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BOOK REVIEWS

Basics of Ancient Ugaritic: A Concise Grammar, Workbook, and Lexicon. By Michael Williams. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012, 143pp., $49.99 paper.

In his *Basics of Ancient Ugaritic*, Williams offers a grammatical précis of the Ugaritic language in thirteen lessons designed to be mastered over a single semester. By presenting these Ugaritic lessons in vocalized transliteration, the author makes Ugaritic look and feel like a real and learnable language. This book, however, is not intended to replace standard grammars, but only to provide a teaching-oriented manual suitable for elementary classroom instruction. In his introduction, the author accurately defines the nature of this book as "an introductory grammar for those just getting their feet wet in the ocean of Semitic language study" (p. 10). The book is characterized by its simplicity and clarity, and even its occasional humor.

Lesson 1 begins by discussing ancient Ugarit's location and history. The synopses of a triad of Ugaritic literature, that is, the stories of Aqhat, Kirta, and Baal, is followed by four intersections—"deities," "literary figures or concepts," "textual insights," and "thought world"—through which the author introduces the students to the significance of Ugaritic for the study of the OT. This serves as a suitable point of entry into Ugaritic grammar for beginning students.

In the following chapter, the author introduces a grammatical overview of the Ugaritic language, beginning with the "alphabet" (chap. 2) and then progressing through the grammar in chapters 3–12 organized under the rubrics "Nouns," "Adjectives," "Prepositions," "Pronouns," "Verbs," "Moods," "Infinitives," "Thematic Stems," "Weak Verbs," "Adverbs," and "Miscellanea." At the beginning of each of these chapters, students are introduced to basic grammatical concepts without burdening them with technical jargon. They are then presented with Ugaritic data, often in the form of charts, as illustrations. Each chapter concludes with practice exercises followed by annotated bibliographies. Appendices at the end of the book include several helpful aids for students—vocabulary list, exercise answer key, and more.

When I was first initiated to the study of Ugaritic at the University of Chicago, it was a very intimidating experience, as I was expected to absorb the language by reading primary texts and poring over reference grammars and lexica. Since learning any dead language has a heuristic aspect to it, students are often trained to learn Ugaritic inductively—namely, by soaking in it and wrestling with cuneiform texts through trial and error. But a primer like this book will help beginning students to be initiated into it and make a smooth transition to a more advanced level of study in their journey of mastering Ugaritic. The importance of this book is to fill the gaps in the teaching of Ugaritic grammar by introducing essential grammar so students are prepared for a more advanced study of Ugaritic.

Despite its obvious usefulness, however, this book leaves something to be desired in the manner of its presenting grammar. First, I do not see any good reason

why the author does not introduce the vowel system of Ugaritic in chapter 2, since he presents consonantal Ugaritic in vocalized transliteration in subsequent chapters. Unlike Hebrew, Ugaritic has three short vowels, *a*, *i*, *u*, three long vowels, *ā*, *ī*, *ū* and two diphthongs *aw* and *ay*, which are always contracted to *ô* and *ê* respectively. Similarly, the omission of particles is difficult to justify. Although the author mentions enclitic particle *m* in several contexts, some explanation of the usage of enclitic particles in general would have been appropriate in chapter 13 entitled "Miscellanea." In this context, it is unfortunate the author parses *mnk* and *mnkm* as general relative pronoun *mn* "whoever" combined with pronominal suffixes, *k* and *km,* "you" (p. 60). They are simply alternate forms of *mn* extended by enclitic particles, *k* and *km*, that add no meaning.

Second, some grammatical features appear too controversial or irrelevant to be included in this short grammar. The author asserts that if the second or third root letter is a guttural, the theme vowel of the G perfect form is *i*, instead of the expected *a* (p. 63). But this controversial assertion is based on only two items, *lik* "he sent" and *šil* "he asked." Similarly, in chapter 2, the author explains a phonological rule according to which *ʾa* drops before *ʿayin* (p. 33). But this rule applies only to the first person singular of the G imperfect of I-ʿ verbs. I do not see any good reason why the author has included this rule when he does not even mention the I-ʿ verb in chapter 11, the chapter on weak verbs.

Third, the author presents Ugaritic only in vocalized transliteration (cf. *malku*). Although vocalized texts make grammatical changes most observable to students, presenting them exclusively may be pedagogically unwise. Since all original Ugaritic texts are entirely consonantal, presenting consonantal transliterations along with vocalized ones (cf. *mlk*/*malku*) would better prepare beginning students for dealing with actual Ugaritic texts.

Finally, this book is not without its problems in terms of accuracy. Although the author argues there is no way of telling which nouns are diptotes (p. 39), there is consensus that proper nouns with a nominal suffix containing long vowels decline in only two cases. Also, there is no basis for the author's assertion that "adjectives don't have a dual form, so if an adjective is modifying a dual noun, the adjective will be in the plural form" (p. 47). This appears to be true more of Hebrew than Ugaritic (cf. GKC 132–33). We have a case where a dual adjective modifies a dual noun: ***tt aṯtm adrtm*** "two old women" (KTU 4.102:18).

That said, these reservations do not undermine the utility of this book for students who find currently available grammars too daunting, and who could do with a gentle guide to help them in their initial forays into the wider world of Semitic languages extending beyond biblical Hebrew. If this book had been available earlier when I first learned Ugaritic, my introduction to it would have been much less daunting.

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Which Bible Translation Should I Use? Edited by Andreas Köstenberger and David Croteau. Nashville: B&H, 2012, x + 204 pp., $14.99 paper.

Hans-Georg Gadamer once stated that every translation is also an interpretation. While this insightful observation is certainly true, it is not equilaterally or validly applicable to the same degree of every translation. Editors Andreas Köstenberger and David Croteau bring together in this single volume four prominent voices to articulate their philosophical stances and to describe their participation in their four respective translations: Wayne Grudem for the English Standard Version; Douglas Moo for the updated New International Version; Ray Clendenen for the Holman Christian Standard Bible; and Philip Comfort for the New Living Translation.

Some problems become immediately apparent from the outset. The question and title at hand, "Which Bible translation should I use?" remains, by and large, ambiguous. Who is the "I"? Is the inquirer to be answered by the book directly? Or is this book supposed to aid the reader in answering this question, which is so often asked of him, that this book became a necessary guide? I found evidence that either scenario may be the case. A blurb by Chuck Quarles on the back cover states, "Instead of recommending a Bible, may I recommend a book?" but this sends mixed signals. Do you recommend the book instead of a translation because the book is so good that its long answer is better than the quick one the inquirer is probably seeking? Or is it so unconvincing that it led Quarles to no conclusive results? Is it possible that all respective representatives are equally convincing? Indeed, recommending the book instead of a translation might undermine its very own purpose.

The end of the question, "Which Bible translation should I use?" needs a more specific target of purpose. Studious reading? Leisurely reading? Devotional reading? Teaching? Preaching? On this point the contributors—though not the editors, *per se*—are more in agreement; all of the above. None of them states that one ought to be read for devotional purposes and another ought to be employed for preaching. But then again, what else should we expect from these respective and representational translators?

Another problem is inevitably aimed at the reader. Who honestly will come to this book without a bias or prior preference and with a truly open mind to find a solution to this nagging question? Is the reader going to be convinced by the persuasive skill and logic of the scholar, or by the philosophy of the translation team, or by the actual renderings of the verses? The readership that is without bias and open for debate may indeed be a very narrow market, and when considering their given annotated bibliography of similar books, the potential readership narrows even more acutely.

At breakneck speed, the book takes a brief historical glance at the lifespan of translations, beginning with the Septuagint and giving appropriate attention to the family tree of English translations, from Wycliffe to Tyndale to all their notable descendents. The editors then level the playing field by choosing sixteen passages that all the contributors must explain by means of comparison and contrast with the other three translations. This essentially eliminates temptation to highlight the

precious pets any one translator might like to highlight as a case in point where he feels he has really captured the heart of the original text.

Grudem presents his polemics for the ESV in a comprehensively convincing manner. He strives to prove the ESV implements "a high degree of literal accuracy … combined with readability and literary excellence" (p. 42). While Grudem calls the ESV an "essentially literal" translation (p. 44), he rejects as misleading and inaccurate the term "formal equivalence" (p. 45) cast upon it by the book's editors (p. 2). Grudem offers an excellent insight into the philosophy of the ESV translation committee: a time machine. Would we prefer to have David travel to us and rewrite Psalm 23, or would we rather travel back to the time of David to discover the richness of the original composition? The latter is to be clearly chosen since this is the time God chose to have Scripture composed; the former is the job of the teacher/preacher/study aide in explaining the meaning for the contemporary listener. Also attractive in the ESV philosophy is the retention of poetic flair in the poetic books. In other words, the poetic sections are not translated as being prosaic with the most natural language used; instead, they exemplify the more indigenous nature of Hebraic poetry by being translated poetically. The sum total of the ESV philosophy is that words—and every single word—meant something then and were said a particular way. The translators' job is to translate into intelligible English but not to insert modernized interpretations; that is the job of the contemporary interpreter. The Word of God remains eternal, therefore a translator ought to tread fearfully where angels dare not go.

Moo states that the updated NIV of 2011 has two essential virtues: accuracy and readability. Sadly, what I found is that the latter overtook the former on many accounts when the two were apparently at odds with one another. In his presentation of the NIV, Moo makes several logical fallacies and reasons from a sense of paranoia and defensiveness. For an example of an equivocation, he states that translating "literally" may not be a good thing, but then proceeds to define a literal translation only as an interlinear (p. 81). Occasionally he will throw out a red herring, perhaps hoping the reader will sniff out the greater fault of other translations without offering a real defense of the NIV decision (e.g. p. 84). Furthermore, Moo gives us backstage access to their committee's process of word choice as heavily—and overly so—dependent upon the Collins Dictionaries, which ranks the popularity of English usage. He defends the NIV philosophy of mediating between the essentially literal and the essentially functional by arguing that a live interpretation of a phrase to a foreigner is to be preferred over a verbatim translation. This analogy fails in many respects as a comparable illustration and ignores the fact that the historical gap needs to be respected as well as the functional role of study notes or a live interpreter. In the end, the importance of readable common English becomes prioritized over accuracy.

Clendenen represents the HCSB as an optical equivalence, meaning that it seeks accuracy clothed in "naturalness of expression" (p. 119). One point that had to be brought up in a defense of such an approach was that the NT was composed in Koiné Greek, not classical Greek; in this respect, it was indeed accessible to all. Clendenen is persuasive when he appeals to Tyndale, who held the philosophy that

a Bible translation should be readable by "any boy that driveth a plow in England" (p. 120), and by tying that accessibility to the Reformation Clendenen makes the case even stronger. The best (in my mind) and "most literal" feature of the HCSB is the use of "Yahweh" instead of the standard all-caps "LORD." The inconsistency of this principle is played out in the comprehensive employment of 'Messiah' instead of "Christ" in the NT (p. 20), even when the Greek does not employ *messias* but rather *christos*.

Comfort advocates the New Living Translation's philosophy of dynamic or functional equivalence (p. 157). The gender-inclusive language employed in NLT is most boldly defended in this essay, though its evidence is also seen in the NIV, and to a lesser extent the HCSB. Yet, what is disturbing is the claim that "male dominated language is a thing of the past" (p. 158), a statement that wreaks of an attitude that the eternal Word ought to bend to the fleeting fancies of the contemporary culture instead of resisting current cultural conformity, and remaining true to the very words selected by the Holy Spirit. Though the NLT is the loosest in translation—and hence, heaviest in interpretation—Comfort's presentation provides the most information on a textual-critical level.

I actually enjoyed the book far more than I had anticipated. One accomplishment of which this book can boast is that it gives an inside look into the tricky business of translating a sacred text, the very Word of God, and with it a deeper appreciation of the work that goes into bringing to us a contemporary English version of an eternal book.

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Huldah: The Prophet Who Wrote Hebrew Scripture. By Preston Kavanagh. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012, xx + 202 pp., $24.00.

At first glance, Preston Kavanagh's *Huldah: The Prophet Who Wrote Hebrew Scripture* is an intriguing book. The author's dedication describes it as a biography of the prophetess whom Josiah consulted after the priests found the scroll of the Torah in the temple (2 Kgs 22:14–15). Given that Josiah sent the nation's leaders to her inquiring about the scroll, and that she provided revelation from God regarding both the scroll and the king who sent them, the idea of knowing more about her is captivating.

Kavanagh *does* present a biography (pp. 28–30). He dates Huldah's birth to 640 BC, adds a second marriage to King Jehoiakim (her first marriage was to Shallum) through whom she gave birth to Jehoiachin (the subsequent king). He maintains that as queen mother she went into exile in Babylon where she served as an elder to the nation of Israel and met with Ezekiel. She subsequently returned to Jerusalem and after the fall of the city fled to Egypt where she met Cyrus (the Persian) and aided him in an attempted revolt against the Babylonians. They captured Jerusalem, but less than a year later their enemies retook it. Kavanagh claims Cyrus

then made his way to Persia where he became king, while Huldah went into semi-exile in Bethel where she died in 564 BC at the age of 76.

The problem is that none of this rather detailed biography (outside of her marriage to Shallum) shows up in the Bible or any other documents. If that is the case, then where does Kavanagh get his information? He uses a three-step method of textual analysis he developed in several earlier works and cites on a regular basis. While those detail his methodology, the present work provides adequate explanation for evaluation of its validity.

