. Because of the need for social order and control, law came into existence. Laws are written to resolve conflicts, which can be classified as crime and tort. Knight emphasizes that Israelite law is a subsystem of the overall social system. It was not homogeneous, and should not be treated as only one subsystem. He warns that one should not try to apply biblical or Israelite law to our world without careful consideration. He questions that biblical law has uniformly high morality.

In chapter 3, "The Law of Power," Knight applies the principle that all law is politics, and discusses the power groups behind the various Israelite laws. He describes the social structure of power in ancient Israel. For every judicial setting, he

lists the primary and secondary power person or group. He then chooses to focus on three broad settings: the villages; the cities, states, and empires; and the cults. He acknowledges that the Hebrew Bible has influenced Western society to become more just and equal, but he maintains that it should not be shielded from suspicion and examination.

Chapter 4, "Speaking and Writing Law," discusses the evolutionary process of law formation from speaking to writing. Knight discusses legal vocabulary and forms in oral stage, then the emergence of written laws. Here he articulates his hypothesis that the biblical law was all written down in the Persian period after Darius.

Part 2, "Laws in Their Contexts," has three chapters that discuss the three legal systems. In chapter 5, "Law in the Villages," Knight begins with a description of village life, then laws relating to village life. He creates twelve criteria for identifying ancient village laws in the Hebrew Bible and other Southwest Asian legal documents. Then he discusses the substance of laws pertaining to village social and economic lives. In the end, he qualifies his reconstruction as plausible.

Chapter 6, "Law in the Cities and the States," depicts urban life in different kinds of cities and in various residential groups. Knight sets up fifteen criteria to determine which law was pertaining to the cities and states. He then enumerates laws related to social and economic lives in an urban setting. He concludes that the laws in the Bible were primarily those of the cities, the states, and the elites.

In chapter 7, "Law in the Cult," Knight describes cultic sites, artifacts, personnel, temple economy, and popular religion. He uses ten criteria to find cultic laws, and discusses cultic laws on membership, behavior, and duties and rights of priests and Levites. The author concludes that the world of the cult in ancient Israel is multi-faceted.

Finally, in the epilogue, Knight states his work as expanding the study of law in ancient Israel both horizontally and vertically: horizontally through inclusion of the study of ordinary village life; vertically through the means of ideological criticism, to discover the hidden agenda as to why laws were created. He incorporates the findings in archaeological research in his hypothesizing and exploring.

Overall, Knight succeeds in incorporating the archaeological finds about the ancient social life and legal documents in this social-historical study of the ancient Israelite law. He considers biblical laws in the Hebrew Bible as literature, but still uses them, through his criteria, to reconstruct the Israelite laws. He hypothesizes that biblical law was put into written form during the Persian period and is related to the legal traditions of Israel during the Iron Age. He admits that many of his conclusions are hypotheses and speculations. His approach is inter-disciplined and unique. His detailed analyses of legal systems in these areas are useful for one to gain more understanding of ancient Israel.

My first career was as a medical research statistician. Research involves data collecting and forming theory to explain the data. Creating hypotheses and models is necessary in order to make progress in acquiring new knowledge. However, in scientific research, one can design experiments to collect more data. With more data, the research conclusion can be verified more surely. Also, it is well known in medical research that experimental data is more reliable than observational data.

From observational data, one easily can be led to wrong conclusions. The hypotheses generated through observational data are prone to errors, as clearly exemplified by the Bible-code controversy (Drosnin, *The Bible Code*). Statistical methods are developed to collect better observational data and also to analyze them properly. All social-historical study of the ancient world is heavily dependent on archeological finds. Archaeological data is observational in nature, so it may not give us a good representation of the past human condition. One should bear in mind this limitation when hypothesizing or speculating about the ancient world.

I also subscribe to the ETS doctrinal standard affirming the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture. From this perspective, one accepts the Mosaic authorship or influence on the Pentateuch. This conservative approach, which is different from Knight's, proposes a different model or hypothesis to explain the observed data. It seems this traditional model can also fit the data well. Throughout Western history, people accepted this traditional model and believed the Bible is the Word of God. Due to this conviction, many benefits and reforms resulted, and better society and human lives emerged.

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The Rhetoric of Remembrance: An Investigation of the "Fathers" in Deuteronoy. By Jerry Hwang. Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures 8. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012, xiv + 290 pp., $39.50.

Siphrut, Eisenbrauns's series devoted to OT literature and theology, has thus far generated a number of remarkably insightful monographs. In its most recent release, *The Rhetoric of Remembrance*, Jerry Hwang offers an analysis of Deuteronomy's "nearly fifty references to the אָבוֹת, the 'fathers' of Israel" (p. 3). By studying the uses of the word "fathers," Hwang endeavors to pave new ground for understanding the complex narrative chronology and theology in Deuteronomy.

As Hwang outlines it in his introduction, the more recent controversy over the word "fathers" has divided scholars into basically two camps, represented by Thomas Römer and Norbert Lohfink, respectively. Römer provided the catalyst for the debate in his published dissertation of 1990, where he attempted to parse out the redactional layers of "fathers" in Deuteronomy. Römer concluded that the term basically referred to the Exodus generation, and that references to the patriarchs were later additions. The following year, Lohfink penned a volume in direct response to Römer where he argued that the first use of "fathers" in Deuteronomy (1:8), which explicitly refers to the patriarchs, must govern our interpretation of all subsequent uses. As is so often the case, the first voices set the sides for the subsequent debate.

Hwang takes a markedly different tack in *Rhetoric*. As his title indicates, he is interested not in the fruit of redactional investigations, but in asking questions of the text *as it stands*. In other words, Hwang examines the different uses of "fathers"

not in order to correct one use or another, but to assess them as the panoply of variegated forces from the pen of Deuteronomy's final redactor.

In his investigation, Hwang gives significant space to redactional analyses before offering his own. This approach raises the stakes because if Hwang can demonstrate the superior interpretation of rhetorical analysis over redactional criticism, he is poised not only to redirect this particular debate, but also to cast a significant vote in favor of rhetorical hermeneutics.

The investigation divides the occurrences of "fathers" into three categories, which reflect three distinct critical conversations. The first looks at "fathers" in the context of land promises; the second examines the "God of the fathers" and the divine promises; and the last looks at the "fathers" and the divine-human covenant. All three parts converge in his conclusion: Hwang finds that Deuteronomy depicts "Israel in all its generations as a corporate entity that is bound with a single covenant that YHWH made with the 'fathers,'" and is the rightful heir to the Promised Land (p. 232).

Rhetoric is a minimally revised Ph.D. thesis, and as such it is heavy sledding for the ordinary reader. But having tasted the power of rhetoric, Hwang offers a discussion that is stimulating by anyone's perspective. His lucid style and punchy quips render a rather dense subject palatable for most readers, though still on the heavy side.

Hwang's analysis is thorough. He introduces each section at the level of Deuteronomy's multifarious uses of significant words and phrases. From here, he follows the most relevant voices in the critical conversation, and he demonstrates how their analyses, which are ubiquitously diachronic, portray the final redactor as a sloppy and not particularly effective pundit of legalism. Then, Hwang guides the reader through the same sections of Deuteronomy and points out the intended effect of each nuance upon its audience. For example, in chapter 7, after reviewing the critical conversation surrounding the divine-human covenant in Deuteronomy, Hwang writes: "Although Perlitt argues that Deuteronomy 4 is primarily an exposition of covenant stipulations, closer examination reveals that this chapter contains far more imaginative speech-acts about Yhwh's gracious relationship with the 'fathers' and the present generation than actual commands" (p. 183).

On the one hand, Hwang demonstrates the chronological arrogance and ignorance of his dialogue partner who has reduced Deuteronomy 4 to a law code. On the other hand, Hwang introduces a far more nuanced lens for reading the text, which reveals a sophisticated perlocutionary utterance that transcends the level of pure information (or stipulation) in order to form a specific *ethos* and *telos* driven by a narrative appropriation on the part of its audience.

By tipping his hat toward speech-act theory in the above quote and in a few other places, Hwang reveals the philosophy of language that undergirds his entire study. He does not argue for the theory explicitly, and he only refers to it here because the conversation of scholarship has already treaded those waters. However, Hwang's delicate readings resemble those of the finest speech-act philosophers down to the very jots and tittles of their style. Even in his fine blend of smooth sentences, unassuming jabs at opponents, and fastidiously sensitive analyses, one

hears regular echoes of J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words*. Furthermore, Hwang's initial question could be easily restated in speech-act terms as: What is the author of Deuteronomy *doing* with his various uses of the word "fathers?"

The fact that Hwang conceals the enormity of his debt to speech-act theory is significant for at least two reasons. First, he does not wed himself to a particular philosophy of language, and he thereby is not constrained to demonstrate its veracity at the outset. As such, Hwang is allowed interact freely with the text of Deuteronomy, rather than through an overtly ideological lens, thus demonstrating the power of speech-act analysis on the basis of its results.

Second, by showing the superiority of speech-act theory in comparison with other methods of textual investigation, Hwang invites readers from both conservative and critical camps to rally around his rhetorical analysis without giving them any extra baggage. On the one hand, Hwang allows conservatives, who have historically viewed speech-act with some degree of suspicion, to find in it an ally against other critical analyses that question basic conservative assumptions. On the other hand, Hwang's critical readership can also appreciate the superiority of rhetorical criticism over competing methods without assenting to conservative accounts of biblical authorship.

In short, Hwang serves up a delectably amicable meal for all of his readers, and the net result is indeed the seminal work for which he aims. Hwang successfully reveals earlier analyses to be reductionistic and overall jejune readings of the text as it has come down to us. As he demonstrates, previous readings assume a highly legalistic backdrop for Deuteronomy's composition, combined with a careless redactor who has placed little value on the consistency or coherence of his final product. As the old adage goes, "You get out what you put in." That is, if we assume that Deuteronomy was composed by a primitive Pharisee, our results will likely confirm that assumption.

Probably the greatest virtue of Hwang's new monograph is its exemplary sophisticated reading of Deuteronomy. By asking what the author is doing with his choice of words, Hwang unveils a document that dynamically calls each generation of the people of God to appropriate the *Sitz im Leben* of Israel on the plains of Moab as its own. The conflation and evolution of the word "fathers" within Deuteronomy takes its place among the equally fluid use of words like "today" and "you/us" as the rhetoric through which the past becomes present for each new audience.

Every Pentateuchal scholar would benefit from this volume. The bibliography alone would warrant its purchase, but the hypothesis and execution are equally (if not more) impressive. My only reservation about *Rhetoric* is that Hwang overstates the impact of his conclusion. While the book paves the way for rethinking the theological and narrative aims of Deuteronomy, Hwang's debates with other scholarship limit his ability to develop these thoughts fully. Vast questions remain unanswered. For example, does Deuteronomy implicitly retain its dynamic authority over Christians? Furthermore, is Deuteronomy's trans-temporal rhetoric to be taken as a model or as an irreproducible and unique style? And what are the hermeneutical ramifications of Deuteronomy's ontology-defying use of language upon

common assumptions about a coherent biblical metaphysic? These are just a few of the many questions raised by Hwang's insightful volume. Hopefully, there will be many more such works in the future.

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A Gracious and Compassionate God: Mission, Salvation and Spirituality in the Book of Jonah. By Daniel C. Timmer. New Studies in Biblical Theology 26. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011, 201 pp., $22 paper.

The book of Jonah is a book full of surprises. Since the Enlightment, many people have thought that the miracles recorded in this book never happened. Until then, nobody within the church questioned the historicity of the events recorded in Jonah.

In the series New Studies in Biblical Theology, edited by D. A. Carson, a new book on Jonah has appeared that analyzes the content and message of the book of Jonah. Its author, Daniel C. Timmer, associate professor of OT at Reformed Theological Seminary, is not ashamed to defend the historical reliability of Jonah. He defines its genre as didactic history. The special focus of his study is the relation of the book of Jonah to the unfolding redemptive history and its Christocentric orientation. He shows that under the OT dispensation, sometimes—as in the case of Jonah—individuals in Israel were called to bring a message to the Gentiles. One of the new things of the NT dispensation is that the command to evangelize all peoples is given to the people of God as a corporate entity. The promise given to Abraham that in his seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed finds its ultimate fulfillment in the proclamation and application of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I completely agree with the author that the final aim of the book of Jonah was to bring about a spiritual change in all its readers. The primary message of the book of Jonah is a message of repentance. "To turn" is one of the leading expressions of the book of Jonah. It is used not only to describe the change of attitude of the inhabitants of Nineveh, but also of the fact that God does not destroy Nineveh as Jonah had proclaimed he would do. God turns away from his fierce anger. In distinction from man's way, God's turning has not to do with sin or evil, but with his compassion for repenting sinners. God's turning is not in contraction with his unchangeable nature and counsel. He changes not his will, but according to his counsel he wills or desires change. Readers of the book of Jonah are called to imitate the living God, the God of Israel who is a gracious and compassionate God.

On one point I disagree with the author. He thinks the prayer of Jonah recorded in Jonah cannot be seen as an indication of real change in the prophet. In this connection, he underscores that we do not find in this prayer a clear confession of guilt and sin. I would argue that the crying of Jonah to God is at least an implicit confession of sin. The fact that the word of the Lord came to him a second time makes clear that the Lord still wanted to use Jonah in his service. We cannot con-

clude from Jonah 4 that Jonah's prayer was insincere; rather, this chapter makes clear the change in Jonah was only partial. What he needed was further repentance.

We see the same in the life of the disciples. The Gospels portray them as sincere, albeit immature, followers of Christ. A true follower of Christ will pray until his last breath: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God" (Jer 31:18). While on earth, we always bear the image of Christ, but always too little. The book of Jonah is an appeal not only to unbelievers but also to believers to repent.

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Novum Testamentum Graece (Nestle-Aland). Edited by the Institute for New Testament Textual Research Münster/Westphalia under the direction of Holger Strutwolf. 28th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012, 94* + 890 pp., $45.99.

At the 2012 Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting held in Chicago, the latest edition of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*, or the Nestle-Aland Greek NT, was unveiled. This has been a long time coming—nineteen years to be exact. The Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (INTF) in Münster is behind this production and deserves accolades for its fine accomplishment. This is the first new edition of the Nestle-Aland text since the death of Kurt Aland, the founder of the institute.

Several gave presentations on the new Nestle-Aland text at SBL. Klaus Wachtel of INTF gave an overview of NA^{28}. In his lecture, he noted, *inter alia*, the following points: (1) The textual differences from the previous edition only occur in the Catholic Epistles. This is due to the fact that behind the scenes INTF has been doing exhaustive research on many variants in these letters and has produced the impressive *Editio Critica Maior* (ECM) series. These are the only books that have been thoroughly examined; hence, the changes to the text are only in these letters. A total of 34 textual changes have been made. (2) In these letters, the siglum Byz is used instead of the gothic M. (3) As INTF worked through the Catholic letters, they came to see much greater value in the Byzantine manuscripts than they had previously. In Wachtel's presentation, he noted that the NA^{27} displayed "prejudice against the Byzantine tradition" while the NA^{28} recognized the "reliability of the mainstream tradition." This is a welcome change in perspective, made possible because of exhaustive collations. (4) For the entire NT, the apparatus functions now as "a gateway to the sources" instead of the more restricted purpose of the previous edition "as a repository of variants."

The introduction to the new work adds much more information. Among these consider the following: (1) "[F]rom now on, the Nestle-Aland will not appear only as a printed book, but also in digital form" (p. 48*). This is more than what is already available in the digital copies of the NA^{27} that are part of the *Accordance* and *Logos* Bible software packages. For example, "Abbreviations, sigla and short Latin phrases in the apparatus are explained in pop-up windows. Above all, the digital

apparatus becomes a portal opening up the sources of the tradition, as it provides links to full transcriptions and, as far as possible, to images of the manuscripts included" (p. 48*).

(2) Gone are the "consistently cited witnesses of the second order"—that is, those witnesses that comprised the gothic M in NA27. Although this siglum is still used, its meaning has changed. Individual non-Byzantine witnesses that are part of the "majority text" (a term that means more than just the Byzantine witnesses in NA27; it is unclear exactly what this siglum means in NA28 since the formerly individually cited minuscule manuscripts belonging to the second order witnesses were considered *not* Byzantine) are now apparently cited explicitly, even if they agree with the Byzantine minuscules.

(3) Conjectures are no longer to be found in the Nestle-Aland apparatus. There were nearly 120 conjectures listed in the previous edition. Nevertheless, at Acts 16:12 the editors still print as the text a reading that is not found in any Greek manuscripts (Φιλίππους, ἥτις ἐστὶν πρώτης μερίδος τῆς Μακεδονίας πόλις).

(4) The thirty-four textual changes in the general letters are as follows:

	NA27	NA28/ECM
James 1:20	οὐκ ἐργάζεται	οὐ κατεργάζεται
James 2:3	ἐκεῖ ἢ κάθου	ἢ κάθου ἐκεῖ
James 2:4	οὐ διεκρίθητε	καὶ οὐ διεκρίθητε
James 2:15	λειπόμενοι	λειπόμενοι ὦσιν
James 4:10	κυρίου	τοῦ κυρίου
1 Peter 1:6	λυπηθέντες	λυπηθέντας
1 Peter 1:16	[ὅτι]	–
1 Peter 1:16	[εἰμι]	–
1 Peter 2:5	[τῷ]	–
1 Peter 2:25	ἀλλά	ἀλλ᾽
1 Peter 4:16	ὀνόματι	μέρει
1 Peter 5:1	οὖν	τούς
1 Peter 5:9	[τῷ]	–
1 Peter 5:10	[Ἰησοῦ]	–
2 Peter 2:6	ἀσεβέ[σ]ιν	ἀσεβεῖν
2 Peter 2:11	παρὰ κυρίου	παρὰ κυρίῳ
2 Peter 2:15	καταλείποντες	καταλιπόντες
2 Peter 2:18	ὀλίγως	ὄντως
2 Peter 2:20	[ἡμῶν]	–
2 Peter 3:6	δι᾽ ὧν	δι᾽ ὅν
2 Peter 3:10	εὑρεθήσεται	οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται
2 Peter 3:16	ἐπιστολαῖς	ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς
2 Peter 3:16	στρεβλοῦσιν	στρεβλώσουσιν
2 Peter 3:18	[ἀμήν]	–
1 John 1:7	δέ	–
1 John 3:7	τεκνία	παιδία

1 John 5:10	ἐν ἑαυτῷ	ἐν αὐτῷ
1 John 5:18	αὐτόν	ἑαυτόν
2 John 5	καινὴν γράφων σοι	γράφων σοι καινήν
2 John 12	πεπληρωμένη ᾖ	ᾖ πεπληρωμένη
3 John 4	τῇ ἀληθείᾳ	ἀληθείᾳ
Jude 5	πάντα ὅτι [ὁ] κύριος ἅπαξ	ἅπαξ πάντα ὅτι Ἰησοῦς
Jude 18	[ὅτι]	–
Jude 18	[τοῦ]	–

What can we say about this new edition of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*? First, it is fascinating to see the sea-change going on in Münster. The text of the Catholic Epistles is analyzed on an entirely different basis than the rest of the NT. Gerd Mink of INTF has been developing a new textual method called the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method or CBGM. This has been applied only to the general letters to date, but has been in the background of INTF's work for decades. If this method proves to be worthy of support by other textual critics, it will become another tool—to *supplement* reasoned eclecticism—that scholars can use to gain greater certainty about the wording of the autographs.

Second, this "new" approach nonetheless has produced some surprising results. Perhaps the most controversial reading in the text of NA^{28} is found in 2 Pet 3:10: οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται. This is not found in any Greek witnesses. NA^{27} printed as the text reading simply εὑρεθήσεται. The textual problem is extraordinarily difficult, and even though εὑρεθήσεται has solid support (א B K P 0156^{vid} 323 1241 1739^{txt}) a variety of variants sprang up most likely because of the difficulty this reading presented. It is thus surprising that INTF has gone with the easier reading.

Another significant change is found in Jude 5. NA^{27} reads πάντα ὅτι [ὁ] κύριος ἅπαξ, while NA^{28} has ἅπαξ πάντα ὅτι Ἰησοῦς. The key difference is Ἰησοῦς for κύριος. The text now says that *Jesus* saved his people out of Egypt and later destroyed the unbelievers. The NET Bible and the ESV also have the reading "Jesus." As the primary textual critic for the NET, I felt that this reading would be the most controversial of any that we adopted—*if* people would ever read Jude! However, it seemed to raise no eyebrows at all. One of my students at Dallas Seminary, Philipp Bartholomä, examined the issue in much greater detail, concluding that Ἰησοῦς was the preferred reading (see "Did Jesus Save the People out of Egypt? A Reexamination of a Textual Problem in Jude 5," *NovT* 50 [2008] 143–58).

Third, the massive effort needed to do exhaustive analysis of the witnesses that the ECM displays has resulted in only the Catholic Letters receiving a facelift in the apparatus at this stage. NA^{28} thus offers two different kinds of apparatus—one for the Catholic Epistles and one for the rest of the NT. This will most likely be confusing to many users, but in order for the edition to come out in a timely fashion this approach was needed. When Acts, John, and the *corpus Paulinum* receive their own ECM volumes, newer editions of the Nestle-Aland text will no doubt be published. Until then, NA^{28} will have to do, even though it presents itself as an unfinished work. Meanwhile, Münster will need to generate more literature explain-

ing CBGM in a clear and convincing way to show users that CBGM is a bona fide tool to help in determining the autographic text. (See now Mink's essay "The Coherence-Based Genealogical Method—What Is It About?" at http://www.uni-muenster.de/INTF/Genealogical_method.html; Gerd Mink, "Contamination, Coherence, and Coincidence in Textual Transmission," in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament* [ed. Michael Holmes and Klaus Wachtel; Leiden: Brill, 2009]; further, the revised edition of *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the* Status Quaestionis [ed. Bart Ehrman and Michael Holmes; Leiden: Brill, 2012] has extensive discussions of CBGM in the chapters by Wachtel, Geer-Racine, Epp, and Wasserman.)

Fourth, this new text has actually taken a step backward in cooperative effort across "denominational" lines (in a broad sense). The previous edition was edited by three Protestants (Kurt Aland, Barbara Aland, Bruce Metzger), one Roman Catholic (Carlo Martini), and one Greek Orthodox scholar (Ioannes Karavidopoulos). The latest edition lists as its editors only "the Institute for New Testament Textual Research … under the direction of Holger Strutwolf." This is a surprising development, since INTF in the last several years has been partnering with other institutes such as the University of Birmingham (in work on the Gospel of John) and the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (in utilizing CSNTM's digital images for much manuscript data). Thus, collaboration is certainly going on, while the final decisions about the text are solely in the hands of Münster. One can certainly hope that the text in future editions of Nestle-Aland will not continue to be the provenance solely of INTF.

Overall, the NA^{28} is a welcome addition for students of the Greek NT—not only a welcome addition, but a necessary one for those who wish to stay current on the critically-reconstructed text of the NT.

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The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible. By James C. VanderKam. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xiv + 188 pp., $25.00 paper.

James VanderKam has written numerous works on the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) and related literature. Many readers may be familiar with his excellent *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). Being an expert on Second Temple Jewish literature, VanderKam treats works such as *Enoch* and *Jubilees* as well as some apocryphal books. Such writings fit within his desire to show that certain works that did not make it into the Hebrew Bible were nonetheless considered authoritative in earlier times. Moreover, they also included interpretations of biblical books. The *Book of Giants*, for example, was considered authoritative by the Manicheans and also "belongs in a tradition that attempted to justify God's seemingly extreme act of sending the flood and did so" with reference to Gen 6:1–4 (p. 83).

After a general overview of the biblical scrolls and their value for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, VanderKam explicates various ways in which other scrolls interpret biblical texts, including the *pesharim* (commentaries) and other types of interpretation. The book devotes a chapter to how the interpreters from Qumran viewed the authority of various works, whether those were or were not included in the Hebrew Bible. In his discussion about the DSS and the canon of the OT he finds more variety of viewpoints among the DSS and roughly contemporary sources than the uniformity emphasized by R. Beckwith (*The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985]). A separate chapter is devoted to selected books known prior to the discovery of the DSS that did not make it into the Hebrew Bible but may have been considered authoritative by the Qumran community. Two notable examples are *Jubilees* and *The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sira* (Ecclesiasticus).

A chapter on the Essenes, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees considers these groups in relation to the NT and to early Judaism. In his final two chapters VanderKam discusses the NT and the DSS. There he treats first the Gospels and then Acts and Paul. As his opening move he disavows the thought that any of the DSS are Christian texts, thus rejecting the views of B. Thiering (*The Gospels and Qumran* [Sydney: Theological Explorations, 1981]) and R. Eisenman (*James the Brother of Jesus* [New York: Viking, 1997]). The headings in the chapter on the Gospels include "Messiahs" (esp. a priestly Messiah and a Davidic Messiah), "The Works of the Messiah" (esp. the issue of the Messiah raising the dead), "Scriptural Interpretation" (esp. Isa 40:1), "Legal Matters" (esp. healing or rescuing on the Sabbath), and "Rebuking" (esp. church practices compared with Qumran practices). For Acts 2–4 he shows how both the early Christian community and the Qumran community held goods in common, and he notes interesting connections between Pentecost and Sinai. He points out that the DSS help us to understand how Paul interpreted Scripture and what he meant by "the works of the Law." The textually questioned passage of 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 comes under scrutiny because of parallels in language with wording from some DSS. VanderKam concludes about it that "ideas and terms now best known from the scrolls and related literature were more widely available for use in the first century C.E. than in Essene communities alone" (p. 163).

VanderKam is careful to let the reader know through a footnote where to find arguments for the views that he disputes. He is also meticulous in his choice of language, sometimes almost unnecessarily so. Is it really helpful to enclose the word *biblical* within quote marks every time it refers to a Qumran manuscript? That reflects his view that the term applies to a later perspective than the period of the DSS. It could make sense, though, to define a scroll as *biblical* in the sense that it contains the text of what is now in the Bible. VanderKam gives only grudging assent to the term *biblical* because of his view that there was no closed canon or list of authoritative books at the time when the scrolls at Qumran were copied or composed. The same evidence he marshals, however, could be interpreted to mean that at least some communities had such a list in mind even if not written down (cf. R. Beckwith). He does admit that "a *concept* of authority was afloat" in that era (p. 51)

and also notes that Josephus was aware of "a Jewish canon" by "the 90s C.E." (p. 58). It is unlikely that Josephus invented the concept, and surely it must pre-date him, probably extending into at least the latter part of the era of Qumran.

The discussion about the threefold division of the canon known from the Hebrew Bible seemed especially helpful. The "Psalms" mentioned in Luke 24:44 likely refer to the book of Psalms itself, according to VanderKam, rather than to the Writings. The threefold division found in the Hebrew Bible may be no more than a classification that arose in the second century or later. New to me was that the often quoted reference from 4QMMT to "the book of Moses and the books of the Prophets and (the writings of) David" is probably based on a misreading of the text or at best a highly uncertain reading (pp. 64–66).

VanderKam views the text of the Hebrew Bible as considerably fluid in the period of the DSS, and he agrees with E. Tov (*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001]) that the standardized text that emerged in the later period was an accident of preservation after the destruction of the Second Temple. He supplies interesting examples for his conclusions, but I wonder if a more nuanced view might include also the factor of popular versus official texts.

As for the community of Qumran, VanderKam notes that those who produced the sectarian texts had more in common with the Essenes than with any other group. One of the more interesting discussions in the book concerns the meaning of the term *Essenes*. VanderKam spends some five pages defending his derivation (which he admits is not a new idea) from *the doers (of the Torah)* (עושי התורה). I found his conclusion plausible linguistically, and it would represent a term that actually occurs in the Qumran documents. It points to "the centrality of the Torah in the life and teaching of the people behind the scrolls" (p. 104). He also details several lines of evidence that demonstrate that the Pharisees were the main opponents mentioned in the Qumran scrolls.

Although he accepts that the Qumran community had a concept of two Messiahs (Davidic and Priestly), VanderKam takes issue with Vermes (*The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* [New York: Penguin, 1997]) regarding the Messiah in the *Rule of the Congregation* (1Q28a 2:11–14). Vermes translated from one of the lines, "When God engenders (the Priest-)Messiah." VanderKam prefers something like, "When God reveals the messiah," meaning the messiah of Israel rather than a priestly messiah (p. 126). Neither translation makes explicit that the word *God* also has to be supplied in the text, but that seems obvious enough from the context. A chart on page 129 lists the parallels in reference to the Messiah between Isaiah 36, Isaiah 61, Luke 7, and 4Q521. It would have been helpful to note here that the Septuagint refers to "recovery of sight for the blind" at Isa 61:1.

VanderKam observes that if the reference to Jesus Christ and the resurrection is removed from Acts 4:32–37, then "it could have described the groups behind the *Community Rule*" (p. 145). That seems overstated. At Qumran the practice was mandated as part of a lengthy procedure by which the candidate became accepted into the community, whereas in Acts it appears more as a spontaneous act on the part of the new believers. The origin of the practice among the early church likely traces

to the calls that Jesus made for others to sell their possessions and give to the poor (e.g. Mark 10:21).

VanderKam's book gives authoritative and up-to-date information on the DSS and the Bible. The few caveats I expressed above hardly detract from the importance of the book. Combined with his *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (2d ed.), it would make an excellent text for various courses on biblical backgrounds or on the DSS. The topics sometimes receive technical treatment, but the language is generally suited for a broad audience that would include educated laity as well as pastors and scholars. It has an extensive bibliography (more than 300 entries, over thirty of which are VanderKam's own previous works), detailed explanatory footnotes, and an index. VanderKam is to be commended for making this significant information readily available to students of the Bible.

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Who is Jesus? Disputed Questions and Answers By Carl E. Braaten. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011, vii + 147 pp., $20.00 paper.

In the introduction to the book *Who is Jesus?* Carl Braaten says he is returning to the subject of his doctoral dissertation in which he agreed with Martin Kähler that the search for the historical Jesus has been a failure and that the only real Jesus is the one presented in the Gospels. With this introduction one might expect the book to be a thoroughgoing critique of historical Jesus studies, but it turns out that the imagined failure of historical Jesus studies was primarily the focus only of the first chapter. The other seven chapters each ask and answer questions relating to faith and exclusivism, Jesus' death and resurrection, the church, and even politics.

In chapter 1, Braaten asks what we can know about Jesus of Nazareth. In this section he argues against what he calls "negative critics" (the Jesus Seminar fringe) and "positive critics" (evangelical and mainline scholars). He contends that the search for the historical Jesus "presupposes that the real Jesus has been lost and needs to be found" (p. 3). While that may be true of "negative critics," it is not true of all Jesus scholars, some of whom seek to show that faith in the Jesus of the Gospels is well grounded historically.

Braaten acknowledges that critics of the Jesus Seminar—positive critics like Sanders, Wright, Dunn, Witherington, Bauckham, Evans, Meier, et al.—have written things about Jesus that are beneficial. Nevertheless Braaten points out that historical studies are always tentative in nature and therefore can never be the basis of faith. In a section about the positive critics, Braaten writes that Christian scholars "should not claim for its results finality of meaning for faith and doctrine" (p. 24). He seems unaware that none of the positive critics are trying to substitute their historical studies for faith and doctrine.

Braaten seems to want an epistemological foundation for faith that is beyond all possible doubt. He thinks he has found this in the Gospels. Critics, however, are quite adept at doubting the Gospels. Since Christianity is a religion based on histor-

ical events, why would anyone think we would be immune to questions posed by historians? Why would we not want to demonstrate that our historical faith is on solid historical ground and is not just fideism? Braaten himself said, "The folly of fideism is to base faith on faith" (p. 32), but that seems like what he is advocating.

Braaten concludes that the "real Jesus" is not the result of some historical quest but is, rather, "the living risen Christ remembered first by eyewitnesses and then transmitted to following generations through Spirit-inspired manuscripts" (p. 25). Most historical Jesus scholars would be more precise in their definitions. Some would say that the "real Jesus" is the Jesus of Nazareth who lived in Galilee 2,000 years ago. We simply do not know everything the "real Jesus" said and did (John 21:25). The remembered Jesus—or some would say, the Christ of faith—is the Jesus we encounter in the Gospels. While evangelicals believe the Gospels contain an accurate remembrance, the Gospels do not contain a complete remembrance. The historical Jesus is the result of attempts to separate what we have reasonable evidence to believe based on historical methods alone, from what we must accept by faith. Braaten seems unaware that none of the "positive critics" are proposing that the church base its faith on historical Jesus studies rather than the Gospels.

In chapter 2, Braaten asks, "How Do Christians Come to Believe in Jesus?" Braaten says there are two available models: (1) one from Martin Luther; and (2) one from Marcus Borg and the Jesus Seminar. For Luther the only way to meet Jesus is through the preaching of the Word. For Borg the way to meet Jesus is to find him behind the Gospel texts. While it is true that Borg would say that we meet the historical Jesus through historical research, he would probably insist that we encounter the Christ of faith through prayer, preaching, and the sacraments. It would be helpful for Braaten, therefore, to explain whether there is really much difference is between his "real Jesus" and Borg's "Christ of faith." Braaten then argues that "[i]t is a mistake to think that the results of historical research, whether conducted by conservative or liberal scholars, can verify or falsify the basic confessions that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ of God" (p. 45). Braaten seems unaware that Jesus scholars are not trying to prove that Jesus was the Christ. At best they may be trying to demonstrate that we have good historical evidence to conclude that Jesus thought and taught that he was the Christ, and that his earliest followers believed and taught this about him.

In chapter 3, Braaten asks whether Jesus rose from the dead. Braaten insists that historical criticism has established that the earliest Christians genuinely believed that Jesus had risen and, therefore, our belief in the resurrection is not just a blind leap. The argument is a bit puzzling in light of Braaten's attacks on historical Jesus studies and their value for apologetics. No other argument for the resurrection is given.

In chapter 4, Braaten asks why Christians believe that Jesus is God. Braaten argues that there is a "trajectory of sanctified imagination that starts with the memory of Jesus" then moves "to confession of Jesus as the crucified Messiah" and ends in the "language of worship" (p. 61). Braaten insists that "[t]he early Christians did not start their thinking with the high dogmatic Christology of Nicea and Chalcedon"; rather, they started with "what Jesus meant to them," and "ac-

complished for them" (p. 62). Braaten argues that Jesus' deity was only confessed after a long time and many controversies. While Braaten is technically correct that the earliest church did not speak of Jesus in terms of "the high dogmatic Christology of Nicea and Chalcedon," he might leave the impression that no one agreed on Jesus' deity until after a long time and many controversies. The writings of John and Ignatius alone are enough to dispute such a notion.

In chapter 5, Braaten asks whether Jesus is "the One and Only Way of salvation" (p. 75). He provides an excellent summary and critique of pluralism and argues for an exclusivist position, concluding that God's self-revelation in salvation history takes place only "through Christ and his Spirit at work through the church and its evangelistic mission to the nations" (p. 81).

In chapter 6, Braaten asks why Jesus had to die on the cross. After a good explanation of Luther's theology of the cross, Braaten summarizes several theories of the atonement and argues instead for a representative model of atonement in which "Christ suffered for us, but he did not suffer instead of us" (p. 106).

In chapter 7, Braaten asks whether Jesus was the founder of the Christian Church. Braaten says that Jesus expected that God was coming soon in power and glory, but his hopes and the hopes of his disciples were shattered on the cross. "A few of Jesus' friends," however, "interpreted his resurrection as the initial breakthrough of the kingdom" and that was the start of the church (p. 111). This seems to substitute a theory of church origins for the straightforward account provided in Acts, a strange position for someone to take whose whole proposal was that our faith is based on the Bible, not history.

The final chapter asks, "What Does Jesus Have to Do with Politics?" Braaten argues that Jesus expected God to establish his kingdom in the near future. When that did not happen, "a few of Jesus' friends projected upon the world an interpretation of his suffering and death in the light of his resurrection that would be heralded as 'good news'" (pp. 129–30). When Jesus never came back, the next generation of Christians had to deal with the question of how to live in the world. Citing H. Richard Niebuhr on five models Christians have historically used in relating to the world, Braaten argues for "The Way of Critical Participation," based on Luther's theology (p. 134).

There was a lot about Braaten's book that was informational, uplifting, and edifying; nevertheless, the lack of precision made the read quite frustrating. Although the book included some footnotes, many of Braaten's assertions and criticisms were undocumented. Better documentation would strengthen the work and possibly answer some of my objections.

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How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels. By N. T. Wright. New York: HarperOne, 2012, xvii + 282 pp., $25.99.

N. T. Wright asserts that "most of the Western Christian tradition has simply forgotten what the gospels are really about" (p. ix). In *How Jesus Became King* he sets out to offer a reminder.

In part 1, Wright makes the case that the Gospels have, by in large, been misunderstood. The Gospels have been recast in light of Paul's epistles with the effect that we have in large part missed what the middle part of Jesus' life between his birth and then his death and resurrection was all about. According to Wright, in the Western Christian tradition, "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were used to support points you might get out of Paul, but their actual message had not been glimpsed, let alone integrated into a larger biblical theology in which they claimed to belong" (p. 9).

Part of the problem is that often the creeds of old, which go directly from Jesus' virgin birth to his death, as true as they are, have functioned wrongly. The creeds were written to safeguard doctrines that were not only essential but were being challenged by various heresies. The creeds were meant to function as safeguards but not teaching outlines. Therefore, when the list of early controversies became the syllabus, the church began to miss what the Gospels were all about.

Part 2 seeks to "adjust the volume" in order that readers can be freed from past distortions and hear the Gospels clearly. According to Wright, there are four dimensions or speakers (to keep with Wright's metaphor) of the Gospels that contribute to how we hear them. At times, individual speakers have either been turned up too loud or are barely audible, and it is not until they are appropriately balanced that the Gospels can be rightly heard.

First*, the Gospels are the climax of the story of Israel.* The story of Israel told in the OT is framed as an unfinished narrative. The OT narrative is one where the nation of Israel has gone from "glorious beginnings, rich vocations, and then horrible failure and exile" (p. 66). Wright demonstrates that the Gospels were written as this story's fulfillment—albeit a fulfillment that happened in an unexpected way. For Wright the problem is this story has mostly been ignored when contemporary readers approach the Gospels: "The implied backstory hasn't been the story of Abraham, of Moses, of David, of the prophets, it's been the story of Adam and Eve, of 'Everyman,' sinning and dying and needing to be redeemed" (p. 67).

Second*, the Gospels are the story of Jesus as the story of Israel's God.* In view of skepticism in the Western world and the challenge not only to "prove" God's existence but also "prove" the divinity of Jesus, Wright believes Christians have often answered this skepticism in such a way that they have failed to pick up on the subtle points the Gospels themselves are making. Wright is not denying the divinity of Jesus but rather questioning whether how people have often argued for his divinity has actually distorted what the Gospels are doing. Throughout the OT God intends to live among his people, but he often refuses to do so because of their sin. Yet in his mercy, God returns to his people. This is the pattern repeatedly seen through the OT, until finally in the face of rebellion and idolatry God abandons his people

to a foreign nation and deserts the temple. Even when some of his people are returned to the land and rebuild the temple, it is quite clear YHWH has not returned. Against this backdrop, the Gospels are telling the story of how God has climatically returned to his people through his Son.

Third, *the Gospels are the story of the launching of God's renewed people.* The Gospels are neither statements of the early church's faith nor merely neutral facts recorded by disinterested authors. Instead, the evangelists are telling the story of Jesus while aware that their stories function as the "foundational documents" for God's renewed people. In Wright's own words: "The gospels are, and were written to be, fresh tellings of the story of Jesus designed to be the charter of the community of Jesus' first followers and those who, through their witness, then and subsequently, have joined in and have learned to hear, see, and know Jesus in word and sacrament" (p. 125).

Fourth, *the Gospels are the story of the Kingdom of God clashing with Caesar.* Wright argues that the three previous dimensions point toward this final one. In the OT narrative, the future hope was that God would deliver his people and rule over the pagan nations. Furthermore, God throughout the OT shows himself to be far more powerful than the human-made gods of the pagans. Thus, it only makes sense that Jesus, representing Israel's God, would triumph over the nations and their gods. And if Jesus was launching the renewed people of God and was to be called Lord, the present first-century "Lord" (i.e. Caesar) would no doubt see this as a rival claim. This dimension of the Gospels, Wright laments, has almost been completely ignored.

In part 3, Wright argues that the division between what has been termed "kingdom Christians" and "cross Christians" is wrong. Once the four speakers of the Gospels are adjusted to what Wright sees as the appropriate volume, it becomes clear that the kingdom and the cross are inseparable. Wright includes several summarizing statements of how the kingdom and cross fit together:

1. "[T]he kingdom truly was inaugurated by Jesus in his active public career, during the time between his baptism and the cross…. The main theme [of the Gospels] is that, in and through Jesus the Messiah, Israel's God reclaims his sovereign rule over Israel and the world" (p. 240).

2. The "kingdom is radically defined in relation to Jesus' entire agenda of suffering, leading to the cross" (p. 241).

3. "[T]he kingdom that Jesus inaugurated, that is implemented through his cross, is emphatically *for* this world" (p. 241).

4. Though Western ideas of the cross have been bound up with the notion of dealing with sin so that one can enter into heaven, "the idea of messianic victory [achieved through the cross] as a fresh interpretation of an ancient Jewish theme is precisely what the four gospels have in mind" (p. 243).

5. Nevertheless, "Jesus, for them [i.e. the Gospels], is dying a penal death in place of the guilty, of guilty Israel, of guilty humankind. Through his death, the evangelists are telling their readers there will come the jubilee event, the great redemption, freedom from debts of every kind, which he had earlier announced and which is the central characteristic of the kingdom" (p. 243). However, "All this

makes the sense it makes not by playing 'substitution' off against 'representation,' as has so often been done, but through Jesus' role precisely as Israel's representative Messiah, through which he is exactly fitted to be the substitute for Israel and thence for the world" (p. 243).

6. "The four gospels leave us with the primary application of the cross not in abstract preaching about 'how to have your sins forgiven' or 'how to go to heaven' but in an agenda in which forgiven people are put to work, addressing the evils of the world in the light of the victory of Calvary" (p. 244).

In the final part of the book Wright closes by summarizing some of the major points and clarifying that his purpose has not been to offer ideas that would distort the great creeds. Instead, his desire has been to show that it is possible to read the great creeds in a "more fully biblical manner." In this last chapter, Wright demonstrates how one might read the Apostles' Creed with the ideas presented throughout the book providing the context.

Wright is an eloquent writer and has the ability to bring a point alive with a masterful analogy. Though this work was written at a more popular level, his magisterial academic works offer more details in support of many of his conclusions (see *The New Testament and the People of God* and *Jesus and the Victory of God*). At least at times, there has been a tendency among some to read other NT books back into the Gospels rather than understanding the Gospels in their immediate context and along their place in salvation history. Wright has challenged readers to hear the Gospels again in light of the OT Scriptures and the first-century context. Furthermore, he has challenged readers first to allow each evangelist to speak before going to a creed or a NT epistle to tell us what the Gospels are "really saying." For those who care about what the text is actually saying, these challenges to approach the Gospels with the historical and OT backdrop in place should be commended.

Nevertheless, Wright has a way of setting out his approach and conclusions as being altogether novel when they are less obviously so. To note just one example, he writes, "there is little evidence, after the first four or five centuries of the church, that the Jewish context of Jesus' public career was playing any role in theological or pastoral reflection" (p. 110). Indeed, often Wright is picking up themes that have been overlooked in some Western Christian traditions. However, one gets the feeling that Wright might, at times, be overplaying his hand: Has no one in the Western tradition said many of the same things Wright is saying?

Furthermore, Wright is responding to the perceived failure of large pockets of Christianity to read the Gospels as the fulfillment of the OT story of the nation Israel. However, the pertinent questions are: Has Wright swung the pendulum too far in the other direction? Has the notion of individual conversion and the forgiveness of personal sin been overly de-emphasized by Wright? There is no reason for individual conversion to be played off against the nationalistic and corporate implications, a point with which Wright would agree. Nevertheless, one is left to wonder if his remarks are, at times, in danger of having this affect (e.g. pp. 38, 66–67, 242–43).

In conclusion, even if one does not resonate with some of Wright's conclusions, his acclaim, at both the popular and scholarly level, has reached the point

where students, pastors, and scholars should know what he is saying. *How God Became King* is an accessible introduction to what Wright is saying about the Gospels and will challenge the reader to return to the Gospels with Israel's story in clear view.

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Matthew. By Craig A. Evans. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, xxii + 543 pp., $35.99 paper.