Kavanagh begins with anagrams. He asserts, "Biblical writers used anagrams much as modern authors use italics—to make a point, to insult, or to associate a person with a trait, an event, or a condition" (p. 12). The problem is that Kavanagh assumes that any anagram of Huldah is a *de facto* reference to her, either inserted by herself to indicate authorship, or by another author to describe her (whether positively or negatively). But some of the words he sees as anagrams are also anagrams of other individuals. For example, "the elders" is deemed an anagram of Huldah, Jacob, Baruch, Cyrus, and Ezra (p. 21, n. 13), causing one to wonder why it necessarily refers to Huldah.

Kavanagh's calls his second step "athbash." Athbash divides the 22 letter Hebrew alphabet in half to produce two rows of letters: "Eleven letters run right-to-left; the other eleven run left-to-right. Next tractor-tread rotation changes the interfaces, allowing parallel rows of letters (with one adjustment [described in his earlier works]) to generate twenty-one *new* ways to spell a name" (p. xv, emphasis added). Jeremiah's interchange of שֵׁשַׁךְ for בָּבֶל (Jer 51:41) is his justification for this method. Thus, every name now has 22 possible spellings (using just the consonantal text), each one of which can be used as an anagram. Kavanagh claims these produce 1773 different anagrams in Scripture of Huldah, each of which can be used as evidence for events in her life. The fact that many of these are also anagrams of other OT names is deemed to demonstrate relationships between the individuals—although this does not seem to be a given, but rather it provides possibilities between which he picks and chooses.

Kavanagh's calls his third step "coding." Here, he looks at word sequences, takes one letter from each word, and then puts them together to make a new word. As he states, "[A] five-letter name would draw upon five Hebrew text words in a row. Again, letters could fall in any sequence" (p. 5). He asserts while the current Masoretic Text is "not wholly the original text"; it "still contains *several million encodings*" he claims were inserted by the original authors (p. 6, emphasis original). Clearly with all of these variations, this is a very complex system. The author admits it required years of work using high speed computer programs to develop and apply to significant portions of Scripture. Yet, he seems genuinely surprised that no one else has used the same system or that the information he presents has not been discovered for more than 2,500 years—especially since the text's supposedly very creative authors used this highly complex system to embed this hidden data into the Hebrew Bible.

One of Kavanagh's concerns is who really wrote the books of the Hebrew Bible. Using this system, he concludes that the same prophetess, Huldah, was "sig-

nificantly involved" with Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles, Proverbs, and Psalms (p. 77). After adding work on Genesis and Exodus (incidentally he concludes the tabernacle was constructed as part of the Cyrus-led revolt and march on Jerusalem in 573 BC and was financed by Huldah), he concludes that she "wrote or influenced 31 percent of Scripture's chapters" (p. 76, n. 5). Likewise, he concludes that while Micaiah, son of Gemariah, son of Shaphan (Jer 36:11) was the instrumental leader of the Shaphan group that he maintains compiled the Deuteronomistic History, the group also included Daniel, Azariah, and Huldah (pp. 99–100).

Although Kavanagh begins with the Documentary Hypothesis, he eventually concludes the Hebrew Bible was essentially a sixth-century BC product. This repudiates the foundational premise that Deuteronomy was written at the time of Josiah's reforms in 622 BC. Rather, he claims his method shows that the "lost scroll" of 2 Chronicles 34 was really Jeremiah's.

Space does not allow me even to list the many more "discoveries" Kavanagh makes. The problem is that Kavanagh claims to validate his conclusions by statistical analysis. Regular statements such as "[t]he chi-squared probability of coincidence … is zero" (p. 6) give his work a semblance of scientific accuracy. However, no matter how valid his statistical analysis (and there is serious question regarding that, but that will require a separate evaluation), unless his assumptions regarding anagrams, athbash, and codings are correct, his analysis is meaningless. To that end, Kavanagh provides no evidence those assumptions are correct. The leap from the idea that OT writers may have used anagrams to the assumption that every word in the OT can be used as an anagram or coding is at best unsubstantiated. Statements such as "the number of concealed names within any passage probably will run into the hundreds" (p. 143) should give a careful reader pause. The same is true for such a statement as this: "More than one thousand other Hebrew names await the same sort of testing that Huldah has received. Presumably a few of them will also show results similar to those of Huldah" (p. 74). If other names show similar results, then it would seem Kavanagh's method is invalid and his conclusions groundless.

Another statement that is even more sobering is the assertion that the text contains "several million encodings" (p. 6). Regardless of how creative and clever the writers of the OT were, this number strains the limits of credibility to the breaking point. With these millions of bits of data, even Kavanagh has to admit that some of his conclusions are "far more supposition than history" (p. 158). In fact, a careful reading of Kavanagh's method suggests that he began with an assumption and then selected the data that supported his speculations. Knowing the name one is looking for, and having the ability to rearrange to alphabet to one's liking makes it a lot easier to find the name—and the result is meaningless.

In sum, while the title and premise are intriguing, the content of the book is extremely speculative. However, given the strong assertions and regular use of statistics, it is likely some of those speculations will begin showing up in a variety of venues. As such, it is a book an OT scholar should be aware of in order to address the issues that will certainly be raised.

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The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus. By L. Michael Morales. Biblical Tools and Studies 15. Leuven: Peeters, 2012, xiii + 345 pp., €74.

Recently there has been a growing interest in tabernacle and temple theology in the OT, exemplified by the work of such authors as G. K. Beale, Jon Levenson, and John Walton. Michael Morales joins this burgeoning sub-discipline and makes a substantial contribution with *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, a revision of his dissertation under Gordon Wenham. The thesis of Morales's book centers around his view that "dwelling in the divine Presence" is "the kernel of [the Bible's] principal theme" (p. 1). He suggests this theme finds expression in the historical and literary pattern, "through the waters → to the mountain of God → for 'worship.'" Thus, in the body of his book, Morales expounds the significance of this theme as it recurs through Genesis and Exodus, particularly in the Eden (chap. 2), flood (chap. 3), exodus (chap. 4), and tabernacle (chap. 5) texts.

Chapter 1 surveys cosmic mountain ideology, laying the groundwork for Morales's discussion in the following chapters. Those familiar with the literature on the cosmic mountain and other related themes (e.g. the cosmic waters and tabernacle/temple ideology) will find few surprises here. Defining the cosmic mountain concept, Morales asserts, "The mountain is sacred, the dwelling place of the gods, the intersection between heaven and earth, the central and highest place of the world (*axis mundi*), and the foundation and navel of creation (*omphalos*)" (p. 2). Morales skillfully draws on previous research on cosmic mountain ideology both in the ANE and in ancient Israel. Overall, he provides a helpful summary and synthesis for those interested in the subject. One distinctive feature of Morales's discussion is his addition of the "gate liturgy" to cosmic mountain ideology (pp. 32–50). Introducing the gate liturgy with quotes from Psalms 15:1 and 24:3 ("Who shall ascend into the Mount of YHWH? Or who shall stand in his holy place?") and Isaiah 33:14, Morales argues it is integral to cosmic mountain ideology because access to the mountain of God (and by extension, the presence of God) is guarded by means of the gate liturgy.

Chapters 2–5 contain Morales's exposition of the pattern "through the waters → to the mountain of God → for 'worship,'" in his primary texts. In chapter 2, he follows the common interpretation of Eden as a prototypical temple and the more recent view that the cosmos of Genesis 1 is a divine temple, further suggesting that the earth and Adam (by virtue of his being made of earth) are brought through the

chaotic waters of Gen 1:2, and Adam is brought to the cosmic mountain (Eden) for worship as a high priest. In chapter 2, Morales argues that the flood is a de-creation and re-creation, that Noah is a second Adam, and that the ark is itself a tabernacle (following Holloway) that passes through the judicial waters, to the mountain of God (Ararat), for worship (i.e. Noah's sacrificial offering on the Sabbath upon exiting the ark). In chapter 4, Morales observes that in the exodus, Israel passes through the waters (the Red Sea) to the mountain (Sinai) for worship. Finally, in chapter 5, he argues that the tabernacle itself constitutes a "cosmic mountain," specially modeled after Mount Sinai, that the Israelite worshipper (but especially the priests) must "ascend." The lavers represent the cosmic waters, and the holy of holies represents the pinnacle of the cosmic mountain where the divine presence is.

Morales notes that the question of "who can ascend?" runs as an undercurrent throughout these chapters. In Eden, Adam is cast out, which is an "anti-gate liturgy," and Cain and Abel offer their sacrifices at the gate of Eden (pp. 100–12). With Noah, the gate liturgy is found in the distinctions between who (and what—i.e. clean animals) can and cannot enter the ark. Sinai is forbidden to the lay-Israelites and their animals, but is ascended (though only partially) by the elders. Moses alone is received into the glory cloud at the top of the mountain. The tabernacle, likewise, reflects this pattern of restricted access. Thus, Morales makes a compelling case that "who can ascend?" is a fundamental question of these texts, highlighting *a* if not *the (*cf. p. 284) significant problem in the post-lapsarian world—namely, the inability to access God's presence.

Eden presents the most difficulty for Morales's proposed pattern. Though the earth does arise from the waters of Gen 1:2, it stretches the text to say that such waters represent a judgment, that the earth is "righteous/innocent," that Genesis 1 portrays "creation as a divine deliverance," or that Adam is delivered "through the waters (via the earth's deliverance)" (pp. 68–73). Furthermore, Morales notes that the gate liturgy functions in reverse, or rather, "Adam's expulsion … [is the] event that initiates and makes necessary the gate liturgy" (p. 101). Thus, instead of Adam ascending the mountain, he is cast out (i.e. sent down), after which the gate functions to keep him from the cosmic mountain. Nonetheless, we should not be surprised at differences between this initial pre-lapsarian instance and subsequent recurrences that happen in the post-lapsarian world. Thus, Morales's thesis is not overturned by discrepancies between Eden and other instantiations of his pattern.

Worship and liturgy are major themes of Morales work. He writes that "the transition from Genesis 1 to Genesis 2–3 might possibly be rendered as the movement from creating the cosmic tabernacle to establishing the priestly service of humanity—that is, from the *telos* of creation as worship to the nature of man as *homo liturgicus*" (p. 98). He suggests that since Eden is the "archetypal" cosmic mountain and because the *imago dei* finds expression in the *imitatio dei* of the Sabbath, worship is the goal to which all instances of the cosmic mountain are striving. Thus, Morales emphasizes the liturgical and cultic aspects of texts that other scholars may have missed or dismissed (e.g. he describes the flood as a "liturgical narrative, p. 122).

Morales's concluding chapter provides a helpful summary of the state of cosmic mountain/temple research within the field of biblical studies. He suggests that the "mountain of God" can be an approach to biblical theology that "subsume[s] other major themes of biblical theology," while also "incorporating much of what has been lacking in other attempts at biblical theology" (p. 282). Later, he suggests, "Temple theology will likely prove to be *the* extensive and unifying principle" of biblical theology (p. 284). These claims may overreach, but it can hardly be denied that temple theology is important for the biblical writers, and thus, Morales's book is an important contribution to our understanding of this theme.

Morales has written an excellent book and provides a convincing and tangible contribution to the field of temple and cosmic mountain ideology. He makes many stimulating observations, has absorbed and synthesized an impressive amount of research, and writes in a way that is clear and compelling. Though his arguments are occasionally strained, these few instances hardly detract from the book as a whole. The gate liturgy is an important contribution to cosmic mountain ideology that needs further research outside of the scope of Genesis and Exodus. Overall, Morales's book is a crucial read for anyone working in this area, and provides significant contributions to our understanding of Genesis and Exodus and their theological outlook and themes. Furthermore, while Morales's claim about the significance of his topic for biblical theology as a whole may be overly bold, it is certainly true that his work sheds light on important biblical themes—themes that run right through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

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How I Love Your Torah, O LORD!: Studies in the Book of Deuteronomy. By Daniel I. Block. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011, xxvii + 242 pp., $30.00 paper.

This valuable volume contains eight literary and theological "meditations" on specific texts in Deuteronomy by a well-known and highly competent scholar, Daniel I. Block. Block currently serves as the Gunther H. Knoedler Professor Of Old Testament at Wheaton College. According to Block, the essays are the aggregate of ten years of careful contemplation on the book (pp. xv–xvi).

In actuality, six of the eight essays offered here were previously published. Block delivered four of the papers in a series entitled "Rediscovering the Gospel according to Moses" for the W. H. Griffith Thomas Lectures at Dallas Theological Seminary in February 2004. These four were published in *BSac* 162 (2005) and are reprinted in this volume as chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7 respectively:

- The Grace of Torah: The Mosaic Prescription for Life (Deut 4:1–8; 6:20–25)
- The Joy of Worship: The Mosaic Invitation to the Presence of God (Deut 12:1–14)
- The Burden of Leadership: The Mosaic Paradigm of Kingship (Deut 17:14–20)

- The Privilege of Calling: The Mosaic Paradigm for Missions (Deut 26:16–19)

Likewise, Chapter 3, "Bearing the Name of the Lord with Honor," was originally published in *BSac* 168 (2011). Chapter 4, "How Many is God? An Investigation into the Meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4–5," first appeared in *JETS* 47 (2004). Except for stylistic changes and corrections of minor details, Block says these six have retained their original "essence" (p. xx).