Craig Evans is widely known for his extensive knowledge of the historical contexts in which the NT was written. Scholars and pastors will be glad that in his new Matthew commentary Evans plays to this strength. That said, this work is not overly technical, since it is written for "a wide range of intellectually curious individuals" (p. xv). It is now the eighth volume to be published in the New Cambridge Bible Commentary series, aimed at upgrading the CBC series of the 1960s and 1970s. All are based on the NRSV.

The value of a commentary review is the chance to situate it among other like works. What does this volume add to the already immense catalog of Matthew commentaries? Four characteristics define this work and give it its value. First, Evans gives persistent attention to the social and religious context of the author and his first audience. To be sure, this is not uncommon among the best commentaries, but some do it better than others. Davies/Allison and Keener come to mind. The advantage of this commentary over these two comparable works, however, is that Evans does not overload readers with too many background texts. He discerns which few he finds most relevant and relates them. For example in explaining John's warning of a baptism "with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matt 3:11b), Evans cites illustrative Second Temple Jewish texts (not merely providing their addresses) that combine references to "spirit" with references to "fire." He starts with the OT and then explores the way the hendiadys was used in the DSS and pseudepigrapha. Given the intended audience, such a handful of texts is manageable; readers are not overwhelmed with a comparison of too many unfamiliar texts. Occasionally, however, Evans provides a commentary on relevant Second Temple Jewish texts without explaining how they inform a reading of Matthew. While this invites readers to think, those unfamiliar with the texts in question might be nonplussed.

Second, as one would hope with any new commentary, Evans looks at many texts from fresh angles, providing thought-provoking interpretations. Two examples will suffice. Evans suggests that Jesus' prayer in Matt 11:25 is a counterpoint to Daniel's prayer in Dan 2:21, 23 (see also Witherington, and Luz, on v. 27 as well). "Daniel thanks God for giving wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the understanding; Jesus thanks God for withholding wisdom from the wise and understanding, giving it instead to 'infants' .... Jesus has not contradicted Scripture, nor corrected it. He finds in it the 'other side of the coin,' as it were .... [I]n the time of fulfillment, in the time of the arrival of the kingdom of God, the Lord has gracious-

ly revealed his truths to simple plain-folk, to people who respond in faith" (pp. 245–46; compare Isa 29:14 in I Cor 1:19). Similarly, Evans reads Matt 20:28 as an inversion of Dan 7:13–14 that also blends in Isa 53:11–12. In giving his *life as a ransom for many*, "Jesus teaches that he, as the Son of Man, must first undergo suffering on behalf of his people before he experiences vindication and glory" (pp. 354–55). Thus, Daniel 7 is inverted until Isaiah 53 is realized.

Third, Evans does not interact with a lot of various interpretations, as do the recent commentaries by Nolland and France (and, of course, Davies/Allison, Luz, and Hagner). This is by and large a strength, but can detract from his interpretations at time. It is great for scholars whose habit is to compare many commentaries since it can become tedious to read endless summations of the views of others. Evans comes right to the point. On the other hand, when an author presents a particular position on certain texts, it is helpful for the argument to explain why this reading is better than that of others. Here Evans's work could be bolstered at specific *loci classici*. For example, in discussing Jesus' "temple cleansing" (Matt 21:12–13), Evans does not interact with Sanders et al., who argue that Jesus' actions were a symbolic prediction of judgment. While readers may greatly appreciate that Evans does not spend a lot of space on interpretations just to serve as his foil, one does wonder what Evans thinks of such views. To be sure, however, Evans does often point readers to other sources in the footnotes and provides a fifteen-page bibliography for further reading. Of course, the best work on the *history* of interpretation is still Luz's.

Finally, the commentary is peppered with sections called "A Closer Look," comprised mostly of quotations from primary texts. These are quite illuminative when they appear. Readers do not need to turn to other sources; windows into the first-century world are right in front of them. For example, considering Jewish perceptions of evil spirits in the "wilderness" (p. 81) informs how we can better understand Matt 4:1–11 as Matthew's first audience might have, as well as setting readers up to take in Evans's observations on the devil's use of Psalm 91 in Matt 4:6 (pp. 85–86).

Although one commentary cannot answer all questions, one lacuna does stand out in Evans's work. For a commentary devoted to the social and religious milieu of the author and the first audience, it is surprising that Evans does not deal more thoroughly with that part of the cultural encyclopedia with which Matthew is most conversant (and contributes the most to the first-century reader's interpretation): the Old Testament. Evans does not give much attention to *direct* quotations of the OT (for that see Blomberg in the volume edited by Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007]). This is ironic given the amount of space devoted to more subtle intertexts. It seems to me that the most straightforward quotations and allusions should take pride of place. They are the loudest of the intertextual voices in the choir.

Readers will also be interested in Evans's position on a few contested matters. Evans works from the two-source hypothesis, commenting on how Matthew is perceived to have redacted Mark (though not as heavily as Gundry). Matthew the apostle is the author, who himself used Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic Bibles. The

text was written prior to the Jewish war of AD 66–70 (so too Gundry, Nolland, France). Evans contends (rightly in my opinion) that texts like 22:7 reflect more a deft use of common-enough biblical imagery (2 Kgs 25:9; 2 Chr 36:19; Isa 64:11; Jer 21:10; 32:29; 34:2) than a retrojection of the community's historical location after the fall of the Jerusalem. Yet the part of the post-AD 70 thesis Evans retains is that the Gospel "may have been written in Syria" (pp. 5–6). While the Matthean community is removed from the synagogue, it is still apologetically and evangelistically engaged. As for structure, like France, Evans sees an "expansion and adaptation of Mark's relatively simple [geographic] outline" (pp. 8–9), but still finds value in Bacon's *five* discourses.

In the final analysis, this is an extremely valuable commentary that should take its place beside the best on the shelf. In the preface Evans states that this work "is not written primarily for the scholar," but he expresses his hope, nonetheless, that "scholars will find it useful" (p. xv). They will.

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A Theology of Luke and Acts: God's Promised Program, Realized for All Nations. By Darrell L. Bock. Biblical Theology of the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012, 495 pp., $39.99.

Lukan scholarship is replete with specialized works addressed to specific facets of Lukan theology, such as the Christology of Luke's Gospel or the ecclesiology of Acts. Seldom, however, has one attempted so ambitious an analysis as Darrell Bock's new volume for Zondervan's Biblical Theology of the New Testament series, *A Theology of Luke and Acts.* Nearly comprehensive in scope, Bock's work touches upon an all-encompassing range of theological *loci.*

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1, comprised of four chapters, provides a discussion of introductory matters. The first chapter briefly orients the reader to Bock's guiding convictions regarding the central themes of Luke and Acts. Chapter 2 then addresses matters of authorship, dating, provenance, and genre. In chapter 3, Bock addresses the nature of the unity of Luke's two volumes, postulating that the Gospel and Acts share a literary and theological unity even as the two works are distinguished by a topical division. Chapter 4 then provides a lengthy overview of the narrative progression of Luke-Acts.

Part 2 of the book addresses the major theological themes of Luke-Acts. This section of Bock's analysis contains seventeen chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 concern theology proper, and chapters 7 and 8 are addressed to Christology. Chapter 9 considers the Holy Spirit, and chapters 10 and 11 evaluate the Lukan perspective toward salvation. Chapters 12 through 19 are concerned in various ways with facets of Lukan ecclesiology. Bock addresses Luke's view of Israel (chap. 12), the Gentiles (chap. 13), the church and the "way" (chap. 14), discipleship and ethics (chap. 15), the divided response to Jesus (chap. 16), women and the poor (chap. 17), and the Law (chap. 18). Finally, chapter 19 provides a summary of Lukan ecclesiology.

Chapter 20 considers the issue of eschatology, and chapter 21 summarizes the use of Scripture in Luke-Acts.

For each new topic in Part 2, Bock's approach is to survey the narrative of Luke-Acts in sequence, briefly discussing every passage that the author perceives to be relevant to the topic at hand. Then, Bock offers a synthesis of the material. For larger topics, such as Christology or soteriology, separate chapters are devoted to the narrative overview and theological synthesis. In other instances, the narrative survey and theological analysis occur within the space of a single chapter. An exception to Bock's general approach occurs in the chapter on eschatology, where Bock foregoes a narrative overview in order to avoid redundancy.

Part 3 of the book is comprised of only two chapters: a discussion of the relationship of Luke-Acts to the canon (chap. 22), and a brief conclusion. The canonical analysis identifies the distinctive theological contributions of Luke-Acts to the canon and highlights various points of continuity between Luke-Acts and the other writings of the NT. Bock also briefly addresses the question of how Luke-Acts might be normative for the church today. Finally, in the conclusion, Bock ties together the major themes of his work by setting forth six key theses pertaining to the theology of Luke-Acts. This final chapter serves to summarize the most significant conclusions of Bock's theological analysis.

For readers acquainted with Bock's previous work on Luke and Acts, the exegetical conclusions and theological perspectives advanced within this new book will be familiar. Bock advocates a progressive dispensational understanding of Luke's attitude toward Israel, the church, and the end times. In his discussion of the use of Scripture in Luke and Acts, Bock emphasizes the way in which Scripture is cited within a pattern of promise and fulfillment. Bock also shows an interest at many points to harmonize Luke with the other canonical Gospels and to defend the historicity of specific events in the life of Jesus and the early church. In all of these ways, Bock's new book brings together many of the characteristic concerns of his previous work.

A Theology of Luke and Acts will surely prove to be a valuable reference work for pastors and Bible students. A detailed table of contents ensures that readers are able to locate material of interest in a timely manner, and the book includes sufficiently thorough Scripture, subject, and author indices. Moreover, most chapters contain selective bibliographies that identify the most significant scholarly treatments of the topics under consideration. Bock's writing is clear, and the various chapters of the book provide accessible introductions to most of the major issues within Lukan theology.

As one might expect, some topics receive more attention than others. For instance, Luke's attitude toward the Roman Empire and his view of the temple are only briefly addressed, though these two issues feature prominently within contemporary discussions of Lukan theology. Nevertheless, the scope of Bock's work is impressive, and for the most part each new chapter acquaints its readers to all of the relevant passages from Luke and Acts that pertain to the topic at hand. Particularly helpful chapters in this regard include the essay on the Scriptures in Luke-Acts (chap. 21) and the discussion of discipleship and ethics (chap. 15). These chapters

offer a compendium of a wide range of material from Luke and Acts, giving readers a succinct and comprehensive overview of the various passages that relate to the issues in question. Hence, Bock's work could serve well as an entry point for students into many of the perennial debates about Lukan theology, highlighting the major questions to be addressed and identifying the key passages upon which the questions turn.

The criticisms that I would raise about Bock's work revolve around matters of method. As a work claiming to be an exercise in biblical theology, Bock never actually addresses what it means to do biblical theology. In many respects, this new book is similar to a commentary on Luke-Acts, except that the structure of the analysis is derived from the theological topics that Bock wishes to address, rather than the verse-by-verse progression of the narrative. Indeed, Part 1, which handles introductory matters, is precisely what one would expect from the introductory section of a commentary. Bock touches upon matters of authorship, dating, provenance, genre, and the unity of Luke's two volumes. The author does not discuss how biblical theology ought to be done, nor does he address what distinguishes a work in biblical theology from the exegetical work of a commentary. Is the difference between the two solely a matter of structure (i.e. topical vs. verse-by-verse), or should there be something more substantial that differentiates biblical theology from biblical exegesis?

At many points, Bock's book reads much like an annotated concordance. Bock identifies in sequence every reference to a particular topic, character, or term in Luke-Acts, quickly summarizing his interpretation of each passage in which the object under consideration occurs. Often Bock's commentary on a given passage simply consists of a paraphrase of the biblical text. This is not necessarily a deficiency, as the accumulation of references to a given topic or theme can be useful to the student or pastor pressed for time. What I question is whether such a resource is rightfully labeled a work in biblical theology. Maybe it is, but it would be helpful for Bock to provide some basic discussion that explains his method.

Perhaps on account of the neglect of methodology, Bock's approach to the text is occasionally inconsistent. For instance, in some places Bock makes use of a Synoptic comparison to highlight distinctive elements of Luke's Gospel. Thus, Bock helpfully calls attention to the lengthening of the quotation of Isa 40:3–5 in Luke 3:4–6 (cf. Mark 1:2–3; Matt 3:3), noting that the extension of this quotation reflects Luke's special interest in the universal scope of salvation for "all people," both Jew and Gentile (p. 104). In other places, however, Bock neglects a Synoptic comparison where one might be expected. For example, in his discussion of Luke's view of the law (chap. 18), Bock leaves unmentioned the numerous points at which Luke either omits or apparently attenuates statements from the Synoptic tradition that might be taken as challenges to the Mosaic law (e.g. Mark 7:1–23; 11:12–14, 16; 12:33–34; Matt 9:13; 12:5–7; 15:1–20; cf. Luke 5:32; 6:1–5; 10:29; 11:37–41). These omissions have typically been a central point of debate within scholarly discussions of Luke's attitude toward the law, and Bock's decision not to address them is never explained. Theoretically, one might argue that a theology of the Lukan writings can be constructed without reference to the Synoptic tradition or other strands of NT

thought, but this is precisely the sort of methodological concern that Bock leaves unaddressed.

Such criticisms ought not to deter prospective readers from acquiring Bock's work, since this book is truly unmatched in its breadth of coverage. Bock has crafted an exceptionally useful resource that provides a topical overview of virtually all of the main themes in Luke-Acts. Whether this work constitutes a model for the practice of biblical theology may remain an open question (cf. the series preface, p. 19), but the value of this work as a reference tool for pastors and Bible students is beyond dispute.

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The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke's Account of God's Unfolding Plan. By Alan J. Thompson. NSBT 27. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011, 232 pp., $24.00 paper.

With this monograph, Alan J. Thompson makes a rich and insightful contribution to InterVarsity's New Studies in Biblical Theology series (NSBT) edited by D. A. Carson. Those familiar with NSBT series know its volumes tend to focus on biblical theology as a discipline, on a particular biblical theme across all or part of Scripture, or on the structure of an individual biblical writer's thought. Thompson's volume is an exercise in the last of these with, as the title indicates, a focus on Luke's structure of the Book of Acts as an intentional continuation of the biblical narrative of God's saving activity.

Thompson contends that Acts is Luke's account of God bringing to fruition the scriptural promises of his kingdom, which has come with the reign of the Messiah made manifest in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He observes a framing structure with the specific clustering of references to the kingdom of God at the opening and closing of Acts (1:3, 6; 28:23, 31). In the opening of Acts, "Jesus' teaching to the disciples and Jesus' answer to the disciples' question are obviously foundational for what the rest of the book is about: the kingdom!" (p. 45). Similarly, in the closing of Acts, "the kingdom is mentioned in the context of comprehensive explanation. In Acts 28:31 we are told that Paul 'preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ'" (p. 45). Given this framing, Thompson suggests that the material between chapters 1 and 28 is meant to be understood as what the kingdom of God looks like now that Jesus is the risen and reigning Lord.

Since his structural analysis of Acts differs from the two main competing approaches, he offers an expositional outline of Acts in an excursus (pp. 67–70). There he takes issue with the typical missionary journey approach for its tendency to focus on Paul's circular activity rather than the Lord Jesus' activity to spread the word outward and for its discord with the narrative flow (esp. at Acts 15:36 and 18:22). He takes issue with the summary statement approach for its insistence upon major narrative breaks at Acts 6:7 and 19:20, which he sees as transitional state-

ments within (and not ending) major narrative sections of Acts. Thus, Thompson's seven-part outline for Acts is as follows:

Acts 1:1–2:47	The reign of Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit
Acts 3:1–8:3	The reign of Christ the Lord over rising opposition
Acts 8:4–9:31	The reign of Christ the Lord over outcasts and enemies
Acts 9:32–12:25	The reign of Christ the Lord over all the nations
Acts 13:1–16:5	The reign of Christ the Lord proclaimed to the nations: part 1
Acts 16:6–21:36	The reign of Christ the Lord proclaimed to the nations: part 2
Acts 21:37–28:31	The reign of Christ the Lord vindicated before the rulers

For Luke, the reign of Jesus is proven by his resurrection from the dead, and this announces the arrival of the last days, the inauguration of the kingdom promised in the OT. In the second chapter of this volume, Thompson outlines Luke's view of resurrection as the "hope of Israel," clarifying Luke's dependence upon the OT (e.g. Ezekiel 37; Isaiah 26; Daniel 12) and making connections with the Gospel of Luke. "Jesus' resurrection is tied to the heart of the fulfillment of God's promises and the outworking of his plans in salvation history" (p. 82). Furthermore, God initiates his plan in sending Christ, raising Christ, and (now in Acts) having Christ proclaimed whether to Jewish or Gentile audiences. Thompson's analysis of the speeches in Acts is that they are God-centered, audience-conscious, Christ-focused, and response-oriented (that is, response-demanding but not response-driven).

The restoration of God's people and the coming of God's Spirit are the subjects of Thompson's third and fourth chapters. He argues that the OT language used to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit as the "promise" of the Father, along with the surrounding kingdom teaching of Acts 1 and the OT allusions in Jesus' interaction with the apostles about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, all point to Acts 2 as Luke's expression of the fulfillment of God's promises. This is made particularly clear in Peter's Pentecost sermon where a citation from the prophet Joel is specifically related to the blessing of God's people in the "last days." Thus, Acts 1:8 is Jesus' indication that this blessing is not just for those in Jerusalem, but also entails all Judea and Samaria (i.e. a restoration of the division between southern and northern Israel) and also the ends of the earth (i.e. an eventual inclusion of Gentiles). The narrative of Acts confirms this; while there may well be future restoration activity (cf. p. 108, n. 14 with reference to Acts 3:21), the restoration of Israel has already begun. Evidence of this kingdom inauguration is that the risen, ascended, and reigning Lord Jesus has poured out the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, who transforms hearts and empowers witness, is the only Spirit received by all believers, and thus, there is ultimately only one people of God.

The subjects of the temple and the law in Acts are taken up in Thompson's fifth and sixth chapters, respectively. Both chapters declare "the end of the era" regarding these features as God moves his plan forward with the reign of Christ. Indeed, the temple and the OT law were themselves pointers to Jesus; so now that Jesus has been declared the reigning Lord of the inaugurated kingdom of God, it is no surprise to see changes in the roles of the temple system and the OT law. Luke is not against the temple or the OT law *per se*; he merely points beyond these things to Jesus.

Thompson's Lord Jesus-focused, kingdom-oriented structural analysis of Acts is engaging and will be convincing to many. His argument for a new outline to Acts (over against the missionary journey and summary statement traditions) is a welcomed suggestion for those of us who have struggled with these older approaches. Thompson's writing style is easy to follow; he begins each chapter making (almost pedantic) connections to the foregoing material and ends each chapter with a clear summary of his argument to that point. Thompson's stress on Acts as the continuing biblical narrative of the reign of Jesus in God's "already-not yet" kingdom is inspiring. While Thompson seems to stress the reassurance that this is for the reader (e.g. p. 195), the book could have been brought to an even more fitting closure by asking readers more directly where they fit into the continuing story of the still reigning risen Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, I like this volume and will look for ways to encourage people to read it. Those interested in using this volume as a supplemental text for a course on Acts will appreciate that it also includes brief discussions of traditional introductory matters (e.g. authorship, audience, interpretive techniques, and the relationship of Acts to the Gospel of Luke).

Acts is all too often appealed to as mere historical information about first-century church matters or (more anachronistically) as an authority for modern church matters that were not really primary concerns for Luke at all. However, as Thompson remarks in a footnote, "It seems as though there is still room for further discussion of the theology of a writer who wrote more than Paul in the NT!" (p. 18, n. 4). So Thompson has given us a volume that, like very few others, seeks to view the NT book of Acts on its own terms. While not intended to be a full-blown theology of the Acts of the Apostles, this little volume intriguingly and successfully uncovers the main contours of Acts so as to outline for the reader Luke's driving concerns. While not intended to be a commentary, Thompson's text interacts with the relevant minutiae of Lukan scholarship (making clear his positions in the various scholarly debates), yet pressing ahead undistracted in the task of making sense of the whole book. While every reader will not be convinced of Thompson's every decision on individual issues, no one should teach or preach from the Acts of the Apostles again without first reading this book.

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Jesus Have I Loved, but Paul? A Narrative Approach to the Problem of Pauline Christianity. By J. R. Daniel Kirk. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011, ix + 214 pp., $21.99 paper.

Fuller NT professor J. R. Daniel Kirk targets a problem not a few of us experience increasingly among younger seminarians. For a generation moved by the plight of the environment, global inequities, and cultural tussles over gender and sexuality, Jesus's message of a kingdom of love and forgiveness, of a righting of social inequities, sounds both different from and far better than the oft-perceived dogmatic positions of Paul.

Kirk's method of approaching this problem is a reading of the Gospel accounts and then Paul's letters as expressions of a larger story. "Both the Gospels and Paul intend to show us that Jesus's story is God's story…. God, precisely as the God of Israel, holds the story together from start to finish in both the Gospels and the letters of Paul" (p. 11). He concludes, "The Gospels and Paul tell the same story" (p. 40). On one level, then, this book aims to rehabilitate Paul for a new generation.

On the methodological level, the book contributes to the growing literature exploring a narrative reading of NT texts and cites forerunners like Richard Hays and N. T. Wright. This is not simply an exegesis of texts in the Gospels and Paul (though there is plenty of that), but a sustained attempt to tease out the larger story of God-Israel-world implicit in both corpora. In spite of clear differences in language (not much "kingdom" in Paul), Kirk insists the story is the same.

After introducing the problem and method (chap. 1), the ensuing chapters take up selected topics in Jesus and Paul, give a narrative reading of that topic in each corpus, and then reflect on whether the Gospels and Paul are telling the same story. Readers unfamiliar with narrative interpretation will particularly enjoy Kirk's clear presentation in this chapter of the larger narrative into which he sees Jesus and Paul fitting nicely.

New creation and the kingdom of God head the list of topics (chap. 2). "Jesus's enacting of the dominion of God and Paul's vision of new creation in the resurrected Christ are complementary visions of a holistically restored cosmos" (p. 32). Kirk draws attention to Adam Christology in Paul in order to argue that the royal dominion of God over creation in the Gospels corresponds to Paul's vision of the risen Lord Jesus fulfilling the creation care mandate given to Adam. Here, and throughout the book, Kirk seeks to deconstruct an "individualistic and escapist gospel" (p. 32) in favor of a more communal and cosmic story.