The remaining two chapters (chaps. 2 and 8) are included here in printed form for the first time. Both of these chapters tend to be longer, and both include two short related excurses. Chapter 2, "Reading the Decalogue Right to Left: The Ten Principles of Covenant Relationship in the Hebrew Bible" and chapter 8, "The Power of Song: Reflections on Ancient Israel's National Anthem (Deut 32)" will be discussed briefly below. Excursus A examines how Deuteronomy numbers the Ten Commandments, and Excursus B surveys the text-critical issues in Deut 32:43.

The placement of the eight articles follows the order of their texts in Deuteronomy. Despite the author's claim that the book contains "meditations" on Deuteronomy, each essay contains scholarly analysis of the text or texts in question, clear evaluation of relevant literature, and detailed footnotes. Block concludes the collection with a noteworthy bibliography as well as indexes of modern authors, selected subjects, and scriptural references. These last items make the scholarship included in the volume readily accessible to readers.

Since the essays are a collection of stand-alone articles, the reader will find, as Block freely acknowledges, some repetition and redundancies within the book's chapters (p. xvi). In addition, collections like this may also suffer from a lack of "smoothly flowing" chapter transitions as well as the presence of an unambiguous unifying theme. Thus, in an effort to alleviate this problem, Block penned a brief preface explaining how Ps 119:97 inspired the title of the book: "How I love your Torah! All day long it is my meditation" (p. xi). The book is about Deuteronomy, but Block wants the reader to understand it is not just a collection of random articles on the subject.

Ultimately, Block hopes the reader will recognize in these essays his love for the Torah as the overall unifying theme. He wants the reader to discover in Deuteronomy, the last book of the Torah, the living and transforming Scripture described by Paul in 2 Tim 3:16 (p. xvii). Accordingly, Block encourages readers to study Deuteronomy afresh, and subsequently find there "a sure and effective source for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, and equipping God's people for every good work to the Glory of God" (p. xvii). This is the *raison d'être* for compiling the articles in this collection.

Since six of the eight articles are already available in other venues, I will attempt to summarize the two chapters not published before. Chapter 2 examines how the Hebrew Bible itself perceived the Decalogue (p. 22). Block based this study on three pertinent questions: (1) "How does the Pentateuch (Torah) speak about the Decalogue?"; (2) "How does Moses reinterpret the Decalogue in Deuteronomy?"; and (3) "What evidence is there elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible for a special status for the Decalogue in Israelite thought and life?" (p. 23). He concludes

that the Ten Commandments are not regarded within the Pentateuch as universal moral truth or natural law, but as a vital part of a treaty document directed to the heads of the Israelite households, directing them "to be covenantally committed to YHWH, his household, and his neighbors" (p. 33). The Decalogue, then, as a part of the larger Torah of Moses, contains the "call to love YHWH with all one's inner being, one's entire person, and all one's resources, and to love one's neighbor as oneself" (p. 55). Block points out that this is Jesus' understanding of the Torah as well (Mark 12:30).

Chapter 8 argues that the so-called "Song of Moses" is really "The Song of YHWH" (p. 164) and was, in effect, "a sort of national anthem" to be recited or sung at corporate worship events (pp. 166–67, 173). The purpose was "to keep alive the memory of YHWH's grace" and "to warn them of the consequences of abandoning him for other gods" (pp. 177–78). While modern readers are usually not aware of the song, Block maintains its rediscovery as the anthem of Israel "could go a long way toward recovering the gospel in the Old Testament and in recovering Jesus' and the apostles' sense of the unity of biblical revelation" (p. 180).

The reader may question whether the additional bibliography, the indexes, and the additional two chapters (2 and 8) and excurses are worth paying a higher price for this collection. The subject matter of the two previously unpublished chapters by themselves and the scholarly analysis there is certainly significant and valuable enough to promote an affirmative answer. But in reality, the entire collection offers a synergistic exposition of various parts of the book of Deuteronomy. Carefully read and studied together, all of the "meditations," whether previously published or not, will help the reader hear the voice of YHWH in Deuteronomy in a fresh and invigorating way. Consequently, this will remain a significant work for the student, the pastor, and the church. In this Block has accomplished his stated goal (p. xvii).

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The Beginning and End of Wisdom: Preaching Christ from the First and Last Chapters of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job. By Douglas Sean O'Donnell. Wheaton: Crossway, 2011, 235 pp., $17.99.

Sidney Greidanus has written the foreword to this short but helpful book that both exhorts us to preach Christ from the OT Wisdom books and demonstrates how. O'Donnell writes, "In short, this is a book on *what* the Wisdom Literature is, *why* we should delight in it, and *how* we should preach it" (p. 23). After an introduction, he accomplishes his task in seven main chapters, which are actually sermons on the first and last chapters of each of the Wisdom books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job.

He opens with a sermon on Proverbs 1, in which he defines and discusses the "fear of the Lord." He concludes by using the example of Jesus as the ultimate embodiment of what the "fear of the Lord" looks like. He takes Proverbs 31 as

instructions to young men on what kind of woman to look for to marry. The answer is a woman who serves, who puts others before herself. The best illustration, O'Donnell suggests, of this kind of service is Jesus himself, who both taught and lived a life of humility and servanthood.

In his treatment of Ecclesiastes, O'Donnell first tackles the issue of "work," from Ecclesiastes 1. He forces his audience to face the discomfort of Qohelet's questions, concluding that our work is vain because there is nothing new or remembered about it. He reviews the three main responses of our age to this reality: escapism, nihilism, and hedonism. Then he invites us to "put on gospel glasses" and read Ecclesiastes 1 in light of Jesus' work—both new and memorable—and the kingdom work to which Jesus calls us. O'Donnell's sermon on Ecclesiastes 12 sums up the argument of the book by surveying the various "vanities," worldly work, worldly wisdom, worldly pleasures, then expounds the "fear" and "obedience" of the book's final exhortation. "Fear" is really life lived in joyful dependence on God, whereas "judgment" is awareness that all one's deeds will be examined. He brings Christ into the picture only at the very end, though not very clearly.

O'Donnell's first sermon on Job 1 is really a summary of the book minus the speeches of Yahweh. He comments on the prose introduction, the poetic dialogues, and the speeches of Elihu, but focuses on Job's three tests (loss of possessions, of health, and of friends). He ends by presenting "Job's roots," the "theological foundations that made him hold up under duress" (p. 99). They are: (1) know that suffering can be good; (2) trust in God's providence; (3) believe in the resurrection. He relates the whole to Jesus only in the last two paragraphs, mentioning that Jesus calls all his followers to put his kingdom above all else. In his second sermon on Job, O'Donnell isolates three questions: (1) Does Job fear God for no reason?; (2) Do the righteous suffer?; and (3) Is God righteous in all he does, even when he allows or *ordains* suffering? He answers the second and third question affirmatively, while defending the basic truthfulness of Job's friends. Job's repentance is "repentance of the righteous." Then he draws parallels between Job's and Jesus' experience (a righteous man, who suffers unjustly, is vindicated by God) and concludes, "The primary purpose of the book of Job is to prepare us for Jesus!" (p. 115). In both cases, but in different ways, God triumphs over evil.

In his final chapter—perhaps the best—O'Donnell reflects on the previous six chapters and explains how and why he made the various hermeneutical moves demonstrated in the sermons. He offers five "tips" for moving from Wisdom Literature to Jesus. Here he discusses typology, correlating the teaching of Jesus with wisdom teaching, and using Jesus to illustrate wisdom teaching. He also includes two helpful appendices on the characteristics of Hebrew poetry and how to move from poetic analysis to sermon (Appendix A), and book summaries and suggested sermon series (Appendix B). His concluding 16-page bibliography guides the preacher to some of the best resources scholarship has to offer on this portion of Scripture.

O'Donnell uses vivid imagery and creative expression in his writing/preaching, and he models a wonderful blend of scholarship (nearly 50 pages of notes!) and practical theology. His book is a very helpful discussion of what he

promises—how to preach Christ from Wisdom Literature. I highly recommend O'Donnell's work to anyone who is trying to teach and preach faithfully these books of the OT with sophisticated biblical theology and a Christocentric focus.

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The Form Function of the Tricolon in the Psalms of Ascent: Introducing a New Paradigm for Hebrew Poetry Line Form. By Simon P. Stocks. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012, 274 pp., $32.00 paper.

What Robert Lowth named "parallelism" is, as every student of Biblical Hebrew poetry knows, the main characteristic of this poetry. Most poetic lines in the Hebrew Bible consist of two cola, but for quite a number of lines we must acknowledge the existence of tricola. In works on Hebrew poetry, tricola used to receive little detailed attention. Simon P. Stocks, tutor for Biblical Studies and Lay Ministry at the South East Institute for Theological Education, UK has published a work in which he seeks to rectify this deficiency. His book refines his Ph.D. thesis that he wrote under supervision of David Firth. Taking the Psalms of Ascent, a sample corpus of poetic texts, as the object of his research, he identifies tricola on an explicit and regular basis.

After an introduction, Stocks's first chapter provides an overview of the most important theories of poetic structure. I agree with Stocks that Jan P. Fokkelman's insight that a colon usually has between two and four stresses and never exceeds the limit of five is the best substantiated starting point for assessing the colometry of a text. That theory incorporates the most favorable aspects of the analysis of M. O'Connor.

Stocks has brought the analysis of the structure of poetic texts in the Hebrew Bible an important step further because he combines the insights of Fokkelman and O'Connor with the fruitful use of the rhythmical-accentual approach of Eduard Sievers, a German scholar of a former generation. In his *Metrische Studien: I. Studien zur Hebraïschen Metrik* (1901), Sievers gave special attention to the six-stress lines. He noted that lines with six stresses can be read as 2+4, 4+2, 3+3, or 2+2+2. His key point is that a 3+3 bicolon and a line divided as 2+2+2 are rhythmically equivalent. Making use of the insights of Sievers, Stocks argues convincingly that the polar assessment of bicolon or tricolon does not adequately accommodate the type of line encountered here. Stocks introduces the name "para-tricolon" for a line with six stresses that is tripartite and yet rhythmically equivalent to a couplet.

Especially in his research of the significance of enjambment he surpasses the work of Sievers. He shows that the average degree of enjambment in definitively identified tricola and para-tricola is less than in uncertain cases. In doing so, he demonstrates a greater resemblance between syntax and rhythmical structure.

The largest part of Stocks's publication consists of his analysis of Psalms 120–134. In the Psalms of Ascents, several examples support his insight. Stock analyzes

each individual psalm in terms of a colometric and structural analysis. The structural analysis consists of a thematic, strophic, and rhetoric-structural analysis.

Just as in the case in the poetic theories of Fokkelman and O'Connor, the colometric structure given by Stocks more than once does not correspond to the Masoretic system of accentuation. For example, he ignores several times the demarcating function of the *'atnāḥ* (cf. Pss 122:3; 127:5; 129:4). I do not think this is a major argument against the insights of Stocks, though in general there should be very weighty reasons not to follow the Hebrew consonantal text. The Masoretic accentuation of the text must be taken into consideration, but of course, it is not of the same value as the MT's vocalization and certainly not of the same value as the consonantal text. Especially when analyzing poetic texts, it is important to realize the secondary nature of the Masoretic accentuation. It is true that the criteria for tricola and para-tricola are set by Stocks, but I think that the result shows the insights of Stocks are worthy of serious consideration. He has demonstrated the application of his theory explicitly and consistently. Still, some of his examples may be analyzed in more than one way. This no doubt has to do with the nature of language and especially with the nature of poetic language. Language is always more than whatever structure is detected in it.

In conclusion, Stocks has provided an important study that will facilitate a more nuanced and realistic appraisal of the functional significance of Hebrew poetic line forms.

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The Story of Israel in the Book of Qohelet: Ecclesiastes as Cultural Memory. By Jennie Barbour. Oxford Theological Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, xv + 225 pp., $135.00.

Jennie Barbour's *Story of Israel in the Book of Qohelet* is based on her 2010 Oxford D.Phil. thesis. In it, she has made a unique contribution to the study of Ecclesiastes. Although Ecclesiastes has usually been approached as being disconnected from history, Barbour suggests the background of Israelite history, and especially the fall of Jerusalem and the exile, has colored the text and contributed to its pessimism (pp. 8, 30). This is not seen in an explicit way, but is more of a "brush against history" (pp. 3, 29).

In the first chapter ("'All Princes, I': The Making of Qohelet's Composite King"), Barbour argues that the masked reference to Solomon in Ecclesiastes 1–2 is really part of the description of a stereotyped composite of Israel's kings. This is a device to alert the reader that the "national historical memory" is important to the biblical book (p. 10). Qoheleth is really "every king" and this connection functions as a critique of the failure of Israelite kings in the light of postexilic foreign oppression (pp. 35–36). Therefore, while the achievements of the king in Ecclesiastes 1–2 closely resemble portraits of kings in Chronicles, these characteristics of kings and kingdoms are used in the opposite way in Ecclesiastes (p. 30). They make a satire

on Israel's stereotypical king, similar to the way the books of Esther and Daniel portray Babylonian and Persian kings, which is similar to Greek portrayals of Persian kings (pp. 31, 35).