This communal focus occupies chapter 3. For both Jesus and Paul, the gospel is primarily about the restoration of harmonious human community. The rescue of individuals from sin is included, but is only meaningful within the larger communal story. The narrative of Israel and of Israel's new representative and king is, of course, the central story. Just as the Gospels portray Jesus as the new teacher of Israel, so for Paul the center of Israel's community life (Torah) is replaced by Christ. Paul's "in Christ" language takes up the corporate discipleship central to the Gospel portrayal. Kirk is ready to admit that there are discontinuities alongside the narrative unity. Thus, in Paul the "body of Christ" is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, whereas the Gospel narrative envisions largely a renewed Israel around a new king. On the level of praxis, Kirk reflects on how the self-absorption of social media sites like Twitter and Facebook comports with the focus on others in Paul and Jesus.

Chapter 4 looks at ethics in both stories. In particular, how does the more doing-oriented discipleship in the Gospels relate to Paul's seemingly anti-works message of justification by faith alone? Kirk acknowledges at points his own Reformed-Reformational leanings, but on this point he sees weaknesses in the traditional way Paul's salvation story is told. Instead of forensic categories, for Paul "the basic

model for salvation … is one of union with Christ or being 'in Christ'" (p. 80; also p. 107). The centrality of the cross in gospel ethics ("take up your cross") finds its echo in Paul's cruciform obedience ("I have been crucified with Christ").

Chapter 5 explores the perception that Jesus advocates inclusion and the embrace of outsiders, while Paul tends toward judgmental and exclusive communities. Kirk shows that both stereotypes are skewed versions of the narrative. Jesus' narrative of embrace of others includes nuanced elements of judgment and boundaries, while Paul's "both Jew and Gentile" puts inclusion at the heart of his story. Although Kirk does not address the New Perspective debate directly, his sympathies seem to lie in that direction, as evidenced in this chapter by his preference for the language of "Jewish identity markers" versus legalistic works (p. 105) and the preference for participatory ("in Christ") over forensic categories.

Chapters 6–9 take up what could be called hot-button issues in modern church and culture: women (chap. 6), social justice (chap. 7), and homosexuality (chaps. 8–9). He adopts a trajectory hermeneutic on the women's issue, finding in both Paul and Jesus "a narrative trajectory of unity through equality" (p. 118). The treatment of problem passages (e.g. 1 Timothy 2) is brief but illuminating. Regarding social justice (chap. 7), Paul turns out to be operating from the same story as Jesus; the God of Israel is establishing justice on earth through the Lord Jesus. Here as throughout the book, Kirk explores modern practical implications of these positions. Both Paul and Jesus have something to say about race relations, sexual exploitation of women, eradication of global poverty, etc.

Chapters 8–9 belong together as a treatment of sexuality and homosexuality. Kirk critiques some other approaches for failing to embed their positions on homosexuality in a larger biblical theology of sexuality. He finds three central positive affirmations in the biblical narratives: sex, marriage, and lifelong fidelity (p. 163). This foundation leads him, then, to fairly traditional conclusions. "The direct biblical evidence is not well poised to support the argument that practicing homosexuals should be affirmed in their lifestyle as living in a manner congruous with the Christian story" (p. 184). One does gain the impression, however, that the author is not entirely settled in this opinion. Thus, his narrative methodology seems less evident in this chapter than elsewhere, and the chapter title seems in tension with the conclusion he reaches ("Homosexuality under the Reign of Christ"). Interestingly, he launches into reflection on how a convincing pro-homosexual-unions position should argue.

The concluding chapter urges readers to continue carrying out the story of Jesus as understood by Paul in their own contexts and is reminiscent of Wright's idea of living out the final act of the biblical drama. Useful Scripture and subject indexes round out the volume.

A few questionable exegetical moves raised my eyebrows, but none were crucial to the main point being made. For instance, Kirk thinks Jesus was telling Peter to get back in line with the other disciples when he said "Get behind me, Satan" (Mark 8:33), rather than the more commonly thought "Get away from me" (NLT) or "get out of my sight" (BDAG). Also, it seems unnecessary to charge Bible translations with a (theologically motivated?) refusal to translate "appointed" in Rom

1:3–4, when they are more likely simply taking an accredited alternate translation ("declare," BDAG).

Readers will hear from Kirk a sustained, but sympathetic, critique of traditional evangelical gospel presentations as too individualistic. This echoes a current among evangelical NT scholars like Scot McKnight (*The King Jesus Gospel* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011]). Emerging church folks will appreciate Kirk's emphasis that the message of Christ's dominion over creation is one that is falsified if only preached and not lived out. Thus, some form of a social or incarnational gospel is demanded. At another point, he wonders if megachurches sometimes act like ecclesiastical Wal-Marts and "squeeze the life out of … local competition" (p. 85). The book regularly delivers such fodder for lively classroom discussions. It is a winsome example of a new generation of evangelical scholarship that understands itself as a critical participant in postmodern culture and less occupied with matters of dogmatics or historical apologetics.

College and seminary professors should consider this well-written volume for courses on Paul or NT theology. It covers some of the same ground as Brian Dodd's *The Problem with Paul* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996) and David Wenham's *Paul and Jesus: The True Story* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), but the narrative approach introduces students to an important methodological advance in NT studies. The few endnotes point readers to some of Kirk's sources of inspiration, but those looking for more thorough academic treatment of narrative method or of individual issues will need to look elsewhere.

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The Heavenlies in Ephesians: A Lexical, Exegetical, and Conceptual Analysis. By M. Jeff Brannon. Library of New Testament Studies 447. London: T&T Clark, 2011, xvii + 254 pp., $110.00.

This book is a slightly revised version of Brannon's doctoral dissertation completed under the supervision of Larry Hurtado at the University of Edinburgh. Its main objective is to examine the expression "in the heavenlies," which occurs five times exclusively in Ephesians (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12) and to determine what the expression exactly denotes and how both believers and the spiritual forces of evil can be in the heavenlies at the same time (Eph 2:6; 6:12).

Brannon develops his argument as follows. After a brief introduction (chap. 1), he traces the history of interpretation of "the heavenlies" (chap. 2). He basically identifies two groups of scholars: (1) those who draw a distinction between "in the heavenlies" and "in the heavens" and spiritualize "the heavenlies" (Hugo Odeberg, Michael Everett McGough); and (2) those who consider both expressions as synonymous and understand "in the heavenlies" either eschatologically (Andrew T. Lincoln), soteriologically (Chrys C. Caragounis), or ecclesiologically (Horacio E. Lona). By aligning himself with the second group and accepting Lincoln's eschatological approach and Caragounis's conclusion that "the heavenlies" always refers to

"that which is spatially distinct from the earth," he positions himself to argue against the view held by Odeberg and McGough.

In the following two chapters Brannon analyzes the usage of the terms "heavenly" and "heaven" within wider Greek literature outside the NT (chap. 3) and within the NT (chap. 4). His analysis includes the Greek and Jewish examples provided in BDAG and LSJ and 14 occurrences of "heavenly" in the NT outside Ephesians. From this investigation he concludes that "heavenly" and "heaven" are synonymous and always refer to that which is spatially different from the earth.

In the next five chapters, Brannon examines five Ephesian passages in which the expression "in the heavenlies" occurs. In chapter 5, he analyzes Paul's description of believers' spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (Eph 1:3). From this analysis, he asserts that believers' blessings are present realities because of their union with Christ (realized eschatology) and that the expression "in the heavenlies" carries a local connotation and implies the source and origin of the spiritual blessings. He then identifies this origin as the abode of God and thus concludes that Eph 1:3 supports the view that "in the heavenlies" is synonymous with "in the heavens" and refers to "that which is spatially distinct from the earth." In chapter 6, he examines Eph 1:15–23, which depicts Christ as being raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of God in the heavenlies (1:20) and draws the same conclusion based on the similarities between this passage and other ascension and enthronement texts (Acts 2:32–35; 7:55–56; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 1 Pet 3:21–22) in which Christ is described as reigning from the right hand of God in heaven.

The most intriguing and intensive discussion comes in chapter 7. Here Brannon examines Paul's statement that believers are raised and seated together with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph 2:6). He thinks that Paul wrote this passage as a safeguard and warning against the widespread Colossian heresy that he believes was deeply influenced by Jewish ascetic mysticism. He arrives at this conclusion in two steps. He first defines the Colossian heresy as a mystical group based on a particular interpretation of Col 2:18. He interprets the participle "entering (*embateuōn*)" as denoting an entry to the heavenly realm and "the worship of angels" as referring to a visionary's partaking of the heavenly angelic worship. He asserts that against this heresy Paul points out that believers have no need to ascend to heaven because they are already participating in the heavenly reign of God through their incorporation into Christ who is seated at the right hand of God. Brannon then makes a connection between Colossians and Ephesians by observing the theological and linguistic similarities between Eph 2:5–6 and Col 2:11–13 and 3:1–4 and concludes that Paul wrote Eph 2:6 with the Colossian heresy in mind.

The next two chapters are closely related to what is said in the preceding chapters. In chapter 8, Brannon examines Paul's statement about God's revelation of the mystery of Christ to himself, to other apostles, and to the prophets, through his preaching and writing to the Gentiles and through the church to the spiritual powers in the heavenlies (Eph 3:1–13). Even in this passage, Brannon finds the influence of Jewish apocalyptic mysticism and thus concludes that Paul wrote this passage as an implicit safeguard against those who might claim that they had received special revelations from God in their visions. In chapter 9, Brannon analyzes

the last occurrence of "in the heavenlies" in Ephesians (Eph 6:12) and endeavors to answer the question, "How can believers and the spiritual forces of evil be in the heavenlies at the same time?" He finds a clue to this question in Jewish apocalyptic literature in which the location of punishment for evil powers is depicted as in the lower heavens and combines this evidence with the NT teaching that Christ reigns over all evil powers and that Satan and his angels are removed from heaven. He then concludes that the spiritual forces of evil are most likely in the lower heavens, while believers are seated with Christ in the (highest) heaven.

Since the idea of multiple heavens is necessary for his argument, Brannon provides a short appendix on the cosmology of Ephesians in chapter 10. Although he does not think that Paul was overly concerned with apocalyptic or Rabbinic speculations about the number of heavens, he nevertheless concludes that Paul conceived of a specific number of heavens. For evidence, he appeals to Paul's reference to the third heaven in 2 Cor 12:1–4 and to Paul's description of Satan as the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2) and Christ's ascension above all heavens (Eph 4:10).

In the last chapter (chap. 11), Brannon provides a brief conclusion by reiterating what he repeatedly said throughout the book: (1) the expression "in the heavenlies" is synonymous with "in the heavens" and always refers to "that which is spatially distinct from the earth"; and (2) believers are seated with Christ in the (highest) heaven while the spiritual forces of evil are in the lower heavens. With this conclusion he rejects the prominent view promoted by Odeberg and McGough that the heavenlies refers to the whole of the spiritual reality, including not only the heavens but also the spiritual life, in which the church partakes in its earthly conditions.

Undoubtedly this book represents the most comprehensive study of the expression "in the heavenlies" and advances modern scholarship on Ephesians. It also provides many ideas for further discussion. Brannon's argument is coherent, well structured, and clearly presented. Although his work heavily relies on the works of Andrew T. Lincoln, Chrys C. Caragounis, and Timo Eskola, his understanding of the Colossian heresy in light of Jewish mysticism, his analysis of Ephesian passages in light of a specific Colossian context, and his attempt to place believers with Christ in the highest heaven and the spiritual powers of evil in the lower heavens are engaging and in a sense innovative.

This work, however, poses some problems. First, Brannon's lexical study has a tendency of sweeping with broad strokes, thus ignoring fine differences in meaning and nuance. For example, he always concludes that "heavenly" and "heaven" are synonymous and refer to "that which is spatially distinct from the earth." "Heavenly" and "heaven" certainly overlap in meaning, but they are not completely identical. The adjective "heavenly," when used attributively, often seems to denote "transcendence" rather than a location. Brannon also draws the same conclusion from his analysis of Plato's and Philo's use of the terms. For Plato and Philo, however, "heaven" or "heavenly" are used metaphorically or allegorically to denote something that is non-physical and thus non-spatial. Second, Brannon's understanding of the Colossian heresy in light of Jewish ascetic mysticism involves many

assumptions, although it is supported by many contemporary scholars. The expressions used in Col 2:18 ("humility," "entering," and "worship of angels") do not provide sufficient textual evidence to conclude that they refer to a visionary's heavenly ascent and participation in the heavenly angelic worship. Moreover, interpreting Ephesians in a specific Colossian context involves more assumptions and thus is less sustainable. Third, Brannon's attempt to place believers and Christ in the highest heaven and the spiritual forces of evil in the lower heavens lacks biblical evidence. Although Paul once mentions the third heaven, one should not too quickly identify this with the elaborate heavenly ascents and numbering of heavens in apocalyptic literature. In addition, Christ's reign over all heavens does not necessarily denote his location in the (highest) heaven. It rather seems to imply his transcendent lordship over all heavens and earth. Despite these concerns, Brannon's proposal is engaging and deserves careful consideration.

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The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture: The Old Testament in Acts, Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles, and Revelation. By Steve Moyise. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, xvi + 176 pp., $22.99 paper.

The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture is Moyise's final installment in a three-part series treating the use of the OT in the NT. In the previous volumes, Moyise covers the Gospels and Paul's letters; so he concludes the series with introductions to the subject in Acts, the Catholic Epistles, Hebrews, and Revelation. Though never stated outright, Moyise presumably designed the series to be used as a starting point for those new to the subject. He is not attempting to break new ground but to provide a template and launching point for someone newly engaged in the topic.

Moyise begins his study straightaway after an all-too-brief introduction. The five-page introduction covers three primary topics: a recap of the series as a whole; a summary of the individual chapters; and an explanation of how quotations and allusions were selected and analyzed. He selected the quotations from the list provided by the United Bible Societies' *The Greek New Testament*, and he limited the allusions to some of the prominent ones listed in UBS4 and NA27. Moyise approaches each of the chapters in different ways, depending on the number and importance of the quotations and allusions found in each book.

Due to the length and number of quotations in Acts (about 40), Moyise looks at several themes found in the speeches that are supported by appeals to Scripture: salvation for Jews and Gentiles; Christ's death, resurrection, and exaltation; Christological titles and functions; judgment; and historical summary (p. 7). Moyise concludes the chapter with a short overview of several overarching interpretations of the use of Scripture in Acts. He accepts the heavy influence of both Isaiah and the Psalms for Luke's speeches and narratives, but he rejects the idea that either "controls" Luke's literary program.

Moyise next turns his attention to 1 Peter in order to compare the use of the Psalm texts in Peter's speeches in Acts to those found in the first epistle bearing his name. He finds evidence to support the prominence of the Psalms in 1 Peter, but they are pressed into service for a different reason: "they are not used to explain the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ" (p. 44). Additionally, while references to Isaiah are mostly allusive in Peter's speeches in Acts, one finds six explicit quotations in the short letter. Moyise initially suggests that the comparison between the use of Scripture in the speeches and the letter may shed some light on questions about the authorship of the epistle, but he eventually concludes that the hypothesis lacks evidence to be substantiated.

Moyise lumps Jude, 2 Peter, and James into a single short chapter (pp. 62–80). As is common, Jude and 2 Peter are treated together, so that one can see the differences in the use of sources and how the author of 2 Peter used Jude as a source. Most of the OT material found in 2 Peter derives from Jude, but the material is utilized in different ways so that 2 Peter is "much less somber" due to its mitigation of the length of punishment (p. 67). At the end of the section, Moyise includes a brief excursus about the use of non-canonical sources in the NT. The section on James is dominated by the ever-present contrast between Paul and James concerning justification by works. Moyise appears to side with those who prefer to "let James be James" and who see the two authors speaking to completely different issues and circumstances.

Moyise takes a more systematic approach to the book of Hebrews, working progressively through many of the 37 explicit quotations. He affirms the conclusion of many that the author sets the stage for the entire discourse in the prologue (1:1–3), which stresses both the continuity and discontinuity of the revelation through the Son. Likewise, the author can be seen in continuity and discontinuity with the early Christian traditions with which he interacts. The author of Hebrews uses many of the same scriptural materials as other NT writers, but he often uses them in different ways and is comfortable expanding the existing corpus of material.

Moyise concludes the book with a lengthy exposition of some of the major themes evoked through the allusive use of Scripture in the book of Revelation. While Revelation contains no explicit quotations, the work is as saturated in OT imagery and themes as any other book in the NT. Rather than treating the material systematically, as in Hebrews, or focusing on one or two particular OT texts, as in Acts and 1 Peter, Moyise instead opts for a third approach, which examines related themes under five headings so as to give the reader "a sense of what Revelation is all about": God, Jesus, and the Spirit; the dragon, beast, and false prophet; judgments and disasters; witness and struggle; final salvation (p. 112). The chapter concludes with an excursus on the use of Scripture in the Johannine Epistles, and the book concludes with a few observations derived from the study as a whole, in comparison with the previous volumes on Jesus and Paul.

As a whole, Moyise's work is well written and informative for an introductory text. He summarizes the relevant arguments and approaches neatly, and he represents positions from a range of theological viewpoints. The secondary sources with

which he interacts are mostly up to date and represent the foundational figures and works for most of the topics at hand.

As one should expect from any work covering multiple books and genres of NT literature, Moyise moves more adeptly through some of the books than others. In places where Moyise has done more independent research (particularly Revelation and 1 Peter), one receives a more current and comprehensive examination than in those that are necessarily more derivative (particularly Jude, 2 Peter, and James). So, at times the reader will be led to many of the current and important studies for further investigation, such as the work of Doble, Mallen, and Litwak in Acts; however, in other places, some important conversation partners are left silent, such as J. D. Charles in Jude/2 Peter or Luke Timothy Johnson in James. Certainly, Moyise should not be expected to cover the entire breadth of scholarship in this introductory work, but students seeking to engage in some of these conversations should be directed to most of the key voices for further research. Overall, the book would benefit from an expanded bibliography that reflects the explosion of such intertextual studies in recent years. Similarly, additional notes and references would be helpful when he appeals to rabbinic tradition (p. 66) or to commonly held positions (p. 40).

In conjunction with an expanded bibliography at the end of the book, the work could also be improved by augmenting the introduction at the beginning. With an introductory work, one wants students to be exposed to the conversations that are taking place in the field. Issues such as the definition of terms (quotation, allusion, echo), the locus of meaning (author, text, reader), or the change of meaning from one context to another are either ignored or assumed. As he has written on these subjects elsewhere, Moyise is not unaware of the issues. So why should the novice reader be left ignorant of them?

No doubt some will disagree with certain points of interpretation or historical reconstruction, such as the suggestion that Silvanus was the secretary for 1 Peter rather than the letter carrier, the rejection of Petrine authorship for 2 Peter on the one hand and the acceptance of the traditional authorship of James on the other, or the background of a particular scriptural allusion, like Numbers 16 rather than Isa 26:11 for the fourth warning passage in Hebrews. No doubt the most troubling aspect for some scholars will be the suggestion that the NT authors at times ignored or altered the original meaning of the texts to which they appealed for support. Again, this criticism could have been tempered if Moyise had raised some of these hermeneutical issues in the introduction.

Overall, the book is a helpful tool for anyone beginning research on the subject of the use of the OT in the NT. Moyise covers a substantial amount of ground in such a short work, and he introduces the reader to a variety of positions and approaches to the texts. If one learns best by example, then this would be a particularly useful work; however, if one desires a more in-depth theoretical framework for understanding the examples, then other works would likely be more beneficial.

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Reading the Epistle to the Hebrews: A Resource for Students. Edited by Eric F. Mason and Kevin B. McCruden. SBLRBS 66. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011, xv + 354 pp., $39.95 paper.

The present title is the second volume in the SBL resource series designed to survey and appraise the new trends and advancements in the areas of exegetical and biblical theology of NT books. After a volume on Revelation, the series turned to one of the most intriguing and theologically rich NT books, the Epistle to the Hebrews. It should be mentioned that both paperbacks are much appreciated budget imports of their European counterparts, published by E. J. Brill. Hebrews studies have seen a notable resurgence in the last two decades with the publication of at least a dozen valuable commentaries, starting with the triumvirate of H. Attridge (Hermeneia, 1989), W. Lane (WBC, 1990), and P. Ellingworth (NIGTC, 1993), and closing with the theologically balanced pair of P. T. O'Brien (PNTC, 2010) and G. L. Cockerill (NICNT, 2012). When one adds to this feat the steady stream of dissertations on various aspects of the epistle, it is obvious that the NT book known in the yester-decades as "the Cinderella" of biblical studies no longer deserves the adage.

In light of such intensity of research, the volume reviewed here provides a much needed orientation as it offers a panoramic look on the trail behind as well as the one ahead in this field of research. This is, in fact, the stated goal of its editors, E. F. Mason and K. B. McCruden: "these essays examine numerous important issues for reading Hebrews, such as the author's conceptual influences and engagement with Scripture and other traditions, the book's structure, its major theological themes, emerging interpretative methods for engaging the text, and the use of Hebrews … by subsequent generations of readers" (p. 1). The volume is interested less in matters of eisagogy (authorship, date, canonicity, etc.) and focuses more on providing "extended discussions of important issues that go beyond what is feasible in a typical commentary" (p. 2). To that extent, the editors lined up a reputable team of contributors, including some renowned participants to Hebrews scholarship, such as C. Koester, G. Gelardini, D. Moffitt, J. Neyrey, K. Schenck, and H. Attridge.

The volume consists of thirteen articles launched by the orienting introduction of E. Mason, a well-known contributor to current Hebrews dialogue, and anchored by the assessing epilogue of H. Attridge. The articles are grouped into five major areas of interest: conceptual and historical background, structure of the text, emerging methodological approaches, major theological issues, and reception history.