Barbour addresses the connection to history further in chapter 2, which analyzes the poems in Ecclesiastes 1 and 3. In her definition of history, she stresses the past dimension, human deeds, and public significance (p. 38). She finds these three elements in both poems. The verb "to do" is important in Ecclesiastes, and Barbour sees the focus as being on human action rather than divine action (p. 42). Many of these deeds are done "under the sun," which Barbour shows indicates they are in the public arena (p. 44). The judgment that everything is *hebel* also has "a historiographic colouring" and often relates to the failure of memory of past events (p. 48).

The poem in Eccl 1:4–11 shows the unchanging nature of the natural world, which Barbour takes as a foil for what has happened (and is forgotten) in the historical world (p. 48). In the phrase "a generation goes and a generation comes," Barbour argues for events on the public stage (Eccl 1:4; p. 50). In the denial of anything new, she suggests a deliberate allusion to the prophetic promise of new things (e.g. Isa 41:22, p. 51).

The poem in Eccl 3:1–15 presents times for various activities, and Barbour sees these as times when things happen, not times that God has appointed for these activities (pp. 55, 73). In the activities themselves, Barbour sees the shadow of historical events, especially the pulling down and rebuilding of the nation in exile and return (pp. 57, 60). In this regard, Barbour correctly sees war and peace as having "something of a summary force," and again, "War is a menace hovering around this poem" (pp. 63–64, Eccl 3:8). One couplet that Barbour does not relate to war is the first, which she takes as a merism for a human lifespan (p. 55, Eccl 3:2). It does relate to war and peace, however, because giving birth is out of place in wartime (as emphasized in Matt 24:19) and death has obvious relevance to war.

The negative attitude toward kings at points in Ecclesiastes is often taken as an indication the author has dropped the historical fiction from the first two chapters. Barbour takes it as an indication that the kings of Israel are still being critiqued and even that the composite king of the first chapters "is in fact the object of the whole work" (p. 78). This critique is not direct but uses allusions that are "fragmentary and unspecific," drawing on the collective memory of author and audience (p. 81). Barbour applies this approach to the story about a king and to the advice before God in Eccl 4:13–16 and 4:17–5:6.

In chapter 4 of Barbour's book, she relates the language of Ecclesiastes to the exile. She does not suggest Qoheleth is writing *about* the exile, but that his "consideration of human misery" is portrayed in language which is colored by that national defeat (p. 109; see Eccl 5:12–16; 6:1–6; 9:11–18).

Barbour draws on Jerome's interpretation of the closing poem of Ecclesiastes and suggests that "Qohelet's ruined house and silenced streets bring with them a memory of the paradigmatic urban collapse in the Hebrew Bible, the fall of Jerusalem" (p. 139). To do this, Barbour offers a convincing correlation of imagery in Ecclesiastes 12 with the city-lament genre of Lamentations and the Mesopotamian

city laments. She focuses on the urban landscape, desertion, silenced agriculture, representative population, *Kontrastmotiv*, darkness, and elegiac perspective. However, Barbour still relates the poem to aging and death (although not as a physical allegory; see pp. 141, 158) as well as "a note of anxiety about historical calamity" (pp. 161, 167). In her discussion of the silver cord and golden bowl (Eccl 12:6) she mentions in a footnote the possibility of these items as plunder (p. 150, n. 50). But she ignores the *ketib* of ***yirḥaq***, "distant," which would support the city-lament reading (i.e. the silver is carried away to a distant land).

For Barbour, the book of Ecclesiastes mourns the loss of Jewish kingship and "also how far short it fell" (pp. 169–70). She has made a great contribution to the study of Ecclesiastes by bringing to account not only allusion to historical event, but also allusion to the literary preservation of those events, especially the fall of Jerusalem (e.g. p. 133). All this analysis raises the questions of *why* Qoheleth would be so impacted by the historical disaster(s) of the past, and also what is the place of the commendations of joy? Barbour answers this in her conclusion with the observation that the epilogist's words are consistent with the book as a whole: "Fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccl 12:13–14; pp. 170–73). She suggests that Ecclesiastes begins to bring together wisdom and law, a connection which becomes stronger in later wisdom literature. As for the joy statements, she sees her focus on the darker side of history as nevertheless compatible with readings which emphasize joy. More specifically, she asserts, "The despair over history and monarchy that this study has exposed serves to circumscribe further the individual pursuits of work, family, eating, and drinking as the places for joy" (p. 170).

Barbour's book is engaging and will be essential reading for Ecclesiastes research. I close by noting a few very minor distractions: (1) Hebrew script is not transliterated and not always translated; (2) Errata: There is a word-division error in the Hebrew on p. 44 (תחתה שמש instead of תחת השמש).

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An Introduction to the Study of Isaiah. By Jacob Stromberg. London: T&T Clark, 2011, xi + 146 pp., $110.00/$19.95 paper.

Jacob Stromberg's *Introduction to the Study of Isaiah* has as its primary audience those who are at the beginning stages of their biblical studies (p. 1). It seeks to demonstrate that "the message of Isaiah the prophet … has been made to be seen through the lens of exile and restoration; the pivotal moments in Israel's history, now textualized, have become a key part of the structure of the book" (p. 6).

Chapter 1, "The Formation of First-Isaiah" (pp. 7–25), discusses the formation of Isaiah 1–39 into its present shape. The approach is diachronic in that it seeks to discern post-exilic, exilic, and pre-exilic material in First Isaiah as well as the rearrangement of earlier material by later editors. Stromberg ends the chapter with what is perhaps the clearest marker of Isaiah 1–39's editing—namely, that every major section in First Isaiah concludes with a "hope for the return from exile

and a subsequent restoration" (p. 24). This hope can be found in Isa 11:11–16/12:1–6 [concluding 1–12]; 27:12–13 [concluding 13–27:11]; 35 [concluding 28–34]; 36–39 [concluding 1–35].

Chapter 2, "Second-Isaiah and the Book" (pp. 27–40), addresses the formation of Isaiah 40–55 and its relationship with First Isaiah. Briefly, there exist two lines of thought concerning the compositional character of Deutero-Isaiah. While one group of scholars argues that Isaiah 40–55 was composed by a single author (pp. 34–35), another has uncovered at least two redactional steps in the formation of Isaiah 40–55. The latter group view Isa 52:7–12; 55:6, 8–13 as two conclusions to Deutero-Isaiah dating from around 521 BC and from the first half of the fifth century respectively (pp. 35–36). The chapter finishes with a discussion of the relationship between Isaiah 40–55 and Isaiah 1–39. Isaiah 40–55 was composed as a continuation of Isaiah 1–39, while also guiding further editorial compositions in Isaiah 1–39 in the light of Isaiah 40–55.

The nature of Isaiah 56–66 and its relationship with the rest of Isaiah is the focus of chapter 3, "Third-Isaiah and the Book" (pp. 41–54). In comparison with the compositional growth of Isaiah 1–39; 40–55, that of Isaiah 56–66 is much more complicated and debatable. Scholars agree that Isaiah 56–66 is composite in nature but disagree as to whether the chapters should be seen as highly fragmented or more unified (p. 42). Following scholarly consensus, the chapter argues for Isaiah 60–62 as the literary core around which the rest of Isaiah 56–66 grew. The latest chapters in its composition are Isaiah 56:1–8; 65–66. Interestingly, the chapter also argues that Isaiah 56–66 in its present form "is roughly symmetrical" (p. 48), despite its many compositional layers. The chapter also pays attention to the role of Isaiah 56–66 in relation to Isaiah 1–55. It argues the author of Isaiah 56–66 not only alluded to parts of Isaiah 1–55 in the composition of his own section but also redacted earlier parts of the book in the light of Isaiah 56–66.

Chapter 4, "Literary Approaches to Isaiah" (pp. 55–76), defines the expression "literary approach," discusses it from a methodological point of view, and finishes with a talk on Isaianic "literary features," such as poetry, allusion, and narrative. "Literary approach" is defined as a "discourse-oriented analysis" (p. 56). This feature differentiates "literary approach" from "source-criticism"—the subject of chapters 1–3—in that is does not seek to discern the "realities behind" the text (p. 76). In other words, a "literary approach" focuses on the final form of the book "*as we have it*" (p. 57; emphasis original). And although one is not to deny the composite nature of a book such as Isaiah, since Isaiah in its present form is all that is available to the reader, "competent reading of the text must precede competent excavation of the source" (p. 57). However, both the traditional literary approach of "source-criticism" and the newer one in the form of "literary criticism" are said to be not mutually exclusive but rather mutually informative. To say the least, Stromberg has drawn attention to the importance of keeping a health balance between both approaches for they help the "reader to judge which features of the text are attributable to source" (source-criticism) "and which to strategy (literary-criticism)" (p. 57).

Stromberg also addresses what can be considered one-sided literary-critical approaches to the Bible. First, some have focused on "literary features of the Bible *in isolation* from its communicative aims, from its theological or ideological point" (p. 57; emphasis original). And, second, sometimes veiled in a "literary approach" to the Bible is the marginalization of a more historical-oriented reading. Stromberg's words are helpful here: "just as the Bible is not literature as opposed to theology (but for the sake of it), so it is not literature as opposed to history (but grounded in it)" (p. 58).

Chapter 5, "Reading Isaiah Holistically" (pp. 77–93), argues for reading Isaiah holistically despite the compositional character of the book. The basis for such a holistic reading is redaction criticism, in that it seeks to understand how later editors gave coherence to the book as a whole (p. 93). This claim is demonstrated with a clear and helpful discussion of how a particular cluster of terms such as "to plan," "to stand," and "to frustrate" are used to tie major historical phases in Israelite history like the Syro-Ephraimite, the Assyrian, and the Babylonian periods (pp. 85–93).

Chapter 6, "Approaches to Isaiah's Theology" (pp. 95–106) seeks to clarify the meaning of scholarly approaches to the theology of the book of Isaiah (p. 108). The chapter demonstrates that Isaiah's theology may be approached as a mere descriptive endeavor or from a confessional perspective (pp. 95–98), from a source or discourse-oriented perspective (pp. 98–102). Indeed, approaches to the theology of Isaiah may be grouped into four distinct classes: (1) descriptive/source-oriented; (2) descriptive/discourse oriented; (3) confessional/source-oriented; and (4) confessional/discourse-oriented (pp. 102–6). Chapter 7, "Aspects of Isaiah's Theology" (pp. 107–27), provides a discussion of two important theological themes in the book of Isaiah—Zion's destiny and "the scope of royal promises" (p. 107).

Stromberg has provided a valuable resource for those who are navigating in the vast sea of Isaianic studies and has demonstrated that the themes of exile and restoration have indeed left their mark on the present form of Isaiah. In general, however, one wonders if the book should have started with a discussion of literary approaches to Isaiah rather than of its compositional history. This question is raised based on the author's correct methodological assertion that "competent reading of the text must precede competent excavation of the source" (p. 57). By starting the book with a discussion of Isaiah's compositional history, one is left with the impression that Stromberg has taken the exact opposite route. Needless to say, this minor issue does not compromise the value of Stromberg's book not only for the beginner but also for the seasoned scholar.

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A Mouth Full of Fire: The Word of God in the Words of Jeremiah. By Andrew G. Shead. New Studies in Biblical Theology 29. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012, 321 pp., $27.00 paper.

Andrew Shead, head of the Old Testament department at Moore College, Sydney, Australia, offers a theological interpretation of one of the more daunting books in the OT. He aims "to present a reading of the book of Jeremiah that makes good sense of its apparently chaotic structure and flow of thought" (p. 21). This is not, however, a commentary per se; it is a more focused study on the Word of God in the words of Jeremiah. In short, Shead proposes that Jeremiah provides raw materials for framing a robust doctrine of Scripture. He approaches his task by blurring the boundary lines between biblical theology and systematic theology, an approach often called a "theological interpretation of the Bible" (p. 21).

A 20-page introduction serves both to explain his approach and to summarize the methodological debate in biblical theology and its interface with systematic theology. Pastors and students will find this a helpful primer. Shead unabashedly opts for reading Jeremiah as part of the Christian canon; indeed, his exposition assumes a Christological context centering on the Word of God. He proposes the interesting thesis that the book of Jeremiah is a narrative about a theological idea in which the protagonist of the narrative is the word of the Lord (pp. 38).

Chapter 1 unpacks the exegetical support for his thesis. The frequency of "word" terminology and "word of the LORD" formulas set Jeremiah apart from all other books of the OT. The prophet is so possessed by the Word of God that he both speaks and embodies the Word of God (pp. 62–63). In this narrative role, the prophet takes on a Christological dimension that, while not identical with, nonetheless prefigures the incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ. In this broader sense, then, the book of Jeremiah is rightly viewed as part of Christian Scripture.

Chapter 2 requires not a little concentration and persistence. Devoting 42 pages to a close structural analysis of the book in its final form, Shead lays out his understanding of the way the MT of Jeremiah presents a coherent narrative. Tables helpfully illustrate the discussion. He concludes that "Jeremiah can indeed be read as a narrative about the Word of God …. It is the story of God's word addressing his people with the utmost urgency, over matters of life and death, with patience and longsuffering, until at last that divine word puts into effect all that it had declared, with devastating results" (p. 105).

In chapter 3, discourse analysis is deployed to discern the basic structural units of Jeremiah. Shead walks us through various structuring devices such as embedded discourse, drift of speaker, and telescoping (pp. 110–16). Once again, visual aids assist the reader in following the argument. He also introduces an important qualification: "Scripture is not the Word of God in the sense of being God's speech. It is not any sort of speech, but rather words written on a page" (p. 109). He is quick to add, however, that "none of this is to suggest that we stop calling Scripture the Word of God …. In the usage of biblical writers the words spoken are the word of the LORD as and precisely because God is speaking them. Every subse-

quent speech event that relays God's word is derivative from that original act of divine speaking" (p. 109).

Chapter 4 applies concepts from communication theory. What is successful communication and did Jeremiah succeed? Why didn't Jeremiah defend himself against his accusers? This is a fascinating discussion and includes the vexed problem of false prophets (pp. 155–73). Given the "incurably deaf listeners" (p. 180), does this mean the Word of God actually failed? Shead responds that one must distinguish between the words of God and the Word of God. The former are conveyed through the words and actions of the prophet. In this case the listeners by and large refused both message and messenger to their eventual destruction—precisely what the Word of God initially informed Jeremiah would happen. Thus, the Word of God accomplished its intended purpose: to destroy and tear down. But it will also build and plant through a future, transformative reception of the Word of God (pp. 182–83).

Chapter 5 addresses the topic of word and power. Once again enlisting communication theory, Shead inquires how the Word of God transforms non-listeners into recognizing and receptive hearers. The answer appears primarily in Jeremiah 25, 30–31, and 50–51. In short, the new covenant accomplishes this miracle, and in so doing, demonstrates the dynamic power of the Word of God that is functionally equivalent to the gospel. Along the way, Shead engages modern speech-act theory and asks whether it throws light on the text. The short answer is that "speech-act theory tells us what we knew already" (p. 219). The author's discussion of the new covenant addresses a puzzling absence in the book of Jeremiah—namely, the work of the Holy Spirit. Shead observes that the creative all-powerful Word of God appears to absorb into itself what Ezekiel attributes to the Spirit (pp. 224–28) and what is more, the NT demonstrates the self-same power of the word phenomenon as portrayed in the book of Jeremiah (pp. 228–32).

Chapter 6 addresses inscripturation. In what sense is the book of Jeremiah, and more broadly, the OT, the Word of God? Conversation partners include Karel Van der Toorn, John Goldingay, John Webster, James Barr, Kevin Vanhoozer, and Nicholas Wolterstorff. Shead concludes that a prophetic paradigm is too narrowly drawn to account adequately for the text as we have it (p. 261). As to the term "inerrancy," Shead is cautious: "The book of Jeremiah can be of no help in deciding the proper meaning of the term …. However, it does cast light on some of the ways in which it is helpful and unhelpful to speak of Scripture as being free from error" (p. 261). He is content with saying that "the words we read will lead us into a right understanding of the word and not mislead us through being in error … one may not begin from the fact that the words of Scripture are the words of God and conclude that they must therefore be perfect in every way" (pp. 261–62).

Shead's concluding chapter moves from exegetical to systematic theology and his primary conversation partner is Karl Barth. Like other modern evangelical scholars, Shead is more sympathetic to Barth's contribution to a doctrine of Scripture than evangelicals of prior generations. However, Shead faults Barth for refusing to identify strictly the words of a particular prophet, in this case Jeremiah, with the Word of God. On the contrary, Jeremiah's word theology compels Shead to

champion a contrary view: the words of Jeremiah are the words of God and thus the Word of God (pp. 277, 284–90).

Shead's book is an important contribution to the theological interpretation of the Bible. Those in the evangelical and confessional wings of the church will especially appreciate this illuminating engagement with the Word of God in Jeremiah.

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Reading with the Faithful: Interpretation of True and False Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah from Ancient Times to Modern. By Seth Tarrer. JTIS 6. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013, xi + 209 pp., $34.95 paper.

This volume is a "slightly revised" and retitled version of Seth Tarrer's doctoral dissertation completed at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, in 2009. The subtitle describes the goal of the work. Tarrer intends to give a brief overview of the interpretations of the false prophecy texts in Jeremiah, especially chapter 28. The survey demonstrates association of that text with Deuteronomy 13 and 18 in the pre-modern era. This stands in contrast with the modern era that sees conflict between these texts. However, Tarrer believes the pre-modern readings prepare us in certain ways for the historical-critical approach of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The twentieth century has seen a return to a more holistic, canonical view but with a recognition that the post-exilic redaction led to the texts being read in a way quite different than the original texts intended.

Tarrer selects representative people from the various eras: Jerome and Theodoret of Cyrus from the early church (chap. 2); the *Glossa Odinaria* and Thomas Aquinas from the Medieval era (chap. 3); John Calvin from the Reformation era (chap. 4); Hobbes, Spinoza, Vitringa, Calmet, and Newton from the Enlightenment era (chap. 5); eight scholars from the nineteenth century representing both conservative (e.g. Hengstenberg and Keil) and historical-critical positions (e.g Duhm and Kuenen) (chap. 6); von Rad, Sanders, and Childs in the twentieth century (chap. 7); and three modern approaches represented by James Brenneman, Amin Lange, and R. W. L. Moberly (chap. 8). His conclusions are stated in chapter 9.

What distinguishes Tarrer's survey from a general survey of views on prophecy is his concentration on the issue of false prophecy. Therefore, he limits his study to those who have written specifically on Jeremiah or the issue of false prophecy in the OT. His survey of the pre-modern era is also in tune with the recent recognition that the early Church fathers and reformers do have something to offer to current biblical studies.

The main issues for understanding Jeremiah 28 up to the Enlightenment were how Deuteronomy 13 and 18 were to be applied to Jeremiah's conflict with Hananiah. The wait-and-see attitude of Deuternomy 18 seemed to readily apply (Jerome and Theodoret). However, Aquinas saw the prophets more as interpreters of God to bring words of judgment than seers of the future, and he set Jeremiah within the

framework of the law. For Aquinas, ultimately the prophets who failed the test of Deuteronomy 18 were subject to the charge of Deuteronomy 13 of idolatry.

Calvin grounded the prophetic task firmly in the covenantal law, that is, Exodus to Deuteronomy. The prophets' responsibility was to call the people back to their covenant obligations. The prophets were not to improvise but to apply the law to the current circumstances. Thus the law and prophets were closely bound together. Even the false prophets could say true things about the future (Deut 13), so the people were to watch their behavior closely to see if it followed doctrine (i.e. the Law). Calvin's innovation was his relocation of the center of prophecy to the written tradition, the book of the Law.

The rise of the historical-critical era in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is well-known (though it was hardly "objective and sober," p. 128!). Spinoza removed prophecy from the area of inspiration and presented reason as the proper test for true prophecy. Prophecy came from the imagination of the prophets and was true if it conformed to the universal law of virtue. Spinoza cut prophecy off from the Law, for even the Law reflected the universal moral law that existed before Moses.

The critical theories of Kuenen and others made the separation of prophecy and law complete with their placing of the P document in the post-exilic period. For them, the prophets were innovators, not mediators of the Law. Further, there was conflict between prophets of salvation (Isaiah) and prophets of judgment (Jeremiah). Since prophets were not especially inspired, "false" prophets were given more credibility, which Tarrer believes is a positive step.

Von Rad stressed the theological content of the prophetic word and its changing relevancy. A true prophet like Jeremiah stood in uncertainty before God and adapted the message to the changing circumstances of the times. A false prophet like Hananiah was too certain and wedded to past expressions of salvation such as found in Isaiah. Childs's canonical approach led him to see once again a relationship between prophecy and law. Prophecy and fulfillment had to be ontologically linked, which brought Childs closer to Calvin.

Recently, James Brenneman has advocated a more postmodern, reader-oriented approach, with the deciding criteria being ethics, especially a non-violent ethic. Armin Lange focuses on the deuteronomistic redaction of Jeremiah and the decline of prophecy in the post-exilic period. R. W. L. Moberly thinks Jeremiah 23 is more crucial to the issue of true and false prophecy than Jeremiah 28, for it posits lack of character (ethics), absence of a call for repentance, and absence from the divine council as criteria.

Tarrer concludes that a canonical approach following Childs holds the most promise for the ancient texts to still be heard in the modern church in some way as the voice of God. Listening carefully to the various eras' interpretation of the prophets as they attempt to apply their insights to their age can help us do the same.

Tarrer has read a vast number of books and articles to compile his survey. This alone makes the book worth reading if one is to keep current with scholarship. For those interested in OT hermeneutics and prophecy this volume will be helpful.

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Preaching Christ from Daniel: Foundations for Expository Sermons. By Sidney Greidanus. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xv + 440 pp., $34.00.

The issue of how to preach the OT is a perennial question for pastors and theologians alike. In fact, it sometimes seems as if there are as many methods of preaching the OT as there are preachers. More recently evangelicals, with renewed interest in hermeneutics and biblical theology, are revisiting the question of how to preach the OT as Christian Scripture, or more plainly "how to preach Christ from the OT."

Sidney Greidanus, professor emeritus of preaching at Calvin Theological Seminary, has provided sober, biblically-theologically rich wisdom on preaching Christ from one of the OT's more homiletically troubling texts; the book of Daniel. This most recent addition to Greidanus's corpus is a companion volume to his previously published works on *Preaching Christ in the Old Testament*, *Preaching Christ in Genesis*, and *Preaching Christ in Ecclesiastes*. Whereas Greidanus's previous books demonstrated the application of the "redemptive-historical Christocentric method" to narrative and wisdom literature, Greidanus produced this book to show how his method applies to apocalyptic literature as well.

Preaching Christ from Daniel consists of an extended introduction followed by eleven chapters that cover the major sections of Daniel. The introduction, entitled "Issues in Preaching Christ from Daniel," treats a number of subjects ranging from matters of historical background to instruction on how to divide the text for a sermon series. Greidanus adopts conservative opinions on the historical background of Daniel and even spends a significant amount of time defending Daniel as a sixth-century BC composition (pp. 5–14). The introduction also acquaints readers with Greidanus's fundamental homiletical conviction that pastors must "[preach] sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament" (p. 27). As in his other *Preaching Christ* volumes, Greidanus argues that the best way to "authentically integrate" the person and work of Christ with any OT text is to look for (1) redemptive-historical progression; (2) promise-fulfillment; (3) typology; (4) analogy; (5) longitudinal themes; (6) NT references; and (7) contrast between the OT text/character and Jesus.

The eleven chapters that comprise the bulk of Greidanus's work follow essentially the same seven-fold outline. Each chapter examines (1) text and context; (2) literary features; (3) theocentric interpretation; (4) textual theme and goal; (5) ways to preach Christ; (6) sermon theme, goal, and need; and (7) a sermon exposition. Greidanus rightly notes that the benefit of this approach is that "it gradually draws

students from a casual acquaintance with the text to an ever deeper involvement" (p. xi). This is true. By the time readers reach the end of each chapter, they will have circled the text so many times and from so many angles that they will feel an intimate familiarity with its details.

Greidanus also includes four appendices. The first describes Greidanus's ten-step preparation process from "text to sermon" and the second is a short outline of the "model" expository sermon. The final two appendices are sermons—from Daniel 1 and Daniel 9—from pastor Ryan Faber.

Scholars will find little new in *Preaching Christ from Daniel.* However, Greidanus explains that the book is not written for the academy. Rather, Greidanus's aim is to "help busy preachers and Bible teachers proclaim the good news of Daniel" (p. x). If we judge Griedanus's book by his stated purpose, then it is certainly a huge success. *Preaching Christ from Daniel* is a "one stop shop" for busy pastors. Greidanus's work is concise, practical, and brimming with homiletical insight without sacrificing meaningful exegetical and literary analysis. Pastors will find this book a wonderful blend of hermeneutics and homiletics, interpretation, and application. Also, pastors with more time to study will appreciate Greidanus's lengthy footnotes and bibliography, which could serve as a helpful launching pad for further research.

There are also several other positive aspects of *Preaching Christ from Daniel.* Greidanus's careful attention to Daniel's literary artistry is both impressive and informative. Readers will profit from Greidanus's literary analysis, which includes careful attention to structure, plot and character development, and other literary features such as Daniel's use of repetition. I also appreciated Greidanus's recognition that a reader's perception of the composition history of Daniel will ultimately affect the way one will preach the text, while at the same time not unnecessarily belaboring critical issues throughout the body of the commentary.

Readers can also expect the same level of biblical-theological commentary and suggestive intertextual connections they are accustomed to seeing in Greidanus's other *Preaching Christ* books. No one will agree with all of the ways Greidanus proposes that Daniel points to Christ. Nevertheless, every reader will find at least some valuable insights on how to preach in such a way that points congregations beyond Daniel to Golgotha.