The first area grapples with the challenging matter of the conceptual background responsible for the thought of the letter. P. Gray in "Hebrews among Greeks and Romans" surveys a "selection of concepts, images, and motifs from the Greco-Roman milieu in which Christianity emerged … [to] illustrate their significance for understanding Hebrews" (p. 13). From scores of potential entries, he samples the conceptual marks left by Greco-Roman language, rhetoric, and philosophy on selected topics in Hebrews, such as persecution and suffering, brotherly

love, athletics, political discourse, and sacrifice. J. Thompson revisits the purported Middle Platonism influence on a selection of four passages/sections of the epistle: Heb 1:5–13 (the Son, angels, and creation), Heb 4:14–10:31 (Christ and the priesthood of Aaron), Hebrews 11 (seeing the invisible), and Heb 12:14–29 (eschatology and ontology). He uncovers areas where Jewish eschatology and Platonic ontology not only overlap but also offer mutual conceptual support. In "Cosmology, Messianism, and Melchizedek in Apocalyptic Jewish Traditions and Hebrews," E. Mason reconsiders the conceptual framework offered by the Dead Sea Scrolls in understanding the "relationship between Hebrews and apocalyptic Jewish traditions" (p. 53). At least in these three areas scrutinized, the evidence points towards the existence of a substantive Jewish apocalyptic thought traceable both in the DSS and in Hebrews. "Interpretation of Scripture in the Epistle to the Hebrews" by D. Moffitt closes the section by examining a selection of quotations in Hebrews in order to elucidate the author's conception of Scripture. Starting from two axiomatic stances—the author used the LXX as his Scripture and he was a practitioner of Jewish interpretive practices—Moffitt reconfirms the virtual consensus that, for the author, "the Scripture is a repository of divine speech, but these divine words are living and active" (p. 96). This perspective has momentous implications for the particular use of Scripture in Hebrews, not least the fact that, with the dawning of the last days and in light of God's filial address, the Christian community addressed has now access to the legitimate, proper, Christological interpretation of the Holy Writ.

Both articles in the second area of focus, "Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity" by C. Koester and "Hebrews and Homiletics" by G. Gelardini rehearse the authors' earlier contributions to the structure of Hebrews. In a republished article (*CBQ* 64 [2002] 103–23), the former finds in Hebrews the major rhetorical elements of Greco-Roman discourses and reaffirms the structural divisions set in his magisterial commentary on Hebrews (AB, 2006): Exordium (1:1–2:4), Proposition (2:5–9), Arguments (2:10–12:27; grouped in three successive series, 2:10–6:20, 7:1–10:39, 11:1–12:27), Peroration (12:28–13:21), and Epistolary postscript (13:22–25). The latter, unconvinced that the "deliberative, forensic, or epideictic oratory can do justice to a synagogal context" (p. 141), finds the homiletical backdrop of the epistle in Rabbinical oratory. She considers Hebrews not only one of the oldest texts confirming the pairing up of a Torah reading and its interpretation, but also evidence for the existence of the triennial reading cycle, "the exhortative synagogue homily, to both the fast day of Tisha be-Av (covenant breaking) and Yom Kippur (covenant renewal)" (p. 143).

Two articles are devoted to the emerging methodologies. J. Neyrey's "Jesus The Broker in Hebrews" contends that the proper understanding of the epistle's multifaceted portrait of Jesus emerges only when one, guided by the tenets of the social sciences, attributes to Jesus the role of "the broker in the basic patron-client relationship between God and [his] disciples" (p. 145). K. Schenck's "Hebrews as the Re-presentation of a Story" reminds the reader of both the power of story, in general, and of the benefit that comes from "an exploration of Hebrews as a rhetorical re-presentation of a story that the author holds in common with his audience to varying degrees" (p. 175).

With "The Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," F. Matera opens the section devoted to the theology of Hebrews. He gives credit to the author for penning the "most systematic presentation of the person and work of Jesus in the New Testament" (p. 191). Focusing on Christology and soteriology, Matera unlocks the theological agenda of the author, who, oscillating between exposition and exhortation, "engages in a creative and insightful Christological exegesis of Israel's Scriptures" (p. 191). K. McCruden's "The Concept of Perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews" deals with one of the thorniest theological concepts in Hebrews, that of the divine son, and hence, perfect, made perfect. He contends that, when read with the assumptions offered by the "larger narrative world or theological story" (p. 211) that informs the sermon, this theological conundrum can be parsed out by separating the ontological and functional (priestly) frameworks defining Jesus and, by extension, his followers.

The final group of articles is devoted to various aspects pertaining to the epistle's reception in history. In "The Jesus of Hebrews and the Christ of Chalcedon," R. Greer underscores the poverty of modern biblicists whose horizon does not extend far enough to the times of the theological ferment of the first four centuries, thus limiting themselves to the dry and reductionistic landscape of post-enlightenment assumptions and methodologies. A look at Athanasius of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius of Antioch proves how futile it would be to craft a portrait of Christ from the raw data of the epistle uninformed by the major Christological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. A. Mitchell's "A Sacrifice of Praise" offers a non-supersessionist reading of those passages that, allegedly, support the very opposite position. To construe Heb 7:1–12, 8:7–13, and 10:1–10 as proofs of supersessionism would be a *non sequitur*; the thought was never part of the author's original intentions. M. Torgerson's "Hebrews in the Worship Life of the Church" evinces, by a kaleidoscopic sampling, the "numerous ways in which ministry, the lectionary, hymnody, service books, and visual arts" (p. 269) bear the impact of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

One could think of no better closing than the one penned by H. Attridge. His epilogue not only recapitulates the major theses of the volume but also provides a brief, laser-sharp critique of the various positions espoused in them. One would expect nothing less from the Hebrews scholar *par excellence*, whose commentary and scholarship devoted to the epistle were in part responsible for the renewed interest in this magnificent first-century document.

There are many commendable aspects of this collection of articles that will undoubtedly lead to a better reading, understanding, and interpreting of Hebrews. Of course, one might not agree with all the ideas advocated, or the methodologies proposed, or the conclusions reached therein. For example, I continue to be unconvinced by Koester's segmentation of the epistle or by Gelardini's too precise placement of the homily within the synagogal context. When assessing sins and their relative degrees of gravity, should we now follow Seneca's lead in taking the "crime of ingratitude" as the gravest of them all, as implied by Neyrey? Is the ideological world of the Church fathers really a *sine qua non* for delineating a historically and theologically accurate portrait of Jesus? Is not Mitchell's non-secessionist read-

ing of the passages in Hebrews a classical example of eisegesis, in which subsequent history, painful and tragic as it was, is allowed to influence the more natural, direct understanding of those passages?

Reaching scholarly consensus on all these issues, as desirable as it might be, is an unrealistic expectation and an unachievable goal. Dialoging about them, however, with ever increased refinement and nuance is not. To that end this volume makes a worthy and gratulatory contribution. As to the SBL series of "Readings," let it continue!

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The Epistle to the Hebrews. By Gareth Lee Cockerill. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xlix + 742 pp., $60.00.

Professor Cockerill's new commentary on Hebrews joins a growing list of expositions of the difficult but fascinating Letter to the Hebrews, replacing F. F. Bruce's classic contribution to the NICNT series. The introduction is both traditional and distinctive at the same time. On the traditional side, the customary issues of authorship, canonicity, and the identity of the recipients are taken up. The distinctive element is Cockerill's designation of the author as "the pastor" (a much overworked phrase), who pens a sermon to his congregation. While the proposal that Hebrews is a sermon is not new, Cockerill develops the model programmatically both in the introduction and throughout the commentary. In rejecting as a paradigm for the letter the standard categories of ancient rhetoric—judicial, epideictic, deliberative—he proposes that "Hebrews is best understood as an example of the kind of homily or sermon typical of the synagogue and thus used in early Christianity" (p. 13). Understandably, he cites Acts 13:15, Paul's "word of exhortation," which matches the same phrase in Heb 13:22. The author of the letter, then, "would use exhortation both to prepare his hearers to grasp this teaching and to urge them to act upon it" (pp. 14–15). The important qualification is that Hebrews is a "*Christian* synagogue homily," with a "*Christological* orientation," one that presents a Christ-centered interpretation and application of the OT text (p. 15, italics mine). This is so despite a traditional letter ending (13:22–25).

As for the recipients of the letter, they were able to appreciate the elegance of the writer's Greek and were thereby at home linguistically and culturally within the Hellenistic world. Their main problem, writes Cockerill, is that they were in danger of compromising their commitment to Christ. They had become spiritually dull and slow to grasp the full significance of Christ and his work. In fact, they were in danger of reverting to "a spiritual immaturity totally inappropriate for experienced believers" (p. 16). The fear is that this lassitude, neglect, and regression might lead to apostasy from Christ. Their anxiety about present marginalization, anticipated suffering, and perhaps martyrdom may have been exacerbated by the disappointment that Christ had not yet returned or by their failure to realize and appropriate his full sufficiency as savior. The pastor is thus concerned that his readers persevere in the

life of faith and obedience. Cockerill underscores the importance of perseverance in light of the notions of honor and shame in the first-century Hellenistic milieu.

In taking up the question whether the recipients were Jewish or Gentile in background, Cockerill makes two assertions that underlie the ensuing commentary. The one is that Hebrews is completely free of any kind of ethnic distinction; its author never differentiates Jews from Gentiles. The other is that the pastor never compares Christ with contemporary Judaism but only with the institutions of the old covenant and priestly system as described in the Pentateuch.

Cockerill places Hebrews within the milieu of apocalyptic literature, while mindful of the differences. Its distinctives are: (1) Hebrews refrains from speculative descriptions of the heavenly world; (2) the writer draws on the heavenly realm to clarify the benefits that Christ has already provided for the faithful; (3) regardless of the influence of the two-age schema, these eras cannot be equated simply with the times of the old and new covenants. In particular, "the old covenant must not be identified with the old age dominated by evil that continues until Christ's return" (p. 28).

Because the letter is set within a Hebrew/biblical framework, there can be no dominant influence of Neo-Platonic thought on its author. Hebrews, writes Cockerill, gives every evidence of being "a unique and profound development of the gospel tradition on the basis of careful OT interpretation" (p. 33). The writer "is an independent and creative theologian who has set about interpreting the OT with his own agenda and in his own fashion" (p. 34, quoting Jon Laansma). After a thorough discussion of the letter's date, a time-frame of AD 50–90 is set. Somewhat surprisingly, Cockerill maintains that the author's use of the OT makes it unlikely he would have used the temple's destruction as evidence of the demise of the old order, which would establish the *terminus ad quem* before the late Summer of AD 70.

A notable advance over Bruce's earlier commentary is the discussion of the letter's use of the OT. As regards typology in particular, Cockerill works with the more or less standard definition: "OT institutions, persons, and events through which God redeemed his people were types that foreshadowed what he would accomplish in Christ" (pp. 53–54). An added bonus is the treatment of Hebrews and the contemporary Jewish use of the OT. Cockerill enumerates four differences between the two, the essence of which is that the pastor reads the Scriptures Christologically. The hermeneutical principles that underlie his understanding of the Bible are threefold: (1) God's word in the incarnate and obedient Son fulfills all that God has said; (2) the old covenant, with its priesthood and sacrifices, did and still does function typologically, foreshadowing the full sufficiency of Christ as Savior; (3) those who live by faith in the Word of God constitute one people of God throughout history.

The introduction is rounded off by an analysis of "The Sermon's Rhetorically Effective Structure" and "The Sermon's Abiding Message." The latter can be summarized in terms of God's speaking to his own. Hebrews has a message for the people of God who live in a world that refuses to acknowledge him. Yet for believers, "The incarnation, suffering, obedience, self-offering, and exaltation of God's eternal Son are the ultimate self-disclosure of the divine character fulfilling what

has gone before" (p. 77). The recipients of the letter, therefore, are to persevere in the life of faith, in spite of the opposition of the world, through the resources that are theirs in Christ.

Let me touch base here and there with the exegesis of the commentary. A natural starting point is the warning passages, two of which may be considered briefly. The one is Heb 5:11–6:8. The metaphor of tasting the heavenly gift (6:4) is important because it depicts those who have truly experienced certain realities. The imagery is doubly fitting: it affirms that those described have experienced a salvation that consists of all the blessings that God has made available to his people; yet these privileges are but a taste of the fulfillment to come. "Hebrews clearly affirms … both the present reality and future consummation of salvation" (p. 272). The other is Heb 10:26–31 and in particular 10:26a. Cockerill maintains that "willful sinning" points to "the willing, intentional, involvement of the transgressor" (p. 483), while distancing the writer's language from Num 15:22–31.

Another factor is Christology. One of the author's strongest assertions of a high Christology is 1:3: Christ is the *apaugasma* of God's glory and the *charaktēr* of his being. The former is translated "the very radiance of God's glory" and the latter "the exact representation of God's very being." The combination of terms makes the Son "'the outshining' of the God who really is" and the "exact representation" or "imprint" of this God. "These two complementary expressions … preserve the distinctiveness of the Son while affirming that the finality of his revelation is based on his identity with the God he reveals" (p. 94).

If anything, Hebrews is the epistle of faith, a definition of which is provided by Heb 11:1. Cockerill translates *hypostasis* as the "reality" of things hoped for and *elenchos* as "the objective evidence" or "proof" of that which is not seen. It is in chapter 11 that the author offers "the examples of faith and the way God demonstrated his power in their lives as evidence for the reality of God and his present activity on his people's behalf" (p. 521).

Finally, there is the handling of what might be considered "oddities" in this epistle. The first is the cryptic statement of 9:23. The verse evokes two questions: (1) Why must the "heavenly things" be cleansed? (2) Why does the writer use the plural "sacrifices" when referring to the one sacrifice of Christ? Taking the second question first, it is proposed that the plural is employed because the author is drawing a parallel with the various offerings of the old covenant and establishing a general principal before discussing the "better sacrifice" of Christ. Thus, Christ's sacrifice cleanses the heavenly sanctuary by analogy with the way in which the animal sacrifices cleansed the earthly temple. It must be admitted, however, that these explanations are not precisely satisfying, especially as regards the cleansing of the celestial sanctuary. In what sense could it have been defiled? A similarly tantalizing passage is 13:2b: the "angels unawares." The OT allusions are no doubt to Gen 18:2–15 and Gen 19:1–22, but it is not explained whether the recipients might actually expect an angelic visitation or whether the reference is literary only.

Several further items of critique may be advanced. For one, the proposal that Hebrews is a homily, not a letter, fails to carry full conviction. True, its commencement is unconventional for a letter, but it is understandable enough given the

dynamics of the situation. Second, it is questionable that the old covenant and the law must not be identified with the old age dominated by evil that continues until Christ's return. Third, it is also open to doubt that one should speak in terms of the "saving efficacy" of the Mosaic Covenant, given that everything about that covenant was provisional and forward-looking. Fourth, the writer makes no mention of the destruction of the temple, and, notwithstanding Cockerill's denial, such a momentous event would have readily played into his hands as proof-positive that the age of the Torah had reached an end.

In spite of these few questionings, Cockerill's commentary is a splendid addition to the NICNT and should serve as a standard exegetical resource for many years to come.

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Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books. By Michael J. Kruger. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012, 362 pp., $30.00.

In this well-researched and stimulating volume, Michael Kruger, Professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary (Charlotte, NC), discusses several of the complex aspects of the NT canon, arguing that each of the writings of the NT bear particular qualities that are to be determined by the canon itself. Kruger's primary objective is to provide Christians with a satisfactory explanation as to "how we, as Christians, can know that we have the right twenty-seven books in our New Testament" (p. 15). The foundational importance of this question should hardly be missed. As Kruger writes, "If Christians cannot adequately answer these questions about the canonical boundaries of the New Testament, then on what grounds could they ever appeal to the content of the New Testament?" (p. 16). Recently, Kruger co-authored the book *The Heresy of Orthodoxy* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010; with Andreas J. Köstenberger), which refuted the theory set forth by Walter Bauer, Bart Ehrman, and others that early Christianity was characterized by widespread diversity and that the NT as we know it merely reflects the theological persuasions of an influential and powerful segment of the Christian movement that exerted its influence in the canon-shaping process. Building upon this study, *Canon Revisited* focuses more thoroughly upon the problem of canon, arguing "that Christians can know which books belong in the canon and which do not" (p. 21).

The book is divided into two major divisions. In the first part, Kruger discusses two general canonical models that have been used to determine the canonicity of a given text. After discussing the strengths and weakness of each approach, an alternative proposal is put forth which is then defended throughout the remainder of the volume. The first model Kruger considers is what he describes as a community-determined approach. Those who advocate this method "view the canon as something that is, in some sense, established or constituted by the people—either individually or corporately—who have received these books as Scripture" (pp. 29–30). According to this approach, the writings that now comprise the NT do

not possess any inherent authority and only began to be regarded as canonical when specific individuals or communities made the determination to recognize them as such. As Kruger notes, this approach assumes that "'canon' is not something that describes the quality of a book, but is something that is done to books" (p. 32). Kruger concludes that this method is to be critiqued for its rejection of the intrinsic authority of particular writings as well as its disregard for the fact that the NT writings were produced during the apostolic age (p. 66).

The second major canonical model Kruger examines is what he describes as the historically-determined approach. Broadly speaking, those who espouse this method recognize that the canonicity of a given text must be determined by a careful critical study that takes into account such factors as authorship, dating, content, etc. As Kruger observes, this approach is not entirely objective given that scholars are prone to—among other things—evaluate the authority of a given passage based on their presuppositions of what the original teaching of Jesus or the apostles must have been (p. 69). As might be expected, advocates of this approach have reached a variety of conclusions regarding the content of the canon. Some have concluded that all 27 books of the NT are to be regarded as canonical, while others have rejected the authority of certain NT writings on historical grounds, adopting a canon-within-the-canon type of approach (p. 67). Although he repeatedly affirms the importance of historical inquiry, Kruger considers the historically-determined approach to be problematic given that it places an "unequivocal emphasis on the role of historical investigation," which "can unwittingly communicate that there are no other God-given means by which Christians can have assurance about the boundaries of the canon" (p. 86).

For Kruger, neither the community-determined model nor the historically-determined model can adequately account for the important characteristics that reveal a text's intrinsic authority. Instead, both systems "ground the authority of the canon in something outside the canon itself" (p. 88). What the book seeks to advance, therefore, is a model that places a rightful emphasis on the internal qualities that characterize the authentic canonical writings rather than an approach that merely appeals to some type of external authority such as the dictates of a given community or the historical conclusions made by modern biblical scholars. After making an appeal for a new canonical approach, Kruger precedes to describe what he has termed the self-authenticating model. He suggests that books that may be rightly regarded as canonical can be recognized on the basis of their providential exposure, canonical attributes, and the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit (p. 290). Some of the canonical attributes would include (1) the presence of divine qualities that one would expect in inspired writings such as its ability to witness to God's character or the person and work of Christ; (2) evidence that the book bears the authoritative message of the apostles and was written during the apostolic era; and (3) evidence that the book was known and embraced by Christians in the earliest period following its writing. This model is then defended at length in the second part of the book with helpful discussions relating to each of these criteria.

Perhaps the most questionable aspect of Kruger's approach is that the "self-authenticating" qualities of early Christian writings may be regarded by some as an

insufficient means of settling the question of inspiration. It is certainly reasonable to expect inspired texts to bear evidence of their apostolic origins; however, many would agree that internal evidence alone is an insufficient means of gauging the authorship or inspiration of a given writing. This is especially true of the canonical writings that are either anonymous (e.g. Hebrews) or determined by some to be pseudepigraphal (e.g. the Pastorals, 2 Peter, etc.). As a result, scholars over the entire course of Christian history have appealed to historical observations in order to determine whether or not various writings can rightly be regarded as inspired. To cite but one example, Eusebius observed that there were some in Rome who rejected the epistle of Hebrews based on the conclusion that it was not written by Paul (*Hist. eccl.* 3.3). These critics undoubtedly based their assessment of the apostolic authority of Hebrews on historical grounds rather than the epistle's "self-authenticating" qualities.

Kruger contends that his canonical approach is unique given that "the external evidence does not stand alone as an independent standard to which Scripture must measure up" (p. 111). This may sound commendable in theory, but practically it would seem that there is little difference between the method Kruger is advocating and those that he believes to be deficient. Few would disagree that the disputed writings of the NT contain many of the divine qualities Kruger describes. What is not readily accepted is the apostolic origin of these writings, a factor that simply cannot be satisfactorily determined apart from careful historical inquiry. In the end, therefore, it is not the "self-authenticating" qualities of these books that are probative in determining the extent of the NT canon, but rather historical considerations that are often external to the text. Once this is recognized, the distinction between Kruger's method and those he seeks to counter become merely theoretical. Regardless of what type of method one employs to establish the basis of the NT canon, one simply cannot avoid a considerable degree of dependence upon historical questions relating to a text's authorship or its reception in a particular community.

All things considered, anyone who is interested in NT canonical studies will find this volume to be an excellent resource on an intriguing subject. The book is well researched, clearly written, and worthy of a careful study from all those in the field. Students and laypeople wishing to learn more about the development of the NT canon will find this volume to be an excellent guide and introduction. Those with a more advanced knowledge of canonical studies will also find this volume to be rewarding given its attempt to address perennial challenges with ambitious solutions.

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New Testament Theology in Light of the Church's Mission: Essays in Honor of I. Howard Marshall. Edited by Jon C. Laansma, Grant Osborne, and Ray Van Neste. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2011, xix + 395 pp., $46.00 paper.

Not many scholars have a *Festschrift* published in their honor. Very few are the recipients of two *Festschriften*. I. Howard Marshall is just such a man. Having been lauded first with *Jesus of Nazareth, Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* (ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), Marshall's life is now celebrated in this informative collection of essays entitled *Theology in Light of the Church's Mission*.

Author or editor of thirty-eight books, Professor Marshall has left his mark on countless pastors, missionaries, and students. Perhaps more significantly, he has mentored a generation of younger evangelical NT scholars through his doctoral supervision. Some of these former doctoral students, along with respected colleagues and friends, have banded together to honor Marshall with this second *Festschrift* by focusing on a repeated concern in his writings—theological reflection informed by the missionary impulse of the NT writings and directed to the ongoing missionary advance of the church.

Following an opening section of personal appreciation for Marshall's life by co-editor Ray Van Neste, the reader is presented with a fourteen-page comprehensive bibliography of Marshall's books, articles, and essays. The volume's remaining twenty-two chapters are subdivided into four sections: (1) The Gospel for All Peoples: Method, Integrity, Translation; (2) Gospels and Acts; (3) Paul; and (4) Hebrews and Revelation. Most of the essays deal with some missions-related theme in the NT, such as James D. G. Dunn's chapter, "Methodology of Evangelism in the New Testament: Some Preliminary Reflections" or Alistair I. Wilson's "An Ideal Missionary Prayer Letter: Reflections on Paul's Mission Theology as Expressed in Philippians." Other contributors include (in order of appearance): Craig L. Blomberg, Philip H. Towner, Richard T. France, Darrell L. Bock, Esther Yue L. Ng, Gary M. Burge, Mark L. Strauss, Joel B. Green, Gene L. Green, Brian S. Rosner, Andrew D. Clarke, Maureen W. Yeung, Roy E. Ciampa, Anthony C. Thiselton, Greg A. Couser, Robert W. Yarbrough, Paul Ellingworth, Jon C. Laansma, Grant R. Osborne, and Eckhard J. Schnabel.