I appreciate Greidanus's desire to avoid "moralism" in preaching and his emphasis on the gospel as the agent of transformation in the Christian life. However, I was disappointed that Greidanus did not more clearly articulate that Scripture also makes demands on its readers. Many preachers need to hear his exhortation to avoid "piecemeal superficial moralizing" (p. 174). Yet it is also the case that some preachers—particularly younger preachers heavily influenced by the redemptive-historical preaching movement—need to hear that preaching must also include exhortations for the congregation to *respond* to "the climax of God's revelation in the person and work of Christ" in the appropriate ways. The NT writers, in the context of a robust, Christ-centered biblical theology, do not shy away from using imperatives or from presenting OT narratives as moral exemplars (1 Cor 10:6, 11; Heb 12:15–16). In fairness, I note that Greidanus's sample sermon expositions do in fact make applications of the text to the readers and call for holiness. He also

shows concern for application when he reminds readers that "the [biblical] author's goal should guide preachers in applying the message to the church today" (p. 25). However, Greidanus's relentless critique of moralism and exemplarism may be slightly overstated. The law and even moral exemplars, "used lawfully" (1 Tim 1:8) in the context of Gospel preaching, are both helpful and biblical.

These criticisms should not dissuade readers from the value of Greidanus's work. *Preaching Christ from Daniel* is a model for what the pastorally-aimed commentary should look like—exegetically sound, well researched, and theologically rich. Overall, Greidanus achieves his goal of providing the "busy pastor" with the tools necessary to authentically preach the gospel from Daniel. His method is easily reproducible and can apply to other OT texts. *Preaching Christ from Daniel* is a thorough introduction to the book of Daniel and a tremendous resource for pastors, local churches, and students.

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The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude: What Earliest Christianity Learned from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. By David A. deSilva. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, x + 343 pp., $35.00.

David A. deSilva, Trustees' Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Greek at Ashland Theological Seminary, has provided readers with a robust yet cautious point of entry into extrabiblical Jewish texts. Whereas in *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002) deSilva surveys the relevant contents and critical issues, here he examines a different set of texts with a distinct objective: to demonstrate that Jesus (and his brothers) found value in material contained in writings of his Jewish contemporaries. Furthermore, antagonistic dialogue was by no means the only type of engagement in which he engaged with them.

Prior to considering points of contact with Jewish sources, deSilva first explains his criteria for establishing the authenticity of Jesus sayings (chap. 1) and his rationale for espousing authorship of James and Jude by Jesus' brothers, respectively (chap. 2). The author aims to avoid common pitfalls by advocating a sensible method that requires both the availability of the Jewish document to the NT author as well as distinctives they share in contrast to other sources. This means that for each Jewish text in view, careful assessment must be made about its provenance, message, and purpose. This he does in each of the remaining chapters (chaps. 3–9), thereby ensuring comparative material is found first in respective texts independently of the potential points of contact with the NT. This simple yet imperative step does not in any way privilege the non-canonical texts but does posit an important corrective to the common method of indiscriminately amassing sound bites from Jewish texts by lending careful attention to the texts as documents in their own rights.

DeSilva finds a "constructive conversation" (p. 17) between Jesus and Ben Sira (chap. 3), particularly in Jesus' reflection on Torah in the Sermon on the Mount regarding forgiveness (Matt 6:4–15; cf. Sir 28:2–5). The sapiential nature of James lends itself well to comparisons with Ben Sira, where one finds commonality regarding controlling one's speech, the dangers of an unbridled tongue, and placing culpability for sin on human desire rather than God. While there are differences between Jesus and James on the one hand and Ben Sira on the other, it seems evident the NT sources are in "close conversation" and "often close alignment" with Ben Sira (p. 85). Similar ethical commonalities are found in the book of Tobit (chap. 4), where Jesus shares with this ancient narrative concern for laying up treasures for oneself and caring for the poor. Yet unlike Tobit, Jesus neither restrains kinship to ethnicity nor advocates Tobit's concern for national restoration.

The constituent parts of *1 Enoch* are carefully examined next (chap. 5). He finds evidence of the *Book of Watchers* (*1 Enoch* 1–26) not only in Jude 9, but also in Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount, Mark's instruction on marriage in heaven, and Jesus' view of the future kingdom. The Enochic *Astronomical Book* (*1 Enoch* 72–82) is intriguing in that its concern for the liturgical calendar and movements of the sun and moon are entirely absent from the teaching of Jesus and his brothers. The *Book of Dreams* (*1 Enoch* 83–90) shares with Jesus and his brothers an anticipation of the faithful of Israel along with those of other races in the kingdom of God. Similarly the teachings of James and Jesus resonate with critiques of the rich found in the *Admonitions of Enoch* (*1 Enoch* 91–108), though they part ways in the latter's vision for a restored temple (*1 Enoch* 91:22). The *Parables of Enoch* (*1 Enoch* 37–71) demonstrates that Jesus' teachings of an apocalyptic Son of Man are "entirely at home in the environment of early first-century Judea" (p. 137). Both understood the title in messianic terms and develop it from Daniel 7 with a view toward his judicial role in final judgment. Yet the notion of the suffering, dying, and rising of the Son of Man, so prominent to Jesus, is absent in the *Parables*.

Messianism takes center-stage in deSilva's treatment of the *Psalms of Solomon* (chap. 6). The messianism in these *Psalms* arises out of dissatisfaction with political leadership in the Hasmonean kings. Yet they share with Jesus a concern for a proclamation of the kingdom of God particularly in Davidic terms. Yet the Son of David of these Psalms is a figure characterized by military violence who, in part, envisions a purified temple devoid of Gentiles, both of which stand in stark contrast to Jesus. The subject of martyrology in select Jewish texts (especially 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, and *Lives of the Prophets*) is taken up in comparison to the death of Jesus (chap. 7). The Jewish sources envision the martyr's death achieving reconciliation with God, and their obedience suggests a representative ideology that likewise positively affects the relationship between God and his people. In this respect, Jesus' conception of his own messianic identity overlaps with Jewish martyrology traditions.

The most difficult pseudepigraphon addressed in this volume is the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (chap. 8). Their provenance has been debated for some time. Though acknowledging Christian interpolations deSilva contends for access to a pre-Christian origin that can bear witness to "the ethical, traditional, and even es-

chatological developments in Second Temple Judaism" (pp. 194–95). While not all will be satisfied with deSilva's confidence in excising Christian interpolations to arrive at any semblance of a pre-Christian document, he is cautious not to overreach with the modest suggestion that they "represent another stream of moral reflection taught within Judaism" that may have reached Jesus indirectly (p. 223). Such ethical instruction includes love for God and neighbor, the insufficiency of external obedience to Torah, concern for the poor, etc. Through these and other ideas the author finds "point[s] of correspondence" (p. 299) between the *Testaments* and Jesus' teachings. In addition, deSilva finds "strikingly close" similarities between James and the *Testaments* in thought and verbal expression regarding envious desires, social strife, and drawing near to God. These constitute an "impressive constellation of parallels with the teachings of James" (p. 233). Yet in recognition of the ongoing debate regarding the origin of the *Testaments*, deSilva prudently hesitates to press too hard for claims of direct influence while still acknowledging correspondences within their (common) Jewish heritage.

Similar points of comparison are adduced between James and the *Testament of Job* (chap. 9). Despite ambiguities regarding the provenance of this *Testament*, deSilva suggests their similarities in some unique aspects may suggest James's knowledge of it (p. 247). Both James and the *Testament of Job* invoke qualities of God as a rationale for Job's endurance, as well as finding them in God's self-revelation to Moses (Jas 5:11; *T. Job* 26:5) in a manner not found in Exodus (34:5).

A summative conclusion brings together the varied discussions of the book, drawing the reader's attention to the commonality between the teachings of Jesus, James, and Jude on the one hand and on the other hand the ethical and eschatological formulations of select texts of the Second Temple era. He goes further to posit these sources, either directly or indirectly, as "teachers" (in a broad sense) of Jesus and his half-brothers. Yet he also brings attention to key aspects where Jesus disagrees with these sources, such as national restoration, resistance to popular expectations, and prohibitive boundaries.

This volume is vintage deSilva; well written, carefully researched, demonstrating mastery of primary and secondary literature, appropriately cautious yet not afraid to press on with assumptions that may require reconsideration. Time and again deSilva resists the urge to harmonize, flatten, or oversimplify points of similarities between traditions. Readers will come away well informed and inclined toward a greater appreciation of the literary and historical context of Jesus and his brothers. This book is highly recommended for its careful and meticulous attention to points of commonality and differences between the teachings of the NT and selected Jewish texts.

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The Early Text of the New Testament. Edited by Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, xiv + 483 pp., $174.00.

This volume is an erudite collection of essays about the text of the NT before the fourth century. The "Introduction" by Hill and Kruger sets up the many topics for discussion: debates concerning the concept of an original text, the viability of speaking about text types, how free the text of the NT was in early stages, scribal practices, and the significance of copying for public or private collections.

The first major section concerns the textual and scribal culture of early Christianity. Harry Gamble ("The Book Trade in the Roman Empire") describes the dissemination of books in Roman culture through the book trade and among literary elites. He notes that, while Christian texts were subject to similar mechanisms, Christian groups did not consist of cultivated literary circles, and as a marginal group their literature had no appeal to the wider book trade. The NT Gospels and epistles probably spread slowly in widening circles, and grew exponentially due to the key role of texts in Christian instruction. Scott Charlesworth ("Indicators of 'Catholicity' in Early Gospel Manuscripts") identifies a degree of catholicity across the proto-orthodox churches with the standardization of Gospel codices and consistent employment of the *nomina sacra*. An observation that impugns the Walter Bauer thesis since Marcionite and Gnostic elements, who supposedly dominated much of the church, would have been unlikely to have joined the emerging consensus on manuscript production. Larry Hurtado ("Manuscripts and the Sociology of Early Christian Reading") notes that in contrast to Graeco-Roman reading culture, where writing materials were ornate and deliberately difficult to use, Christian reading culture was enfranchising in producing materials that were deliberately easier to use and distinctly Christian. Michael Kruger ("Early Christian Attitudes towards the Reproduction of Texts") notes that two historical realities existed within Christian literary culture side by side: some Christians valued NT texts as Scripture and did not accept unbridled textual changes, while others felt free to alter the text and its wording either to clarify or correct what was intended. Importantly, there were second-century authors who urged that the text should be accurately and faithfully transmitted without adulteration.

The second section covers the manuscript tradition itself with a formal survey of early textual witnesses to the NT writings. Tommy Wasserman ("Matthew") identifies a spectrum of early witnesses ranging from "strict" to "normal" textual quality, which suggests that the text of Matthew in the second and third centuries might not have been quite so free and chaotic as sometimes thought. Peter Head ("Mark") acknowledges the paucity of manuscript and patristic evidence for the text of Mark, especially in the second and third centuries. He thinks that the fourth-century uncials B and ℵ were based on a well preserved early text of Mark, from which the freer form of $\mathfrak{P}^{45}$ was based. Juan Hernández Jr. ("Luke") presents a survey of the Lucan papyri and gives particular attention to $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ and its affinity with B and discusses the Western non-interpolations where $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ routinely supports the longer reading. Juan Chapa ("John") examines textual witnesses to the fourth Gospel. He points out that all our early witnesses to John come from Egypt and the

texts generally testify to an Alexandrian text-type with $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ and $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$ in particular corresponding closely to an exemplar in contrast to freer texts like $\mathfrak{P}^{45}$.

The Book of Acts presents a plethora of textual-critical issues. Christopher Tuckett surveys the various witnesses, most of which are fragmentary, especially in relation to the "Alexandrian" and "Western" recensions. He concludes that the text of Acts was handled relatively freely and that the Western text in particular was less strictly preserved than the Alexandrian text. Papyri with roughly "Western" features also have the highest number of singular readings, usually deriving from scribal errors. The earlier papyri generally exhibit a text form closer to that of the Alexandrian text and with fewer scribal mistakes.

Concerning the Pauline corpus, James R. Royse presents a study of the texts witnessing to Paul's letters and Hebrews. Romans and Hebrews are the most well represented texts, and it is interesting that in some witnesses like $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ and possibly $\mathfrak{P}^{13}$ Hebrews follows Romans in order. Royse gives particular attention to $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ since it is the earliest and most extensive collection of Paul's letters. He regards $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ as generally an Alexandrian text but with a number of agreements with the Western text. Even though most of the witnesses are fragments of letters rather than whole letters or entire collections of Paul's letters, Royse avers that the Alexandrian text dominates in the majority of the papyri.

J. K. Elliott's essay on the Catholic Letters is a maverick piece, giving a brief overview of the papyrological witnesses to the Catholic Letters, but majoring on the obsolescence of the text-type model and the irrelevance of pursuing the original autographs. In the end, Elliott considers the papyri to be of little significance to understanding the textual heritage of the Catholic letters. Tobias Nicklas engages the text of Revelation. He notes that of the 300+ manuscripts that contain Revelation or parts thereof, only four can be dated earlier than or around AD 300. Indeed, studies on the text of Revelation are little more than postscripts to Josef Schmid's magisterial work on the subject, and the main question that predominates is the plausibility of Schmid's two text types of Revelation. Nicklas gives a good survey of the early papyri and in his conclusion urges that greater attention be paid to Latin witnesses to the text of Revelation given the largely Western interest in the book. Peter Williams's piece on the witness of the early versions points to their overuse and misuse in the apparatuses of many editions of the Greek NT. He notes that appealing to the *Vorlagen* of the many versions as attesting a particular Greek reading is liable to error unless married to a study of the translation method used by the originators of the early versions.

The third section examines early citation and usage of the NT. Charles Hill challenges the view of some textual critics who argue that the "free" nature of patristic citations indicates that many of the Church fathers were using exemplars that were unstable and highly variable. Hill responds by pointing out that elasticity in textual citation was a widespread feature of ancient literary culture. He explains the phenomenon of more literal citations by the time of Irenaeus by referring to the proliferation of Christian texts by the late second century when citations could be more readily checked and by pointing to the greater familiarity with the Christian Scriptures at that time. Paul Foster examines the text of the NT as attested in the

Apostolic Fathers. Foster is cautious about using the Apostolic Fathers to establish an early text of the NT because manuscripts of the Apostolic Fathers often date to the Middle Ages. He submits that the Apostolic Fathers cannot be used to establish any text type, but only to inform the questions about the history and originality of given variants.

Dieter Roth surveys the significance of Marcion for the text of the NT, specifically, Marcion's collection of Paul's letters (*Apostolikon*) and his truncated version of Luke (*Euangelion*). Following Ulrich Schmid, Roth finds indications that Marcion knew a "pre-Western" text of Paul's letters and Luke's Gospel. Joseph Verheyden looks at Justin Martyr's Gospel citations and notes that the apparent looseness of his citations can be explained by several factors like memory, oral tradition, redaction, harmonies, or floating texts that probably co-existed, with no single factor accounting for the form of citation. Verheyden thinks more attention needs to be given to the role of Justin in shaping the texts that he cites. Tjitze Baarda overviews the relevance of Tatian's *Diatessaron*, a discussion complicated by the fact that it was probably written in Greek, translated into Syriac, but survives only in Syriac fragments of Ephraem's commentary, in two manuscripts of an Armenian translation of Ephraem's commentary, in isolated references in the treatises of Aphrahat, and in a medieval Arabic version of the *Diatessaron*. Baarda is thus quite reticent about using the *Diatessaron* for any reconstruction of an original text, since it is nearly impossible to reconstruct the *Diatessaron* itself. Stanley Porter looks at several apocryphal Gospels. He concludes that their witness for an early text is meager. However, the general tendency was to conflate canonical accounts, and their replication of the wording and structure of canonical materials suggests that that the NT text was well established and fixed by the second and third centuries.

The volume closes with a study of Irenaeus's text of the Gospels by D. Jeffrey Bingham and Billy R. Todd and by Carl P. Cosaert on Clement of Alexandria's Gospel citations. The conclusion reached is that Irenaeus used a Western text of the Gospels similar to the Old Latin, while Clement used a variegated Alexandrian text.

In sum, this is a very technical book, but it is an invaluable resource for documenting the state of research about the text of the NT before the major fourth-century codices. Most of the essays conclude that, while the evidence is often meager and always complex, the NT text was transmitted with a large degree of textual stability in several quarters. The volume should be mandatory reading for anyone doing postgraduate study on the Greek NT.

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Jesus and the Forgiveness of Sins: An Aspect of his Prophetic Mission. By Tobias Hägerland. SNTSMS 150; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, xvii + 304 pp., $99.00.

The theme of forgiveness is one of the most important in today's cultural milieu. Many see forgiveness as their own "existential need" because of their personal religion or in spite of the lack of it. All that one needs to do is mention to a small number of friends (or even strangers) the topic of forgiveness, and the questions will come rolling out. Usually these questions take two forms: the first is whether or not the questioner should forgive someone in light of what they have done; the second is whether or not someone else should forgive the questioner.

Into this cultural uncertainty comes Hägerland's book, a revised version of his dissertation presented for approval at the University of Gothenburg in 2009. This is not a popular-level treatment and will not directly answer the sort of questions most have about forgiveness. It will, however, help the scholar to wrestle with issues that can lead to answers to such questions. The work mainly deals with two queries about Jesus and his claim to forgive sin. The first is "What significance would such a claim have for Jesus' contemporaries?" The second is "What would the implications be for someone who identified themselves as a first-century prophet?"

The first section of the book asks the question "Is it plausible that the historical Jesus did claim to forgive sins?" (p. 1). To help with the answer to this question, Hägerland first lays out the results of most of the important studies up to this point. Then he defends a variety of criteria for determining the validity of sayings found in the Gospels. Hägerland's model is to examine the nature and functions of particular *chreia* and make suggestions as to how these *chreia* were developed.

From here Hägerland goes on to examine specific passages in the NT in which Jesus is said to forgive sin. He then moves on to passages that might be read as implying Jesus' forgiveness of sin. He continues by examining the link between forgiveness and healing, including the connection between sin and illness. After this Hägerland asks whether or not forgiveness was a part of the commission that Jesus gave to his disciples upon sending them out.

Following a look at forgiveness in primitive Christian theology, Hägerland turns to an examination of the mediators of forgiveness in early Judaism. Here he examines priestly, prophetic, and angelic forgiveness. The section on angelic forgiveness is particularly intriguing because, as Hägerland points out (p. 167), few scholars have given this area the attention that it deserves. Here Hägerland points to two passages in which the Angel of the Lord forgives sin. While he grants that the OT does not maintain a clear distinction between God and the Angel of the Lord, more work on the links between Jesus and the Angel of the Lord might have been a method for finding a forgiving Jesus outside of the Gospels.

Hägerland then moves on to draw conclusions about what part the promise of forgiveness played in the ministry of the historical Jesus. He concludes that Jesus' preaching of forgiveness is analogous to healing in that they both are dependent upon faith and that Jesus' practice of announcing forgiveness fits well with his

identity as a prophet. He then argues that, while Jesus' announcement of forgiveness (in such places as Mark 2:10–11) is a part of eschatological and indeed even messianic events, the events surrounding these offers of forgiveness (e.g. Mark 2:6–10) do not fit with this announcement and thus are shown to be fictitious (p. 225).

Hägerland concludes the work by turning from the historical Jesus to the use of the forgiveness episodes in the Gospels. Here he essentially attempts to show how a particular tradition came to exist and how it came to be used in one (or more) of the Gospels. It is here that Hägerland argues most strongly for Mark 2:6–10 being an embellishment of a once much simpler pericope.

Setting aside evangelical presuppositions for a moment, this work is very well done. Hägerland is careful in laying out the methodological tools for the study as well as for his handling of the issues related to historical Jesus studies. Students who are working in this area would do well to use this text as an example of how such studies should be done.

The work is not, however, without its problems. The first has to do with a lack of reflection and interaction with those who feel that the NT text is much more reliable than Hägerland supposes (e.g. Wright, whom he mentions and briefly critiques; Bauckham, who is also mentioned). While it is true that Hägerland mentions several of these scholars, a more significant interaction with them would have been helpful. On this same note, more interaction with those who see the "criteria of authenticity" as problematic (or even inconsequential) would have been helpful. A second issue has to do with forgiveness in the parables of Jesus. A number of the parables touch either directly or indirectly on the issue of forgiveness. One cannot help but think of the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18 or the prodigal son in Luke 15 when reflecting on Jesus' message of forgiveness. A work that does not deal with these parables in detail is missing a large component of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness. While Hägerland does mention these parables, he does not deal with them in any depth. In fairness, this lack may be because such detail would have taken the dissertation far afield in terms of length and depth. Third, the work could stand to deal more with the OT and with intertestamental literature having to do with forgiveness. This would set the stage for a clearer understanding of forgiveness and healing in the kingdom of God. Fourth, a section dealing with the preaching of John the Baptist would have been helpful. Given that John's preaching was clearly about repentance and forgiveness of sin, this background to Jesus' preaching is important in understanding his claims to forgive sin.

All in all, this work is a good one that will be helpful to anyone dealing with the issue of Jesus and forgiveness. While there are a few problems with the work, overall it is well worth careful study.

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Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction. By Jonathan T. Pennington. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, xiv + 268 pp., $24.99 paper.

Jonathan Pennington's *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, which he aptly describes as a companion to rather than a replacement of traditional introductory books, offers up-to-date discussion of the nature and purpose of the Gospels, thoughtful reflection on current debates relating to Gospel history and hermeneutics, practical suggestions for interpreting and preaching Gospel narratives, and a warmly argued appeal for Christians to give the four Gospels a central place in their reading of Scripture. Pennington begins with four chapters treating foundational issues. He explains various uses of the term "gospel" in the opening chapter, and then in the second chapter goes on to survey and evaluate recent discussions of the Gospel genre. He concludes that the Gospels are "*bioi* plus"; they include many features typical of Greek biographies, but go beyond them to provide theological, historical, and virtue-forming narratives of Jesus' significance. In chapter 3 he lists nine reasons why we need the Gospels, writing partly with an eye to American evangelicals who may be tempted to sideline them in favor of the NT epistles. The fourth chapter deals with issues arising from the fact that the Bible gives us four, partially parallel Gospels.

Chapters 5–7 take up complex theological questions currently debated among evangelical scholars. These concern, first, the role of historical investigation in relation to Gospel interpretation and, second, the goals and avenues of Gospel interpretation (and Scripture interpretation in general). Pennington introduces the issue of historical investigation, which in the case of the Gospels centers on the search for the historical Jesus, by highlighting the interaction between N. T. Wright and Richard Hays at the 2010 Wheaton Theology Conference. He cites how Hays and others have critiqued Wright for allowing his reconstructed picture of Jesus to overrule the canonical portrait, and how Wright has insisted that theology not become divorced from historical reality. Pennington sets this recent debate against the backdrop of Enlightenment-influenced rationalism and historicism, showing how these movements have impacted Gospel scholarship. While affirming the importance of Gospel history, Pennington tends to align himself with those who question the need to place great stress on historical evidence or to construct a picture of "Jesus" that meets the criteria of modern historians. Commenting on George Ladd's "biblical realism," for example, he suggests Ladd may have surrendered "too much epistemologically to Enlightenment historicism" (p. 87).

Pennington's two chapters on hermeneutical theory reflect his general identification with the "theological interpretation of Scripture" movement. He stresses the importance of approaching Scripture texts through three avenues of reading: "behind the text," "in the text," and "in front of the text." He uses these basic categories to show how various methods and factors (human authorial intention, divine authorial intention, letter and Spirit, redaction criticism, historical criticism, grammatical-historical criticism, the quest for the historical Jesus, narrative criticism, intertextuality, reception history, biblical theology, and the *regula fidei*, to name but a few) can be incorporated into a comprehensive model for Scripture interpretation.

Pennington cautions against a rigid focus on authorial intent as the key to interpretation, particularly as this is conceived in modernist approaches that leave no room for the intentions of the divine author. He also warns against a one-sided emphasis on objectivity and against the danger of separating meaning from application. At the heart of Pennington's concerns is his insistence that the Gospels should be read with a responsive openness to God and a readiness to trust and obey.

After a brief chapter in which he summarizes the practical implications that emerge from the foundation-laying sections of the book, Pennington moves on to offer step-by-step suggestions for analyzing Gospel narratives. He first discusses the mechanics of plot analysis and theme identification at the level of individual episodes (chap. 9), and then he shows how sensitivity to an episode's wider circles of context also impacts our appreciation of its total message (chap. 10). In this latter chapter he shows how "acts," "cycles," and an overall macro-plot are present in the Gospels, and how the four Gospels themselves fit within the yet larger story of the whole Bible. Still in a how-to mode, Pennington then offers practical models for applying and preaching the Gospels (chap. 11).

In his concluding chapter, Pennington boldly argues that the Gospels should serve as a kind of "canon within a canon" for Christian readers of Scripture, holding a "privileged place and controlling position" (p. 230) and providing a guiding principle for understanding all of Scripture.

To mention just a few of this book's many strengths, Pennington has written an attractive midsize book that covers the whole spectrum of issues relating to Gospel interpretation. He analyzes issues in significant detail and draws from and interacts with the most recent trends in Gospel scholarship. His historical and theoretical chapters take us just a little deeper into questions, or lead us a little further along the paths of contemporary discussion, than most introductory treatments of the Gospels. The same can be said of his practical chapters. They offer substantial, systematic guidelines for reading, applying, and preaching the Gospels, often highlighting processes other books neglect. Another engaging feature of *Reading the Gospels Wisely* is that Pennington dives into areas where evangelicals disagree, particularly in his chapters on historical investigation and hermeneutics. In doing so, he alerts readers to points of controversy, the history lying behind the controversies, and the major arguments that need to be weighed. He is not afraid to provoke thought by challenging some common evangelical positions and attitudes. In a classroom setting, I think those sections of the book dealing with history, hermeneutics, and the Gospels' special place within the canon might serve as good discussion-openers; they provide significant guidance, but will probably also raise questions.

Some of the questions I found myself asking related to the definition of terms and the delineation of issues. Problems like the role of history in relation to the Gospels or the place of authorial intention in Bible interpretation (two of the topics Pennington takes up) are notoriously complex. Each includes several distinct subquestions and leads to several possible sub-positions. Take the issue of historical investigation: there is the question of whether Gospel history is theologically important, the question of whether historical reconstructions should control Gospel

interpretation, the question of whether they can inform interpretation, the question of whether they have apologetic value, and the question of whether methodological naturalism is appropriate. In the case of authorial intention, some use this phrase to refer to an author's communicative intentions, others an author's psychological state; some mean only the human author, some include the intent of the divine author. So unless terms are defined carefully and distinct positions noted consistently, a degree of cloudiness can easily enter the discussion. For example, I might read a particular argument and agree it weighs heavily against one approach to authorial intention, but not *my* approach. Or I might encounter a critique that seems devastating against one kind of evidentialism, but not *my* kind. Many books about the theological interpretation of Scripture suffer from an overgeneralized grouping of distinct positions; so it is perhaps unfair to ask for a more meticulous analysis in the chapters Pennington devotes to these matters. He does go into significant detail within the space he has to work. However, since these issues are both complex and important, I do think many readers will find themselves goaded to push a little further and attempt their own analyses of certain aspects of these contested issues.