It is a rare joy to find top-notch biblical scholars employing their exegetical skills to explore missions-related themes, and this book will disappoint neither the missionary practitioner nor the professional exegete. Though the book is a bit pricey for a paperback ($46), I can imagine it being used well as a supplementary text in an upper-level missions or biblical theology seminar. Undoubtedly, this book should be purchased by every theological library associated with a college or seminary. And, though putting readings "on reserve" in the library is passé, perhaps an essay or two from this text would work well as supplemental readings for a class.

A few of the essays, while interesting, seem poorly fitted to the book's overarching missions theme (Gary Burge's investigation of the Gospel of John's water motif in light of recent archaeological discoveries in Jerusalem, for example). Also, as with any multi-author volume of essays, there is sometimes overlap or repetition.

For example, several contributors begin their essays with a nearly identical reference to Marshall's assertion of the missionary nature of NT writings from his *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004).

With such limited space to review this diverse collection of essays, perhaps it would be best to focus on two essays for further summary and interaction. I will begin with Dunn's chapter because, while I found the essay insightful at points, I have hesitations about a few of his assertions.

The first numbered chapter of the book (following the reflection on Marshall's life and bibliography of his works) is James D. G. Dunn's "Methodology of Evangelism in the New Testament: Some Preliminary Reflections." Dunn approaches the question of the method of evangelism in the NT cautiously—noting "the danger of distorting the purpose and intent of individual NT documents in order to provide answers to *our* questions, questions which were never actually addressed by the NT writers themselves" (p. 25, italics his).

Dunn divides his discussion neatly under three headings (Where? How? and What?). That is, where was evangelism done, how was it done, and what was the content of the evangelistic message? Regarding the "where" question, Dunn shows how "the earliest Christian mission, including Jesus and Paul, shows a *readiness to stay within the established religious structures*—that is, the religious structures of Judaism" (p. 28, italics his).

Regarding "how" evangelism was carried out, Dunn points to the regular pattern of preaching and teaching in Jesus' ministry. Such preaching and teaching did not always stay in formal settings. Both Jesus and his early followers are found not only in the synagogue and temple, but also the home and marketplace.

With Dunn's introduction of the "what" section, the reader expects a discussion of the proclaimed gospel's basic content. Dunn, in fact, redefines "content" to specify the "packaging" or "medium" of the message. He then spends some time pointing out the redactional emphases of the different Gospel authors. Unfortunately, he then seems to slide into a relativistic affirmation of diverse understandings of the gospel. Citing disagreements recorded in the NT (including that between Paul and his opponents), Dunn avers, "There was no single or uniform means of presenting the gospel in the earliest days of Christianity. There were disputes on how the gospel should be presented and on the lifestyle necessarily consequent upon the gospel; different opinions were evidently held in good faith on both sides" (p. 39).

Though Dunn begins his well-written chapter with a clear tripartite structure (where, how, what), his later discussion seems to mix these questions, as the "how" of evangelism (preaching, teaching) wanders back into the "where" question—exploring the various locations for formal and informal teaching. I also wonder if Dunn is not in danger of giving modern Christians attracted to non-evangelistic withdrawal or philosophical pluralism a nudge in the wrong direction.

Kierkegaard famously quipped, "Christian scholarship is the human race's prodigious invention to defend itself against the New Testament, to ensure that one can continue to be a Christian without letting the New Testament come too close." Kierkegaard's warning is especially apropos in a day when outward-directed

evangelism is met with scorn by broader society. Is Dunn perhaps only salving our evangelistically-impoverished souls to conclude, "The NT writings do not warrant any guilt-inducing generalization that only those Christians who are active in explicit evangelism are true to the spirit of the NT" (p. 27)? In Mark 1:44, Jesus told a man, "See that you say nothing to anyone" (ESV). Do we wish he had said the same to us?

I find misguided Dunn's insistence that not only the form and emphases of the gospel, but the *content* of the gospel must be changed or risk becoming "a fossilized relic of an older age" (p. 40). Further qualification might permit Dunn's unguarded assertion to stand, but it appears a far cry from the apostle Paul's confession in 1 Corinthians 15:1–11. Dunn's polyvalent use of the term "content" makes it difficult to be certain what he is affirming.

Already skating along the edge of my assigned word count, I will explore briefly another chapter in the book. Andrew D. Clarke authored the essay in chapter 12, "Church Membership and the ἰδιώτης in the Early Corinthian Community." With appropriate scholarly caution, Clarke applies modern insights about social inclusion/exclusion and group boundaries to the understanding of "membership" (broadly conceived) in 1 Corinthians. Clarke makes a good case that the language not only of Paul, but of the rest of the NT, clearly distinguishes insider from outsider. Before exploring various texts from 1 Corinthians, he explains, "I suggest the presence not only of unequivocal boundary markers within the Pauline epistles, but also a number of features specifically in 1 Corinthians that appear to suggest areas that are rather more grey—that is an apparent blurring of boundaries, and, at times even a mandate to accommodate those who do not fulfill all the standard requirements of full association" (p. 203). Clarke's subsequent exploration of this motif is insightful, ending with the cautious summary: "Behavior within the Christian community should, in particular ways, accommodate those who are on the fringes of the community" (p. 211). Modern studies on both church membership and mission would be well served by incorporating Clarke's insights.

In summary, *New Testament Theology in Light of the Church's Mission* is a good book filled with good essays by good scholars in honor of a good man. Although Marshall is a towering scholarly figure, it is clear from the contributors' personal reflections that his legacy is much more enduring than the volumes of exemplary research that he produced. Professor Marshall is consistently remembered as a man of integrity and love, who sees himself first as a Christian and second, as a scholar, employing his gifts for the church of his savior, Jesus Christ.

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Re-Imaging Election: Divine Election as Representing God to Others and Others to God. By Suzanne McDonald. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, xx + 233 pp., $26.00 paper.

The doctrine of election for centuries seems to have taken center stage in theological discourse pertaining to Reformed thought. While the historic Reformed

approach to election affirms, for the most part, the concept of "double predestination" established primarily in the Canons of Dordt, there are significant revisions to the doctrine in the works of such "Reformed" thinkers as John Macleod Campbell, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Karl Barth. In a book that serves as a Reformed revisitation to the subject of election, Suzanne McDonald offers a different perspective by examining the scriptural contours of the doctrine and its relationship to the *imago Dei.* The thesis of the book, first proposed by the author in her doctoral dissertation at the University of St. Andrews, is that the *imago Dei* can serve as the foundation for a theological formulation for understanding the purpose of election as that of "representation"—representing God to others and others to God (p. xiv). The author sees the concept of election as God choosing to carry out his universal purpose through a single, particular calling of a chosen covenant people. McDonald argues that the elect can be conceived as those set apart to hold the alienated and seemingly rejected "other" before God and, thus, keep the alienated still within the sphere of God's promised covenant blessings (p. xvi).

McDonald, furthermore, desires to give greater balance to both the Christological and pneumatological dimensions found in the election act whereby election can be acknowledged genuinely as being "in Christ" and "by the Spirit." She chooses for dialogue partners in constructing her proposal the election theology of John Owen, representing the earlier Reformed tradition, and that of Karl Barth, who reinterpreted the traditional Reformed doctrine significantly. Not desiring to scuttle the primary tenets found in Barth's Christology concerning the nature of God's election of all humanity (and, thus, rejection of individual double predestination), McDonald seeks to adopt the rich pneumatology she finds guiding Owen's election doctrine and its particular relationship to the *imago Dei.* Having established the election theology of the two aforementioned Reformed thinkers as the perimeter for her proposal, McDonald begins her task.

Chapter one is a concise look at the election doctrine of John Owen, whom McDonald, quoting Carl Trueman, describes as the "forgotten man" of English theology. Owen, whose works do not include a specific treatise of the image of God, nevertheless weaves important aspects of the doctrine into his detailed writings on Christology and the work of the Holy Spirit. His strong affirmation the *filioque* in the inner-Trinitarian order of being is expressed in his presentation of the Holy Spirit's role in bringing to fulfillment the economy of salvation that is eternally decreed for the elect by the Father and the Son. This economy entails the Spirit uniting the elect to the risen Son and his benefits ("in Christ by the Spirit") and has important implications for Owen's election pneumatology. Because he denies that there is any innate feature of God's image in humanity following the fall, it is Christ who is the prototype of the new humanity. The Spirit's task, therefore, is restoring the lost image through the union of the elect to Christ in order that they experience redemption and reestablish right relationship to God. The restoration of the image in the elect is for Owen "representation" of God's overarching purpose for humanity; indeed, for Owen, "the image of God consists in being those creatures specifically called *to represent the holiness, righteousness, and love of God in the world* and *represent Christ* to all other humans" (p. 24).

Chapter two presents McDonald's insightful interpretation of Barth's "other" doctrine of election. She maintains that Barth contributes to the Reformed doctrine of election by offering *two* accounts, an early version in his *Göttingen Dogmatics* and the more noteworthy model in the *Church Dogmatics* II/2, each featuring a different approach to the Spirit's role (p. 32). McDonald asserts that Barth adopts the traditional Reformed doctrine of double predestination in *GD* that is "emphatically individual, unconditional, and double" in presentation. The early Barth affirms that while election does determine each individual's destiny, the "something special" that creates the human response to God's self-revelation and enacts God's decision of election is the efficacious grace of the Holy Spirit. Those who are rejected by God do not receive this saving grace provided by the Spirit while, for the elect, the event of revelation is the actualizing of reconciliation through the Spirit's irresistible grace. This is Barth's only deviation from the classical model with his "actualist" understanding of God's decision. This divine eternal election is not an act in the pre-temporal past, but is a "living eternity," a "moment-by-moment divine deciding for or against an individual in each God-determined possibility of revelation" (p. 35).

McDonald finds the essential features of Barth's view of election in the *GD* repeated in *CD* I/1 and I/2. Both election and revelation place the individual in total dependence "upon the future coming of the Word as event for us by the gift of the Spirit" (p. 39). The word incarnate, Jesus Christ, is the objective reality of God's self-revelation, and in Christ the revelation and reconciliation that the elect receive has already taken place. The subjective appropriation of this objective revelation, which is the acknowledgement of this achieved reality, is the work of the Holy Spirit whereby the elect individual is a recipient of God's revelation, the object of the divine reconciliation. Barth insists that to be "in Christ" is something not intrinsic to human beings because the image of God has been annihilated due to sin. Rather, it is the Spirit's work of revelation that causes this "new thing" to be added to an individual's being whereby she comprehends this objective reconciliation by becoming a hearer and doer of the Word.

The author, citing the previous work of Bruce McCormack, finds Barth's view of election in *CD* II/2 as undergoing a dramatic Christological reorientation. Election for Barth now becomes primarily an ontological category in which the triune God's self-determination is the free decision to be God-for-us in Christ. In the person of Christ, God chooses to enter into a gracious relationship and elects *himself*; thus, Jesus Christ alone becomes the electing God and the elect man. He becomes not only the elected one but the only truly rejected human being. Election is no longer primarily about predestining individuals because, for Barth, individual double predestination is the result of an insufficient Christ-centered account of election's nature. Because there is already a large body of academic work devoted to Barth's mature election doctrine, there is no need tarry longer on this discussion.

McDonald's interest here is the role that Christology and pneumatology play in relation to the image of God in humanity and election, particularly from Barth's perspective. He revises a part of his earlier view concerning the *imago Dei* to emphasize that our imaging consists in *analogia relationis* in which humans are created to be

covenant partners with God. This revision means the image has not been lost due to sin nor is it even partially destroyed. But the image, unlike what Owen suggests, does not consist in *right-relatedness to God* but is focused on the nature of *God's relationship to us*, which is determined in his self-election in Christ (p. 51). In Christ is seen the perfect existence of the divine and the human; thus, humanity is determined ontologically to participate in Christ's all-encompassing imaging of God.

Despite Barth's robust Christological reorientation of doctrine, McDonald notes, as have critics before her, that Barth's mature view of election leads to a diminution of the Holy Spirit's role in effecting salvation. The Spirit-enabled response to faith is subsumed in all humanity being elect "in Christ" apart from the Spirit's work in us. She also notes, rightly, that the NT (Paul's pneumatology in particular) provides a far different picture, as the Spirit's work is the decisive difference in effecting the crucial transition to being "in Christ" (p. 67). There are still occasions in Barth's later work where he appears to insist that the Spirit's work is a necessity for the reality of one's election in Christ, not just for the apprehension of it. An impasse remains between the Spirit's task and Christ's accomplished work in Barth's doctrine. Not only do Owen and Barth each embrace the implications of the *filioque* for the Spirit's role in election, but both insist that the works of God *ad extra* are a reflection of the shape of the Trinitarian life *ad intra*. But Barth's radical concentration of the whole of election in Christ goes against the NT witness and earlier Reformed tradition represented by Owen where there is no "in Christ" apart from the Spirit's work. The Spirit's presence does not simply cause one to recognize that one is elect in Christ, but is determinative in whether one is elect or not.

Following her detailed analysis of the shaping of the doctrine by Owen and Barth, the author begins in chapter four to move from the descriptive to the prescriptive task of sketching the scriptural contours of her proposal by focusing on the continuities between the divine image and election in light recent biblical scholarship (p. 87). Primarily, she hopes to show that the concept of "representation" is found in significant portions of the OT and NT witness. McDonald finds the Gen 1:26–27 account to be noteworthy, because the creation of humanity in the image of God is seen as God choosing to make something manifest in the created order, and through which he mediates his presence. In the NT, the focus shifts from the image in relation to humanity to it being revealed supremely in the person of Christ. As the one true image of the invisible God, Christ by the Holy Spirit transforms fallen persons into his image through redemption. Sharing in the image of Christ (rather than that of Adam) is the eschatological destiny of the believing community. This means that just as Christ represents God fully to humanity, so he also represents humanity to God. McDonald's thesis is that if Christ's imaging is the touchstone for the church's image, then in a very real sense those "in Christ" must *represent others to God.*

She attempts to flesh out her argument by referencing the election of Israel and, in particular, the Pauline Christological reorientation of this election as espoused by N. T. Wright. In living out its existence as the chosen people of God, Israel is the "locus" of God's self-manifestation and mediates his presence to the Gentiles (p. 99). As nations respond to Israel, so they likewise respond to God and

receive blessing or judgment as it relates to the nature of that response, even if Israel is not conscious of God's work among the nations. It might be said also, in this sense, that Israel provisionally represents the whole of humanity to God. Wright finds in Pauline theology that Christ encapsulates the covenant promise of blessings to both Israel and the nations because Jesus is the fulfillment of God's purpose in electing Israel. As Israel's representative Messiah, Christ in faithfulness bears the sins of unfaithful Israel in covenant judgment and, because Israel's election is representational of all humanity, Christ is also the bearer of the world's sins. The Messiah is the channel of the wider blessing that is God's promise to Israel which, by its election, represents the other nations to God. Wright is insistent, however, that this election language can refer *only* to very particular community that finds itself "in Christ" by the Spirit through faith.

It is evident that McDonald wants to move beyond what she sees as the problematic and inadequate categories of universalism and particularism as they relate to the language of election. She desires an alternative conceptual framework for the doctrine that will hold together these polar concepts and, perhaps, transcend them. Because she wants to affirm that the church is the instrument through which God works out his wider intent of blessing, McDonald insists that the elect community itself is not the sole focus of God's purposes in election. In this representational dynamic of election, the elect community, even in its own sinfulness, exists intrinsically for the sake of the other, and it "representatively holds the sinfulness of alienated humanity as whole in itself before God" (p. 134). Furthermore, the nature and dynamic of election in Israel, in Christ, and in the church demonstrates that God's intentions for humanity is not simply shown but is also enacted through his elect.

McDonald uses the concept of "parable" to help demonstrate how the relational dynamic of election to representation of others by the believing community might be conceived now and in the consummation of all things. Interestingly, she chooses the degenerative effect of dementia to conceptualize in parabolic fashion the dynamic between the elect and the rest of humanity. McDonald points out that in severe dementia, the dynamic of relational personhood is essentially *representational*. The unique identity and personhood of someone with severe dementia can be preserved only as it is held for him and continually imparted to him by others. Even though those who stand in relation with the person with dementia cannot serve to make him a "whole person," they can still, at an ontological level, hold the personhood and identity in being for him who cannot any longer do so. The parable itself is designed to show the reality of "true personhood on Christ" that is held by the elect for the rest of humanity, to whom it would otherwise be wholly inaccessible (p. 164). This idea is bound up with the idea the elect always and intrinsically exist "for the sake" of those are alienated from God.

How might this election to representation be displayed in its eschatological form? What will this mean for those who have been drawn by the elect into the sphere of the church's communion with God in Christ by the Spirit? McDonald, while proceeding with caution, suggests that within this dynamic, the parousia must be considered a pneumatological as well as a Christological event. The Spirit's work at present is to enable the confession of Christ as Lord, to constitute our person-

hood in Christ, and to transform us into Christ-likeness. She assumes that at the parousia it will likewise be the Spirit alone that continues to perform this same task. Although it is not possible to know the eschatological outcome of the Spirit's role in election in representation by the church to those outside the covenant community, it is McDonald's hope that this provisional representation will yield some surprising outcomes. It is the hope that those who currently live in rebellion, alienation, indifference, and/or ignorance will be drawn by the Spirit into the wider hope of God's blessing and his saving purpose because of this particularity-in-relation that has been established in the covenant community.

McDonald sums up her proposal by returning to the election doctrine of Owen and Barth, particularly as each relates to the concept of representation. For Owen, the Spirit transforms the elect more and more into the likeness of Christ, who is the one true image of God. The elect, therefore, are able to fulfill their calling by representing Christ to the world in their lives and through proclamation. But there is no place for the elect to represent those who have been apparently rejected by God, because the church cannot be said to represent the non-elect to God. In Barth, the idea of the church representing others to God receives strong identification because the particular election of the church is a further, self-conscious exercising of the aspect of representation. The church exists to witness to and declare God's self-election in Christ, as well as the reality that all are given a share in this election. What sets the elect community of the church apart from humanity as a whole is the Spirit's work in giving recognition to the whole of the reality of their election in Christ and the call to live in accordance with it. Yet with Barth's doctrine of election, the inclusion of the whole of humanity in the all-embracing election in Christ cannot do justice to the full distinctiveness of the elect community in its relationship to God and to the rest of humanity.

McDonald notes that both Owen and Barth see election as the outcome of representation. For Owen this is the outworking of the eternal double decree, and for Barth it reflects the inclusion of all, at least provisionally, within the one election of Christ who has born our rejection. The author desires an approach to election that distinguishes between the two by seeing representing God to others as part of what it means to be elect. McDonald's thesis throughout is that the scriptural witness leads to the conclusion that God has chosen to further his purpose of blessing not only for the elect community, but also beyond the elect community as it exists in history. Yet this "representational election dynamic" shares with Barth and *contra* Reformed orthodoxy the insistence that the foundational purpose of election is blessing, grounded in God's self-determination to be God-for-us in Christ.

McDonald seeks in her work to open the possibilities for dialogue about election in Reformed circles and, in her view, to reclaim the doctrine for the church. She even suggests that while the questions and important aspects of the Reformed approach have shaped her critical approach to the task, the relational dynamic of election need not require a Reformed framework. McDonald has undertaken to formulate her proposal because she refuses to allow the election doctrine to be a "theological optional extra," and wants election to be at the heart of any attempt to

speak of the purposes of God in and for the world. In prompting Reformed thinkers to revisit the scriptural and theological contours of election, she apparently has succeeded, although it is uncertain whether her reformulation of doctrine will ever find wide acceptance.

A reason that her reformulation may not be readily accepted, at least in most evangelical circles, is because she is not specific as to the identity of these "others," the alienated and seemingly rejected who are represented before God by the elect, covenant people. Does this election include all of alienated humanity who will eventually be found to be "in Christ" and, thus, a part of the covenant community, when the Holy Spirit brings to full revelation the reality of their election? If so, when will this eschatological reality occur? There are times in McDonald's work when she seems to be affirming this tenet found in Barth's doctrine, but it is not always clear because she, like Barth, does appear to commit to the idea of universal salvation. Yet if McDonald favors this particular view of election as it relates to the "alienated" and "seemingly" rejected, then it is difficult to see how she closes the door to the concept of a hypothetical universalist soteriology. Moreover, is it possible, ultimately, for the author to support this interpretation of election with a thoroughgoing and comprehensive exegesis of the biblical testimony as it relates to election? Several theologians and biblical scholars are likely to be skeptical of her overall handling of the scriptural witness to the concept.

McDonald, nevertheless, has composed an interesting proposal that is worthy of consideration and study, even should it not prove to be convincing in its totality. This book will be of interest to teachers and students alike who have a particular interest in recent theological developments in pneumatology, particularly as it pertains to the doctrine of election.

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Salvation Accomplished by the Son: The Work of Christ. By Robert A. Peterson. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012, 619pp., $40.00.

Robert Peterson, professor of systematic theology at Covenant Theological Seminary, has provided his readers with a book that attempts to demonstrate the saving benefits of Christ's person and work. His goal is to demonstrate how the work of Christ actually saves.

One of the most unique features of the book is its structure. Peterson divides his work into two parts: events and pictures. In Part One, Peterson discusses what he believes are the nine events that contribute most significantly to Christ's person and work. He argues that Jesus' death and resurrection are the central events of human history. These events, however, cannot simply function in isolation but must be preceded by his incarnation and sinless life and followed by ascension, session, Pentecost, intercession, and second coming to maintain their full meaning. In Part Two Peterson introduces the six pictures of Christ's salvation as reconciler,

redeemer, legal substitute, victor, second Adam, and sacrifice. He also has a brief appendix addressing the extent of the atonement.

Several features of Peterson's work deserve commendation; I will make note of four. First, Peterson does a magnificent job of demonstrating the relationships between the various salvific events that compose the person and work of Christ. He dispels the common notion that it is merely the cross that saves. For Peterson, the cross certainly saves, but it saves in accordance with the other events of Christ's life. The atomization of the various doctrines related to salvation can lead to a misinformed, disconnected, and underdeveloped theology of the work of Christ. For example, Peterson notes that "most Christians have never considered the saving significance of Christ's ascension" (p. 151). He further argues that the ascension is the linchpin of Christ's other saving events: "The ascension confirms the authenticity of Christ's previous works and is a prerequisite for the subsequent works" (p. 179). In this instance, and in many others, Peterson demonstrates that the salvific events of the work of Christ function in organic unity.

Second, his emphasis on the saving benefits of Christ's resurrection is insightful. He argues that the church has often emphasized the salvific work of the cross to the neglect of the resurrection. "Christians believe in the resurrection from the dead," Peterson concedes, "but do not always realize its full import" (p. 145). He begins his fourth chapter with the statement, "The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ saves" (p. 117). With so much emphasis in contemporary evangelicalism on the saving benefits of the cross, Peterson provides a helpful corrective by emphasizing the saving benefits of the resurrection. He also notes that when Paul summarizes the gospel, he includes both the death of Christ and his resurrection. Peterson proceeds to demonstrate the saving benefits of the resurrection by explaining that Jesus' resurrection brings justification and forgiveness, establishes peace with God, and inaugurates a new creation. Further, he rightly argues that our resurrection, as it relates to Christ's, is our final salvation. Peterson's insight into the salvific benefits of Christ's resurrection, and the resurrection of believers, is a much needed remedy in the evangelical grammar of soteriology.

Third, Peterson is clearly aware of, and conversant with, contemporary scholarship. However, he does not always address it directly; in my opinion, this approach benefits his labors greatly. Some may consider his lack of academic discussion a weakness; I am not convinced. He is certainly aware of the most recent scholarship and it informs his conclusions; however, this is not a work that attempts to directly address recent debates. Peterson wrote this as an investigation into the Scriptures, all the while revealing what it is they say about our salvation. This method enhances the accessibility of this book significantly. Peterson deserves commendation for his exhaustive exposition of virtually every biblical text that anticipates or explains the work of Christ. There is no doubt that pastors, laypeople, and seminarians alike will greatly benefit from his expositional labors.

Fourth, and most importantly, Peterson's love for the gospel of Jesus Christ and his church is evident in these pages. This work is about bringing clarity to the gospel of Jesus Christ for the sake of the church, which is the domain and proper home of all Christian theology. Noting the enormity of Christ's person and work,

Peterson writes, "We cannot fully comprehend the incarnation. How shall we plumb the depths of the empty tomb? We understand in part and, awaiting the day when we shall understand in full, we worship, serve, witness…. The saving work of Christ is magnificent" (p. 565). This is a superb example of Christian theology done for the sake of the church and the glory of God.

In light of the various positive contributions that Peterson makes in *Salvation Accomplished by the Son*, I have one methodological critique. This work is largely expositional in nature; accordingly, as a treasured collection of biblical material, it is not systematic theology in the purest sense. Systematic theology, though largely expositional, is also concerned with philosophy, history, and culture, among other things. Perhaps Peterson's goal was not systematic in nature; if that was the case, a note from him in the introduction would have been helpful. *Salvation Accomplished by the Son* is certainly a valuable resource for expositional insights, but it would be a much stronger work if it also engaged in historical, philosophical, and cultural discussions.

Despite some methodological matters, *Salvation Accomplished by the Son* is a wonderful theological accomplishment. Peterson's labors will benefit the church for many years to come.

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Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine. By Gregg R. Allison. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, 778 pp., $44.99.

Finally, we have a companion volume to Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology* for use in the college or seminary classroom for introductory theology courses. Professor Allison has provided a readable and well-organized evangelical perspective that provides a solid survey of the history of doctrine. The book is designed to go hand in hand with Grudem's text and includes a chart that delineates the corresponding chapters of the two volumes. This will enable the student to gain a fuller understanding by reading the systematic and historical theology textbooks together. The author also includes a helpful glossary of key figures, literature, and movements in church history

Each section is organized under a doctrinal heading in which the author traces the development of that theme from the patristic to the medieval era then to the Reformation and post-Reformation period and finally to the modern period. He refers to the major thinkers of each era. In the Reformation period, he primarily cites Luther and Calvin. A wider range of citations might have improved the scope of the book. The book is comprehensive and covers all of the major doctrines in chronological fashion.

Most of the references are from English translations rather than the original Greek or Latin works. This makes it easier for undergraduates or master's level students to do further research. Since there is a glossary of names and movements at the end of the book, the reader has a place to go for more background infor-

mation. I would have liked to have seen at least a selected bibliography at the end of the book or at the end of each section, but one can refer to the footnotes instead.

The author's section on the Lord's Supper is of particular interest. There Allison traces the development of that doctrine from the patristic era, noting the differences in positions between various Church fathers. He explains that the Augustinian view, which regarded the elements as symbols of the body and blood of Christ, held sway until the medieval period when the debate between Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus led to a change in the position of the church to advocate the real presence of Christ. I am sure that a Catholic treatment would come to a different conclusion. He then discusses the development of the doctrine of transubstantiation with the Aristotelian distinction between the accidents and the substance as a key element for justifying this position, culminating in the pronouncement of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. This section provides helpful side panels where he quotes directly from the major players—Aquinas, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin—so that the reader can note the similarities and differences.

Another important section is his discussion of the Trinity where he provides a detailed analysis of the origin and development of Trinitarian language, along with sidebars quoting such important patristic figures as Gregory of Nazianzus, Novatian, and Athanasius. In his section on the person of Christ, the author goes into detail concerning the early Christological heresies including Docetism and Arianism and details the progression from the first through the fourth ecumenical councils, providing clear explanations of the differences between Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, and Monophysitism. He includes sidebars citing the Creed of Nicaea, the Nicene Creed, and the Chalcedonian Creed. These controversies can be confusing for the beginning student, and Allison does a fine job in explaining the overall framework of these debates.

The atonement is also a key doctrine with contemporary implications, and the author notes how this particular doctrine developed throughout the centuries. He describes the various theories such as the recapitulation theory of Irenaeus, the ransom theory of Origen, the satisfaction theory of Anselm, the penal substitution theory of the Reformation, and the governmental theory of Grotius. A discussion of Abelard's moral influence theory would have been helpful here. He also provides a nice analysis of some modern views of the atonement such as Schleiermacher's subjective view and Gustaf Aulen's *Christus Victor* motif. Some discussion of the controversy between N. T. Wright and John Piper on the atonement might have fit in well here, although Allison includes this debate in the section on justification.

Concerning justification, the author provides a nice survey, noting in some depth the debate between Augustine and Pelagius, the development of semi-Pelagianism or semi-Augustinianism (depending on one's vantage point) from the Synod of Arles in 473, which supported the views of John Cassian. Allison then provides a basic explanation of the doctrine of purgatory and how it relates to justification as well as the development of the use of indulgences and the resultant protests of Luther against their misuse. He does omit a discussion of the doctrine of justification in late medieval nominalism and its relationship to Luther. After a brief

survey of Reformation and early modern views on the subject, Allison goes on to discuss some recent trends such as the dialogues between Lutherans and Catholics, the controversial "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," and the debate over the so-called "New Perspectives on Paul." I do understand that it is not possible to cover everything on this topic, but the author does provide an excellent starting point.

I am using this work in my own classes along with Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, and the students seem to have responded favorably to the combination. Allison writes in a clear style and makes difficult theological concepts easier to follow. This is also a handy reference tool for those who want to do further study. I highly recommend this as a text for undergraduates or seminary students.

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Calvin, Classical Trinitarianism, and the Aseity of the Son. By Brannon Ellis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, viii + 250 pp., $135.00.

Brannon Ellis has written a valuable book on Calvin's view of Christ's aseity and should be commended for the lucidity and clarity of his argument for its importance. Ellis holds the position of Associate Editor of Academic and Reference at InterVarsity Press, USA, as well as Project Editor for the Reformation Commentary on Scripture series. He was co-editor along with Daniel J. Bush for John Webster's *The Grace of Truth*, and has various other works forthcoming.

Throughout the book Ellis argues that Calvin maintained a pro-Nicene, or classical, stance on the Trinity throughout all the debates he faced during his lifetime. This stance emphasized the distinction between essential and relational language about God, and indeed further developed that classical trinitarian position. However, Calvin's understanding of the Son's aseity became a minority position even within the Reformed tradition, and Ellis aims to rehabilitate Calvin's arguments for the sake of consistent trinitarian language and thoroughly trinitarian theology. Although he focuses on Calvin, he hopes to serve contemporary trinitarian dialogues as a whole by bringing consistency to their language as well as by suggesting some constructive, positive implications resulting from Calvin's position. This involves a correction and evolution of Warfield's view of Calvin, among other things.

In the introduction, Ellis describes the context in which Calvin's trinitarian debates took place, the current state of the question, and the contribution of his own work. Chapter 1 begins to explore Calvin's position, starting with the 1559 *Institutes*. In Chapter 2, Ellis defines Calvin's relationship to Nicea (or "classical" trinitarianism, to use Ellis's term) as one of complex solidarity in that Calvin took a pro-Nicene stance while diverging from most other classical trinitarians in his exposition of the Trinity. The third chapter details the role of eternal generation in the classical trinitarian stance. Ellis moves on to survey various approaches to trinitarian language (ch. 4), and describes the classical and mainstream Reformed ap-

proaches as that of tension in distinction (ch. 5). In the sixth chapter Ellis turns to the "minority report" within the Reformed tradition and argues that this report is most faithful and consistent with respect to Nicene trinitarianism. In closing, Ellis moves beyond description to prescription, constructively developing his major themes, such as the divine name "I AM" (which he understands as denoting YHWH's aseity) and a covenantal ontology.

The argument begins by surveying the 1559 *Institutes*, examining Calvin's "complex solidarity" with classical trinitarianism, and detailing how eternal generation relates to classical trinitarianism. Ellis continually emphasizes that Christian theology arises from and must be faithful to God's self-revelation in Scripture, which means that conformity to Scripture must guide his discussion of the Trinity and aseity, just as Scripture was the norm for Calvin. It is for this reason that the author rejects attempts to explain the "how" of the Trinity, as well as attempts to argue from reason to the Trinity. For Calvin, God gives himself to be known, and that revelation is about who God is, not an explanation of how God is three and a unity, nor a revelation that human reason could reach on its own. Ellis provides a prime example of how just such a chastened theological approach can yield positive, substantial contributions to its field.

Furthermore, Calvin advocated, and Ellis reaffirms, a position that carefully distinguishes between essential and relative language about God, in which the persons of the Trinity are distinct in subsistent relationships, order, and operation (relative language), while they have a common nature (essential language). The persons can be distinguished in relative language, but essential language should not be comparative; thus, it would be improper to compare or contrast the nature of the persons, or suggest that the common nature could be communicated from one person to another. Nor does the Son's consubstantiality with the Father depend on eternal generation, Ellis argues. Near the end of the book he pointedly asks how aseity can be communicated; and if it can be, do not both terms lose their respective meanings? While his methodology has the potential to bridge the divide between systematic theology, biblical studies, and historical theology, the author's emphasis on order among the divine persons will likely raise concerns with theologians who are nervous about any language of submission with regard to the Son.

Ellis consistently affirms the ongoing relevance of Nicea (and the other ecumenical creeds), which suggests that despite their contextual nature, the content of the creeds and the issues they raise ought to guide theologians today. The author states several times that his argument does not suggest people with other positions than Calvin's are unorthodox; rather, Ellis intends to clarify and refine theological language for greater faithfulness to Scripture. Accordingly, non-Calvinists—whether Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox—who uphold Nicea can also benefit from his argument. On the other hand, early in the book Ellis specifically states that his ultimate interest is to serve trinitarian theology. However, a major flaw with this plan is the fact that the author makes little attempt to draw in non-Reformed readers: his terminology, the sources with which he interacts, and the very title of the book are clearly Reformed, with the result that non-Reformed readers are unlikely to engage the work. If serving trinitarian theology as a whole is

truly Ellis's first goal, he needs to demonstrate more explicitly this aim throughout the book and in the conclusion, not just mention it in the first few pages.

Ellis lays out a spectrum of positions on the issue of aseity, from outright denial to cautious, qualified affirmation to the minority report's full affirmation. He describes specific cases of "loose" approaches to aseity—e.g. the Remonstrants and Röell—and contrasts them with classical and mainstream Reformed stances—e.g. Robert Bellarmine, Martin Chemnitz, and Bernardinus de Moor, among others. Ellis affirms the minority report position, arguing it possesses the most self-consistent, biblically faithful language for speech about the Trinity. He rounds out his argument by laying out the implications of this position for topics from creation and covenant to consummation and re-creation. Throughout, Ellis weaves together historical analysis and theological claims with great skill, and writes in such a way that weighty topics become both understandable and exciting. Because the argument links the Nicene statement, intradivine procession, Reformation figures, doctrines of the Trinity, aseity of the Son, and divine simplicity, the book will appeal to scholars with various specialties.

Two core pillars in Ellis's argument are, first, the claim that *autothean* language is and should be grounded in faithfulness to divine revelation in Scripture, and second, the claim that trinitarian language focuses on the character of Christian confession. Because knowledge of God depends on divine self-revelation, human speech about God always relies on Scripture. In effect, Ellis criticizes speculative theologizing and any notion that human reason rules theologizing: this move should endear him to biblical scholars. At the same time, the fact that he refuses to reject metaphysics will frustrate others, but Ellis justifies his stance quite well through his interaction with biblical passages that address metaphysics, demonstrating that it is not foreign to the biblical writers. In regard to trinitarian language, he proposes that both unity in nature and distinction in persons must have equal weight in theology, and that a trinitarian theology must emphasize this unity of three persons throughout. These three persons are distinct in order (or *taxis*), which does not and cannot imply any difference in essence; nor, he insists, does order within the godhead equal subjection, because order in the Trinity is a freely chosen, economic reality.

There are many ways in which Ellis's book might impact the scholarly field. Christian theology flows from Scripture, so the trinitarian nature of God should not be ignored or side-lined. Ellis offers a strong argument for the implications of God's triunity for various theological *loci* while refining language of the Trinity. His statements about order in the Godhead, and *perichoresis* not producing or explaining divine unity, are likely to provoke discussion, if not argument, in certain circles. These aspects in particular certainly critique social trinitarianism. On the other hand, his argument for the centrality and biblical rooting of metaphysics, along with his suggestion that people are called into communion with God—as opposed to being called to ontological participation in the triune God—may provide material for deeper engagement with Orthodox theologians. Ellis is one of the few conservative theologians to produce a weighty, constructive piece on the Trinity and aseity in

recent years; hopefully this signals an advance of and long-awaited change in evangelical theologies more broadly.

Other Reformed theologians such as Paul Helm and Richard Muller have written on these doctrines, as has Anglican John Webster. Ellis continues the discussion and adds nuance and depth to it, but he does not contribute much that would propel the topic out of his own Reformed community into a broader conversation group. To aid his goal of impacting trinitarian theology as a whole, he could excise his sections on B. B. Warfield and instead engage more deeply with non-Reformed trinitarian debates. For example, he could have interacted further with Sarah Coakley's important piece "'Persons' in the 'Social' Doctrine of the Trinity: A Critique of Current Analytic Discussion," or Lewis Ayres's *Nicaea and its Legacy*. Coakley critiques social trinitarians for applying a modern, individualistic understanding of the term "person" to the three Persons within the Trinity. Some scholars, in a reaction against social trinitarianism, want to remove entirely the language of "person" from talk about the triune God. Here Ellis provides biblical, historical, and theological reasons for retaining the language of person, yet at the same time continually advocates and models a more modest, cautious approach in dealing with this divine mystery of three-in-one. This approach could have allowed Ellis to offer a bridge between estranged positions, but he does not explicitly make this move. Nor does he take up the threads of Coakley about gender, which would have shown the implications of his work in that area.

Because Ellis does not move far from his Reformed roots, even in the conclusion, it is most likely that the potential within his book will not be realized, which is unfortunate because his argument is well crafted and his writing smooth and clear. Ellis's book is best suited to academics in the fields of systematic theology, analytic theology, and historical theology, though it would also be accessible for pastors and seminary students.

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The Theology of Jonathan Edwards. By Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, xvi + 757 pp., $65.00.

The last half century has been called a renaissance period for the study of "America's theologian," Jonathan Edwards. One contributing factor has been the production of a critical edition of Edwards's works by Yale University Press, which includes twenty-six printed volumes published from 1957–2008 and an additional forty-seven digital volumes available on the Jonathan Edwards Center website (http://edwards.yale.edu). Until recently, it was virtually impossible for anyone to provide a systematic treatment of Edwards's theology that takes into account not only his published treatises, but also his more than 1,200 extant sermon manuscripts and voluminous "Miscellanies" notebooks and notes on the Bible. With the completion of the printed volumes and most of the material for the digital volumes,

Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott seek to deliver this systematic treatment in their tome, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*.

McClymond and McDermott are no newcomers to Edwards studies—both have written a number of articles and books on Edwards. McClymond, Associate Professor of Theological Studies at Saint Louis University, authored *Encounters with God: An Approach to the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford University Press, 1998), which received the 1999 Brewer Prize from the American Society of Church History. McDermott, Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion at Roanoke College, has written *One Holy and Happy Society: The Public Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Penn State Press, 1992) and *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faith* (Oxford University Press, 2000), and edited a collection of essays titled *Understanding Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to America's Theologian* (Oxford University Press, 2008). With their background in the broader Edwards field, McClymond and McDermott bring knowledge of a vast secondary literature and years of reflection to bear on their treatment of Edwards's theology.

In their volume, McClymond and McDermott seek not only to provide a synthesis of Edwards's theology, but to highlight Edwards as a uniquely qualified figure in church history for bringing unity to the diverse branches of Christianity—and even incorporating those outside the Christian fold into the body. They set the stage by comparing Edwards's theology to a symphony with five instrumental sections, each section corresponding to a theological thrust in his overarching program. In their view, the first two sections, trinitarian communication and creaturely participation, "carry the tune" throughout Edwards's theological symphony (p. 7). The other three sections are "necessitarian dispositionalism," "theocentric voluntarism," and "harmonious constitutionalism"—the Augustinian, Calvinistic, and Thomistic aspects of his theology, respectively (pp. 5–7). Edwards's theology can be rightly understood only if we hear all sections playing together and harmonizing as a whole, which is why previous depictions of his theology have gone awry when they have emphasized one major element while drowning out others. Edwards's theological program subsists in such complexity because he employed a "developmental" theological method that established links between seemingly unrelated topics and absorbed insights into ever-expanding categories (p. 9). These methods resulted in "an unusual combination of traditionality and originality," which is why both theological conservatives and theological liberals have found Edwards attractive (p. 12). In the structure of their book, McClymond and McDermott seek to take seriously Edwards's intention to organize his theology using the history of redemption in a work that he did not live to write. They divide their book into three parts that explore Edwards's historical context, his methods and theology, and the trajectories and legacies of Edwards's thought. Throughout the volume, they repeatedly seek to show where Edwards's eclectic theology can appeal to a wide range of people and where Edwards is original in his formation of doctrines.

In Part One, McClymond and McDermott set the historical, cultural, and social background for a discussion of Edwards's theology. After sketching a short biography of Edwards's life, they depict his intellectual context by showing how the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a time of flux in Protestant thought, as

Puritan theologians responded to major heterodoxies like deism and changed in the process. Edwards was very much a part of this context as he read widely in the exchange of the transatlantic Republic of Letters, absorbing new ideas while applying them for his own aims. McClymond and McDermott also describe the priority of spirituality in Edwards's life and thought, warning that one cannot wrestle with his theology apart from his spirituality, which was characterized by discipline, enjoyment, and consummation (pressing toward an eschatological fulfillment). To close out their treatment of Edwards's context, the authors answer the question of whether Edwards changed over time with an affirmative, tracing five turns in his life as he responded to his shifting circumstances.

Part Two constitutes the bulk of the volume, and McClymond and McDermott begin with a section on the metaphysical and methodological foundations that undergirded Edwards's theology. They start out with beauty because it was so central to his theology and also quite innovative within his Calvinist heritage: "There are many reasons to regard Edwards as an original and venturesome thinker. Yet his placement of beauty at the heart of his theology may have been the boldest stroke of all" (p. 94). What also stands out methodologically about Edwards in contrast to theologians like Luther, Calvin, and Barth is his embrace of metaphysics, aligning him more with Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas. McClymond and McDermott go on to show how Edwards reveled in the art of typology for, in Edwards's view, God uses types because he is a communicative being who seeks to communicate his infinite self, using concrete images that will be better grasped by finite creatures, even placing types in nature and history. God's communicative nature also led Edwards to see God revealing himself in Scripture, reason, and tradition, though for Edwards, the "principal subject" of all revelation is Jesus Christ, and the "surest and clearest way" to find Christ is "in the only written revelation God gave to the church, its Bible" (pp. 134–35). Even so, people need the Spirit's help to give them a sense of the text, and they must grasp the entire shape of the biblical narrative in order to relate all the various parts to their shared end. In fact, the "history of redemption" was "[o]ne of Edwards's governing theological ideas," and had Edwards lived to complete his *History of the Work of Redemption*, McClymond and McDermott argue, it would have been a "pioneering effort in cultural analysis" and would have "diverged significantly from traditional textbooks of theology" (pp. 181, 189).

In their second section of Part Two, McClymond and McDermott explore the Trinity, creation, providence, the angels, and heaven. They highlight several of Edwards's original contributions, such as his accent on beauty within his doctrine of the Trinity, which is "perhaps the most significant" way Edwards "put his mark on Christian understandings of the Trinity" (p. 200). Of the many unique ways that Edwards approached Christology—his reconfiguration of covenant theology, his eclectic approach to the atonement, his uncommon explanation of the hypostatic union—it should be noted that his primary focus was Christ's satisfaction. Edwards stood out in highlighting the Holy Spirit's significant role in the history of redemption, and he made "an original contribution to Christian theological reflection" in his argument that the Spirit is the love of God, or the "thing purchased" in the

atonement (pp. 262, 263). As for the angels, again McClymond and McDermott argue that Edwards is "one of the most important interpreters of angels and demons in the Christian tradition" because of the way he cast them in redemptive history (p. 274). His approach to heaven likewise exhibited distinctive emphases, including his belief that, until the final consummation, heavenly saints gaze upon not only God but also the earth, observing the unfolding of his redemptive plan. Clearly, redemptive history served as a key organizing theme in his theology.

In the third section of Part Two, the authors explore Edwards's theological anthropology and divine grace, touching on the affections, Calvinism, free will and original sin, salvation and its various aspects, and revival. They note that Edwards's "new sense of the heart" has been called "the most original idea in all of his theology," and suggest that his "project of spiritual discernment was among the most penetrating and subtle in Christian history" (pp. 316, 320). As McClymond and McDermott turn to divine grace, they show that Edwards understood salvation as inclusive of conversion, justification, sanctification, and divinization, meaning that while it starts with conversion, it never ends because the believer eternally grows in participation with God. From this organic understanding of salvation, Edwards emphasized salvation by faith alone, but also put an "equally important stress on perseverance as a condition of salvation" (p. 372). His doctrine of justification has thus attracted significant debate, in part because he used "infusion" language to describe the doctrine. McClymond and McDermott weigh in by saying that Edwards was "an original on justification," rejecting certain elements of his tradition and incorporating other elements of the Roman Catholic tradition to form a distinct hybrid doctrine, based on the notion that "Christ's work outside the believer cannot be disconnected from Christ's work within the believer" (p. 404). Thinking about the promotion of salvation through revival, they suggest that Edwards was the most significant contributor to revival theology in church history.

In their final section of Part Two, McClymond and McDermott treat theological topics that have a more public or corporate nature to them, from church, ministry, the sacraments, and preaching to ethics, society, missions, eschatology, and world religions. The authors show that Edwards sought to minimize the distinction between a visible and an invisible church, emphasizing the unity of the body in a way that, they say, shared commonalities with the twentieth-century ecumenical movement. They also claim that through his "hyper-emphasis on the real presence of Christ's humanity in the Supper," Edwards "pushed the envelope of Reformed thinking" in his theology of the sacraments (pp. 491, 492). In his public theology, Edwards uniquely joined his social ethic with his theological system, in contrast to other moralists of his time, and he even stood out in the Christian tradition because he insisted—"[m]ore than perhaps any other Western theologian"—that genuine love is participation in God's life (p. 528). McClymond and McDermott go on to discuss Edwards's theory and practice of missions, noting that his significant influence on missions earned him the name "'grandfather' of modern Protestant missions" (p. 565). His concept of missions was also driven by his eschatology, and while many in the Reformed tradition gave eschatology little attention, it formed a central part of Edwards's thinking, as God guided redemptive history to its ap-

pointed end. McClymond and McDermott close the section by describing his fascination with non-Christian religions, arguing that "Edwards made a series of theological moves beyond his Reformed predecessors" that "laid the groundwork for a more expansive view of God's presence among non-Christians" (p. 597). While he did not live to embrace an inclusive soteriology, they speculate that he was moving toward one.

In Part Three McClymond and McDermott explore the legacies of Edwards's theology in his disciples and interpreters, as well as his affinities with diverse theological groups. They begin by tracing the development of the New Divinity theology in the hands of Edwards's disciples, a somewhat fluid theological movement that witnessed both theological innovation beyond Edwards as well as heated debates into the mid-nineteenth century over who was Edwards's true heir. In the last third of the nineteenth century, Edwards was viewed as an "anachronism" (p. 634), but the twentieth century gradually saw his restoration, especially through Perry Miller, who revived Edwards studies through his artistic depiction of Edwards as a modern man. While Miller's interpretation of Edwards did not stand for long, he did launch the Yale University *Works of Jonathan Edwards* project and lit a fire of Edwards interest that reaches down to our time. McClymond and McDermott go on to discuss five broad areas of interpreting Edwards in modern times, showing Edwards's influence on or affinity with philosophy, the Reformed tradition, the revival tradition, the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, and contemporary theology.

In their final analysis, McClymond and McDermott claim that "Jonathan Edwards is one of the great Christian thinkers who defies precise categorization" (p. 663), and that while he exhibited Calvinist leanings in many areas, he also departed from the Reformed tradition in several ways. They suggest, however, that it is "[p]recisely because of his many-sidedness" that "Edwards may be understood as a bridging figure within the fragmented world of twenty-first-century Christianity" (p. 721). They believe that Edwards's theology can build a bridge between Eastern and Western Christianity, Protestants and Catholics, liberals and conservatives, and charismatics and non-charismatics. Thus, they conclude that "it may be appropriate to cease speaking of Jonathan Edwards as 'America's theologian' and to begin thinking of him as a global theologian for twenty-first-century Christianity" (p. 727).

McClymond and McDermott's volume is a milestone in Edwards studies, the first volume to organize systematically Edwards's theology by consulting the full range of his corpus. While one can find hundreds of articles and monographs on particular theological themes in Edwards' thought, there is no resource that seeks to treat the whole of his thought in such a full-orbed fashion while taking into account the resources on Edwards now available. John Gerstner (1914–1996), who wrote the only comparable systematic treatment of Edwards's theology, *The Rational Biblical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Berea Publications, 1991), called his two-volume synthesis "an interim work" until a time when the Yale University *Works of Jonathan Edwards* project would be complete and "comprehensive surveys will appear" (p. 2). McClymond and McDermott's work is the first of those comprehensive surveys of which Gerstner foretold—and an excellent volume at that.

The Theology of Jonathan Edwards has much to commend it. The authors present their material in lucid prose, and it is well organized in both its macro- and micro-structure, giving readers a clear sense of the overarching themes that drove Edwards's theology while also digging into finer points of doctrine. One of the benefits of this volume is that the authors not only engage the vast range of Edwards's writings, but also connect it to the burgeoning secondary literature on Edwards now available, giving scholars an accessible foray into the debates over Edwards and his theology today. Furthermore, McClymond and McDermott's systematic treatment of theological themes in Edwards's thought makes it a handy resource for those wanting to engage a particular aspect of his theology, a characteristic of the book that theologians may especially find beneficial as they seek to grasp what Edwards thought on any given topic. At the same time, one misses a benefit of the volume if it is only read in piecemeal, for the book, when read as a whole, gives the reader a good sense of the breadth and complexity of Edwards's thought. This volume joins George Marsden's *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (Yale University Press, 2003) as one of the best starting places for dipping into Edwards studies today.

McClymond and McDermott also help readers by giving clear indications of their positions on interpreting various aspects of Edwards and his thought. Naturally, scholars will debate some of their interpretations, including the notions that Edwards's exegesis was more medieval than Reformed (p. 17) and was excessively spiritual (pp. 167–80); that he employed both a psychological and a social model of the Trinity (pp. 198–99); that Edwards departed from the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone by creating his own original hybrid doctrine (pp. 389–404); that his soteriology was foremost a "dispositional soteriology" (pp. 589–97); and that Edwards laid the foundation for a more inclusive doctrine of salvation that incorporates non-Christians (pp. 580–98).

The biggest question about this book, though, revolves around its overarching thesis. Just how much of a "bridge" figure is Jonathan Edwards? The live debates in interpreting Edwards rehearsed above make one wonder how he can unify diverse groups that cannot even agree on the meaning of his theology. McClymond and McDermott rightly describe Edwards as an eclectic who developed theology in ways that went beyond his Reformed predecessors, but while the idea that engaging his theology might promote Christian unity is highly attractive, the question is whether those who find traces of their theological heritage in Edwards—whether Catholics, Orthodox, liberal theologians, or Taoists—will be able to swallow Edwards's core commitments to Calvinist doctrines like grace and sovereignty. McClymond and McDermott correctly observe that "[l]iberals and conservatives have both read Edwards selectively—picking the parts that they liked and ignoring the rest" (p. 724). But this seems to leave Edwards looking more like a battleground than a bridge, just as he was in the nineteenth-century debates over who was his true heir. Edwards was a polemical theologian who sought to defend Calvinist theology against new threats, and it is difficult to call him a bridge figure today when he failed to bring unity to so many in his day—revivalists and anti-revivalists, New England Congregationalists, even his own parish. While Edwards shared a number of commonalities with non-Calvinists and non-Protestants, he

also differed from some such groups on many core issues. That does not mean that Edwards is irrelevant for us today, but incorporating Edwards into our contemporary theological discussions means that we need to allow him to speak to us as the eighteenth-century innovative evangelical that he was, not as a twenty-first-century ecumenical theologian.

Still, McClymond and McDermott's *Theology of Jonathan Edwards* is a fine work of scholarship that will serve as a standard in the field for years to come. It is essential reading for Edwards scholars and highly recommended for theologians and anyone interested in Edwards's theology, for it displays the depth, breadth, and originality of his theological rumination while challenging us to consider how that impacts us today.

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The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Edited by Isabel Best. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012, xxvi + 214 pp., $29.95.

In the past decade works by Bonhoeffer and works on Bonhoeffer have flooded the shelves of theologians, clergy, and laity alike. Now just one publication from completion on their sixteen-volume set, Fortress Press's Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works in English series has granted access to the fullest presentation of his written corpus ever available, and the recent conferences, biographies, and devotional literature considering Bonhoeffer continue to generate enthusiasm and interest among new generations of admirers. The recent publishing blitz has taken Bonhoeffer scholarship in English to an altogether unprecedented level and created opportunity for an engagement with his thought never before possible.

For the many readers captivated by the harrowing story of his courageous life and martyrdom, however, the question remains as to whether these admirers of his life will become actual students of his theology. As Ferdinand Schlingensiepen has articulated so well in his recent and well-received biography, placing Bonhoeffer on a pedestal only forestalls the kind of encounter he would want with others. Schlingensiepen's warning needs to be heard today as much as ever, because the perpetual hero worship of the martyr Bonhoeffer undercuts fresh consideration of the theologian Bonhoeffer, let alone the pastor Bonhoeffer.

Amid the burgeoning renaissance in Bonhoeffer studies, however, an unprecedented publication has emerged, and this new volume highlights a neglected and almost forgotten aspect of the story: Bonhoeffer the preacher. In *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, Isabel Best—accomplished Bonhoeffer scholar and translator for the Bonhoeffer Works series—has compiled a remarkably representative sample of sermons from the twentieth-century martyr and theologian. This rich and highly accessible collection of Bonhoeffer sermons provides not only another window into his biography but perhaps, more importantly, a unique and poignant entry point into the richness of his theology.

In addition to the biographical overview in the editor's introduction, Best provides a brief word about the context for and specific references within each sermon. Boasting thirty-one sermons in all, this collection presents a fairly large sample from the number of handwritten and typed manuscripts that remain from his life, and the selection of sermons here showcases the range of liturgical settings and ecclesial contexts in which Bonhoeffer ministered. Best has included messages for important events in the German church calendar like Reformation Day, Remembrance Sunday (i.e. Memorial Day in Germany), and Repentance Day (historically, an official holiday in Germany that the church took as a day of prayer and repentance at the end of the church calendar), as well as special occasions marking personal milestones in his family or his ministry (e.g. his first confirmation class, the baptism of his nephew Thomas, and the confirmation of three young people from the family of his eventual fiancée). In addition to these dates, Best's collection demonstrates Bonhoeffer's sensitivity to the rhythms of the church calendar in the numerous and wonderful Advent, Lenten, and Easter messages included here. She even incorporates a four-week expository series that Bonhoeffer preached on 1 Corinthians 13.

Perhaps more significantly, many of the collected sermons display Bonhoeffer's willingness to provide a prophetic word from the pulpit whenever the opportunity arose. These instances were particularly suited to the various contexts in which Bonhoeffer found himself, and this collection highlights four distinct movements in the larger arch of his pastoral journey: Barcelona, Berlin, London, and his time of ministerial exile. These movements constitute a unique season in his life—a season that includes only two periods in which he preached every Sunday. This portion of his life remains wedged between his student years and the years characterized by his full descent into the conspiracy to remove Hitler. In 1928, Bonhoeffer served as assistant pastoral vicar to a German-speaking congregation in Barcelona, and the sermons from this period show a young theologian trying to find his voice in the pulpit. Upon his return to Berlin in 1932, Bonhoeffer continued his ministry training and began his all-too-brief academic career at Berlin University, and during this time, his sermons reveal an emerging pastoral consciousness concerning the upheavals taking place in the German government. During his years away in London (1933–35), Bonhoeffer served two German-speaking congregations and honed his craft as a preacher, all the while preserving the integrity of his theology and ethical witness. The tumultuous conditions of his underground service to Confessing Church churches did not derail his desire to preach in the slightest. The final years represented in this collection coincide with his time as director of an illegal seminary for Confessing Church pastors at Finkenwalde and demonstrate the final maturation of his prophetic voice—a voice that many have already heard in the pages of beloved books written in those years, namely, *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*. By spanning these difficult periods in Bonhoeffer's life, Best provides not only a well-rounded sampling from the archive of his sermons but also helps to fill out the picture of Bonhoeffer the preacher, which in turn serves to establish the vital link between his theology and his prophetic gospel witness in the pulpit. And since each of these sermons can be located within the criti-

cal editions of his works in DBWE, this short collection should make that connection and serve to introduce Bonhoeffer to a wider audience. While the theology of Bonhoeffer's sermons cannot be evaluated here, this review will examine instead the major and, perhaps, most timely benefits of this collection.

As the editor admits, Bonhoeffer is not remembered as a preacher, but as Eberhard Bethge (Bonhoeffer's best friend, co-laborer in gospel ministry and long-time overseer of his literary estate) remembers, Bonhoeffer maintained a great love and dedication to preaching. In his seminal biography, he relates how nothing competed with preaching in the exercise of Bonhoeffer's gifts. If Bethge's remembrance means anything, the sermons of Bonhoeffer can potentially showcase the true voice of his theology better than anything else. Thus, three primary benefits emerge when reading through this diverse set of messages. First, Bonhoeffer's fidelity to the theological convictions of the Reformation tradition, Luther's theology of the cross in particular, rises to the surface almost immediately. Second, Bonhoeffer's hermeneutic and his handling of Scripture indicate his love for the Word of God and demonstrate his significance in the recent conversation around the "theological interpretation of Scripture." Third, based on the manner and rhetoric of his sermons, Bonhoeffer's great hope for the church becomes concrete and tangible in the words of these messages. These themes and others make this collection an invaluable resource for engaging the theological convictions and the pastoral character of the man.

Even a surface reading of these messages reveals a clear commitment to the gospel of God's grace in the preaching of Bonhoeffer. Several themes surface over and over again and display the deep theological connections Bonhoeffer had to the Reformation tradition and the priority of the gospel in that tradition. His admiration for Luther impacted greatly the gospel-centered nature of his messages, and several circulating themes expose his indebtedness to the Reformer. For instance, Bonhoeffer, following Luther, revisits again and again in his sermons the properly basic qualities of Christian faith (i.e. the nature of faith, faith as a gift, the daily life of faith) and draws a marked contrast between faith and fear. Indeed, for him, preaching made it possible for faith to grow and fear to flee, and he describes preaching in his 1933 "Overcoming Fear" along those lines: "The overcoming of fear—that is what we are proclaiming here. The Bible, the gospel, Christ, the church, the faith—all are one great battle cry against fear in the lives of human beings" (p. 60). While it may seem that with his emphasis on fear as a threat to faith Bonhoeffer would be guilty of psychologizing the gospel along with many of this theological contemporaries in Berlin, his sermons instead bear a vivid description of sin as humanity's greatest obstacle to faith. Bonhoeffer goes so far as to say in his sermon "Lord, Help My Unbelief" that it is in fact the hard hearts of men and women that establish a determined resistance to believing the gospel. In this way, Bonhoeffer's doctrine of sin remains quintessentially Luther-esque throughout his sermons, and with such a gospel-centered framework undergirding his sermons, it is no surprise that repentance emerges as perhaps the most re-occurring theme in this collection. Readers, however, will find over and over again Bonhoeffer the preacher applying a word of repentance to the church first and foremost. Like unto

the emphasis on repentance is his ongoing remembrance of Jesus' words in Matthew 25 concerning the stranger and the destitute. For Bonhoeffer, the ethical demands of the Gospels were never far from the heart of his preaching, no matter the occasion or the text for the day. Vitally linked with a fidelity to the Reformation's theological heritage and the centrality of the gospel in all his preaching are Bonhoeffer's care for and handling of the Word of God.

These sermons reveal a deep love for the Word of God in Bonhoeffer's life and thought. It is clear that he believed just as the gospel is the Word of Christ for everyone, so too the Bible is God's Word for everyone. While Bonhoeffer's sermons do not contain precise statements about Scripture's truthfulness or careful descriptions of inspiration, his hermeneutic can best be seen in his practice of preaching the Bible. He preaches the whole counsel of God's Word. In a time when it was not popular to preach the Old Testament because of its presumed "Jewishness," Bonhoeffer taught freely from both testaments with expositions of short and extended passages. The pulpit, it seemed to him, is not at all the place to perpetuate ideology, opinion, or conjecture; rather, Bonhoeffer focused consistently on the clear sense of the biblical passage for the sake of illuminating the gospel word it contains for his hearers. These sermons never show a preacher willing to play fast and loose with the text for the sake of making a pertinent or precious point.

While each sermon confirms this characterization of him, certain cases reveal a particularly compelling side of his handling of Scripture. Two examples will suffice. In a 1932 message entitled "The Promised Land," which Bonhoeffer delivered to his first set of confirmands, he utilized the story of Jacob's return to Canaan and his encounters both with the Lord in the night and his brother the next day as a way for those young men to understand the significance of their confirmations. Much more than a moralizing tale from Genesis, Bonhoeffer preached the life of Jacob in such a way that his hearers might identify with the patriarch and so begin to see their own stories in the great story of the Bible. This was a familiar preaching strategy for Bonhoeffer and the means he employed for finding the story of Christ throughout Scripture. A further example of his devotion to the Word of God can be seen in another message from 1932 on "Lazarus and the Rich Man." Bonhoeffer did not tolerate simplistic categories or easy theological divisions when teaching the text, so in this case and others, he resisted the temptation to soften the rough edges of Scripture. Here, Bonhoeffer fully embraced the seriousness of Luke's warnings to the rich, but even in his efforts to fully declare Jesus' concern for the poor, he did not even entertain the suggestion of a merely social gospel. Instead, he cautioned the congregation with these words: "We must end this audacious, sanctimonious spiritualization of the gospel. Take it as it is, or hate it honestly!" (p. 37). Thus, before anyone attempts to affix a certain label to him (e.g. "secular," "death of God," or "neo-orthodox"), they should read Bonhoeffer's sermons to see how he handles Scripture, and this volume makes that exercise not only possible but also extraordinarily convenient. Bonhoeffer was a faithful and devoted student of Scripture, and these sermons indicate that time and again. While his aim in preaching was clearly to reveal the original meaning of the text in a theologically informed

manner, Bonhoeffer also gave careful attention to the social and political realities that profoundly affected how people might hear the Word of God.

As attested by the so-called "late theology" of his letters and papers from prison, Bonhoeffer's faith in the church was not strong, but as these sermons indicate, his hope for it never waned. His appreciation for the church did not belie a cultural sentimentality but stemmed from the deepest convictions of his theology. In *Sanctorum Communio*—Bonhoeffer's doctoral dissertation and the cornerstone of his ecclesiology—he developed a theological description of the church articulated in the phrase "Christ existing as community." Thus, his sermons bear out his own spiritual commitments to this theological principle as he leveraged all of his academic training, life experience, and cultural advantage for imploring the church toward righteous action in response to gospel of Jesus Christ. In this way, Bonhoeffer's sermons made possible two strategic aims in his effort to encourage the church. First, Bonhoeffer utilized his sermons to address the most timely threats to Christianity in his day, and second, he attempted through his sermons to fortify the theology of the people with a vibrant Christology of the living Christ that demanded action on their part. In facing the great threats of his day, Bonhoeffer took opportunity wherever appropriate to provocatively address both the enculturation of Christianity in his context (i.e. the German Christian movement) and the most vitriolic opponents to Christianity, whose influence persisted in the Nazi ideology of the day. Rather than intimating accommodation when it came to these "cultured despisers" of Christianity, he chose confrontation, and the confrontations in his sermons regularly encountered the thought of Nietzsche, Marx, and other such figures. Evoking such voices with poignant quotations or paraphrases of their words, Bonhoeffer responded to their criticisms by pressing into the most scandalous claims of the gospel. For instance, he spoke often of how only the suffering of Christ displays the power of God in the world—a theme later developed in his prison writings. The sermons contain many such germs of thought that would have been or would be featured in his academic writing. Not surprisingly, then, every significant theological theme from his corpus appears in his sermons, and these appearances do not constitute an intellectual product placement but rather reflect the solid core of his doctrinal convictions about the nature of the church and Christ's presence there. Although space does not permit the enumeration of all those connections, it should suffice to say that the pastoral directives of works like *Discipleship* and *Life Together* appear throughout the theological architecture of the more systematic early works (i.e. *Sanctorum Communio* and *Act and Being*) and the later speculative theology (i.e. *Ethics* and *Letters and Papers from Prison*) all looms large at turns.

In these sermons, Bonhoeffer appears more direct and forthright than ever, and nearly every page is littered with the poignant and provocative lines that students of his life and thought have been pondering since their first reading of *The Cost of Discipleship*. Skeptics will also find several surprising insights into the orthodoxy of the theologian. Issues that some evangelicals cling to in their suspicion of Bonhoeffer (e.g. his appreciation for Gandhi, the supposed universalist tendencies in his soteriology, and the assumed contamination in his view of Scripture from

higher criticism) appear, and although none are central to the thrust of his messages, their appearance may tip the scale back toward his status as thoroughly orthodox. Even the provision of more historical insight into his life and ministry, however, cannot compare with the singular clarity of his theological voice in these sermons, a clarity that reflects the convergence of everything he cared for most: answering the call of Christ and preserving the pure witness of Christ's church.

With the stirring words of these sermons and inspirational life behind them, it should be clear that his martyrdom was only possible because of the depth of theological and pastoral conviction in the man himself. Reluctant to ever reveal too much personally, Bonhoeffer provides a brief glimpse into his own heart when, in his 1934 sermon "… and Have Not Love," he declares: "So what can the devout person give, in the end, beyond his or her naked life itself as a sacrifice for God and for Christ, as a martyr? If I give my body to be burned, if I give proof of how seriously devout I am and seal it with my death, if I become a martyr for God's cause—God, what grace it would be to die for you!—but have not love, I truly gain nothing" (p. 145). The last people to see Bonhoeffer alive in Flossenbürg concentration camp testified that just before his execution, he led his fellow prisoners in worship and delivered the Word of God one last time. Now, thankfully, this collection compiled by Isabel Best can help to preserve for new generations the legacy of Bonhoeffer the preacher.

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