Pennington's bold case for making the fourfold Gospel a "canon within the canon" may also spark interesting discussion. He defends at least two claims: that the Gospels should serve as "the guiding principle (even *regula fidei*) and lodestar for understanding and standing under all Holy Scripture" (p. 231) and that they "provide the closest thing we have to a comprehensive theology of the Scriptures" (p. 248). While some readers may want to consider what this claim implies for reading the OT, my own thoughts went to the question of how the Gospels relate to the NT epistles. I share Pennington's concern that the Gospels are often neglected in favor of the epistles and that they are sometimes viewed as mere descriptive history in contrast to the doctrinally prescriptive epistles. However, I will want to think more about whether, or in what sense, the Gospels should function as a guiding principle for Scripture interpretation. In practice I find myself treating the Gospels and the epistles in a much more equally reciprocal fashion. The Gospels have a power and concrete quality the epistles lack, but again and again I look to the epistles to shed necessary light on some Gospel passage. Nevertheless, Pennington has raised an issue that deserves further consideration. His book will certainly do much to advance the cause of wise and faithful Gospel reading.

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Jesus' Parable of the Rich Fool: Luke 12:13–34 among Ancient Conversations on Death and Possessions. By Matthew S. Rindge. SBL Early Christianity and Its Literature 6. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011, vii + 299 pp., $36.95 paper.

Matthew S. Rindge, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Gonzaga University, offers an incisive and unique treatment of the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:16–21. As a revision of his doctoral dissertation ("Illustrating Wisdom: Luke 12:16–21 and the Interplay of Death and Possessions in Sapiential Litera-

ture"), which was completed in 2008 under the supervision of Gail O'Day at Wake Forest University School of Divinity, Rindge constructs a conversation between Luke and his ancient interlocutors on the interplay of death and possessions. The chief question driving this monograph is: what are appropriate and meaningful uses of possessions in Jewish and Greco-Roman texts, given the unavoidable end of death, and how does Luke participate in this discussion? The answer to this question creates a rich dialogue.

Beginning with a short introductory chapter, Matthew Rindge exposes his readers to the lamentable, widespread neglect of the parable of the rich fool, one that is due primarily to its supposed "simple and straightforward critique of avarice" (p. 1). Instead, he demonstrates the complexity of this parable and its potential to disclose a fuller meaning when placed in conversation with ancient Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish texts on the intersection of death and possessions.

Rindge begins chapter 1 with a history of interpretation on Luke's parable of the rich fool. By analyzing various readings throughout the early medieval periods, the Reformation, the nineteenth century, and the "modern" era, an essential distinction emerges between "prophetic" and "sapiential" readings of this parable. A "prophetic" reading, prevalent among pre-modern and modern scholars, interprets the parable with a moral focus and simply views it as a critique of avarice. A "sapiential" reading, however, acknowledges the allusions and echoes to wisdom literature, interpreting the parable as an engagement in a Second Temple conversation with sapiential texts on the proper use of possessions in the face of death's finality. While Rindge does not consider these readings mutually exclusive (p. 160), he nevertheless advances a sapiential reading to enhance our understanding of Luke's engagement in (and even theological reconfiguration of) this ancient discussion.

To be sure, some scholars (e.g. Calvin, Jülicher) have tipped their hats to the sapiential reading, but do not provide extensive research on the matter, while others have written extensively on the parable of the rich man through this lens (e.g. Eichholz, Seng, and Scott). Nevertheless, Rindge finds many faults in their works, builds on their previous proposals, and further substantiates a sapiential approach to the parable, and he does so in three ways. First, he employs a different methodology than his predecessors. Rather than using wisdom texts as mere background to the NT or noting interesting parallels between the two, he aims to create a conversation between Luke 12:13–34 and wisdom texts from Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish authors. That is, he allows Luke's parable to engage these other texts and, at the same time, be engaged by them. Texts are read "on their own terms" rather than forcing Luke's concerns onto them in a reductionistic manner. For Rindge, a dialogue is the goal, not a monologue. Second, he incorporates certain wisdom texts into his monograph that have been largely neglected or misunderstood in relation to Luke's parable, namely, Qoheleth (Qoh 8:15 and other texts in Qoheleth) and Ben Sira (Sir 11:14–19). Third, he expands the literary contours of the parable to include 12:32–34, a decision that, he believes, will bear much interpretive fruit. Once his particular approach to Luke's parable is established, Rindge begins his examination of death and possessions in Hellenistic Jewish texts.

In chapter 2, Qoheleth and Ben Sira are read closely and interpreted carefully, with a particular eye on their recommendations for meaningful ways to use goods before death arrives. On the one hand, the inevitability and uncontrollability of death lead Qoheleth to promote control over what one can: eating, drinking, and enjoyment. Enjoying goods is precisely where one finds meaning in life, because enjoyment is considered a gift from God. An ineffective manner of using one's possessions, however, is leaving an inheritance. After all, a deceased person cannot really control who receives his goods (p. 55). On the other hand, Ben Sira's perception of death leads him to recommend various means for using one's possessions wisely: enjoyment, generosity, giving to God, creating an inheritance for the distribution of one's goods (contrary to Qoheleth), and almsgiving. Noteworthy, for Rindge, is that enjoyment comes through giving to God and others, not hoarding goods for oneself.

Chapter 3 considers how *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Abraham* contribute to this conversation on death and possessions. In view of the belief in a postmortem judgment, *1 Enoch* strongly castigates the rich and certain uses of possessions, especially enjoyment. As such, it stands in disagreement with Qoheleth and Ben Sira, without providing an alternative option for how possessions can be used appropriately. Conversely, the *Testament of Abraham* promotes two specific uses of possessions: hospitality and the establishment of an inheritance. The latter option accords with Ben Sira's advice but conflicts with Qoheleth's view of inheritance as meaningless. One can already begin to see the multifaceted nature of this dialogue, even from within a Hellenistic Jewish framework.

In chapter 4, Rindge turns his attention to Greco-Roman sources, specifically Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead* and Seneca's *Moral Epistles*. These texts resonate with certain views within Hellenistic Jewish texts but also promote a distinct perspective on death and possessions. For example, Lucian complements Qoheleth's critique of inheritance by highlighting the lack of control a deceased person has over the actual use of their goods by their progeny. At the same time, contrary to Qoheleth, he endorses an attitudinal and practical detachment of one's possessions as a guard against avarice, rendering the enjoyment of goods meaningless. Seneca agrees with Lucian concerning the reprehensible nature of avarice and the need for a mental detachment from one's possessions, thereby disagreeing with Qoheleth's assessment on enjoying one's goods (p. 151). And yet, Seneca concurs with Qoheleth, Ben Sira, and the *Testament of Abraham* that a person's possessions are divine gifts, one of the primary reasons for Qoheleth's recommendation to enjoy gifts (pp. 53–60). What becomes clear is that, when coupled with Hellenistic Jewish texts, Greco-Roman sources uniquely contribute to a variegated conversation regarding the proper use of possession in light of the finality of death.

In chapters 5–7, Rindge finally situates Luke 12:13–34 in this ancient discussion. His primary aim in these chapters is to "argue that Luke's parable and its immediate literary context illustrates, participates in, and reconfigures this Second Temple conversation" (p. 160).

In chapter 5, Rindge establishes Luke's familiarity with and engagement in the conversation by establishing the prominence of death and possessions as important

motifs in the parable of the rich fool and its wider literary context, and by noting the presence of other sapiential motifs and lexical similarities with the ancient texts aforementioned. Of the six options for the use of possessions (i.e. enjoyment, inheritance, generosity, giving to God, hospitality, and almsgiving), he identifies four in the parable (p. 177): (1) *enjoyment* of his goods is the fool's chief goal (Luke 12:19); (2) *inheritance* is alluded to in God's question in 12:20b and explicit in the preceding discussion in 12:13–15; (3) *almsgiving* appears in the discourse proceeding the parable (12:33); and (4) *giving to God* emerges from the injunction to be "rich toward God" (12:21). The rich man, of course, enacts none of these options. His plan to enjoy his goods is the closest he comes to doing so (12:19).

Chapter 6 provides the precise reasons for considering the rich man a fool (cf. also pp. 224–30). Given death's uncertain timing, inevitability, and possible imminence, the rich man's failure to enact the suggestions above (which Rindge calls a "limited imagination," p. 194) renders him a fool. However, by reading the parable through the lens of Luke 12:21, Rindge discovers two additional reasons: "he treasures up for himself (12:21a) and is not rich toward God (12:21b)" (p. 196). He later adds that the rich man's plan to enjoy his possessions discloses "an assumption that the future will unfold according to his plans" (p. 212). In a word, the man is rich, but foolish. The only solution for this unfortunate diagnosis is to be "rich toward God" (12:21), which is only accomplished through the giving of alms. Almsgiving alone has the ability to generate life in oneself and others.

In chapter 7, Rindge examines Luke 12:22–34 to show how Luke reconfigures the conversation by implementing and amending motifs in line with his own theological, existential, and ethical concerns (p. 217). Luke promotes almsgiving as the optimal means by which to use one's possessions meaningfully in light of death's unavoidability, while eschewing the other uses of possessions recommended by his Hellenistic Jewish and Greco-Roman interlocutors. Ben Sira would have applauded him.

Chapter 8 highlights the similarities (though there are hardly any) and differences between Luke and the *Gospel of Thomas* in order to demonstrate the "important rhetorical function of character identification in Luke's parable" (p. 233) and to substantiate claims made in previous chapters on Luke's contribution to this discussion (pp. 233–37).

While Rindge has certainly filled in the gaps that are lacking in Lukan scholarship with exegetical skill and theological erudition, two criticisms can nevertheless be leveled against his monograph. The first is against his use of sources. Since almsgiving plays such an important role in his study, I wonder why he would not have included an analysis of Tobit (he only cites relevant texts in a footnote; p. 193, n. 120, without any further explanation)? Similarly, since possessions—which are frequently considered "gifts"—played a major role in his book, why would he decide to leave out Seneca's *De Beneficiis* ("On Benefits")? These texts are essential to the conversation he seeks to create. The second critique concerns his methodology. Although I find his methodology an illuminating approach to interpreting ancient texts, the explanations of his methodology lacked the sources necessary to bring a greater degree of clarity. In other words, citing Vernon Robbins, *The Tapestry of*

Early Christian Discourse (New York: Routledge, 1996) and *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), as well as articles on the danger of identifying parallels in ancient texts (i.e. Samuel Sandmel and Terence L. Donaldson), was not enough to support, explain, or define his promising methodological approach.

Those criticisms aside, this book would greatly benefit any student, scholar, or pastor interested in a theological and exegetical analysis of the parable of the rich fool and other ancient texts within Luke's cultural milieu that greatly illumine each other when placed in a conversation on the intersection of death and possessions.

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Thomas and the Gospels: The Case for Thomas's Familiarity with the Synoptics. By Mark Goodacre. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, x + 226 pp., $39.00 paper.

Mark Goodacre has done it again. In much of his previous work Goodacre has taken on that juggernaut of Gospels scholarship, the pervasive theory of a single, written Q source behind the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. His book, *The Case Against Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), presents a clear and compelling refutation of the Q hypothesis by meticulously building the case for the alternative Farrer hypothesis: affirming Matthew and Luke's use of Mark, but arguing that the shared material of Matthew and Luke over against Mark is best explained by Luke's use of Matthew.

In *Thomas and the Gospels* Goodacre has taken on another emerging juggernaut of Gospels scholarship, the view that the *Gospel of Thomas* is an independent and early witness to the Jesus tradition. Goodacre's refutation of this hypothesis is just as meticulous, clear, and compelling as is his case against Q.

Goodacre begins with some "First Impressions." In this opening chapter he describes why the theory of Thomasine independence has gained such a following among scholars and summarizes many of the key arguments for the independence and antiquity of the *Gospel of Thomas*. Along the way he offers an alternative perspective on this evidence, showing that the arguments for Thomasine independence are weaker than they are normally made out to be.

Goodacre then builds his case for the familiarity of *Thomas* with the Synoptics by working through standard methods of source criticism. This means, first, exploring the "Verbatim Agreement between *Thomas* and the Synoptics" (chap. 2). Working primarily with the Greek Oxyrhynchus fragments and secondarily with accepted Greek retroversions of the Coptic Nag Hammadi text (Greeven and Bethge), Goodacre demonstrates that "there are frequent and extended verbatim parallels between *Thomas* and the Synoptic Gospels" (p. 44). Furthermore, Goodacre argues, these verbatim parallels are such that some kind of literary connection between *Thomas* and the Synoptics is the best explanation.

Yet establishing the likelihood of a literary link is only the first step; it does not on its own establish the direction of this link. Thus, in the next four chapters

Goodacre works to demonstrate that these verbatim parallels are best explained by the familiarity of *Thomas* with the Synoptics.

Chapter 3 ("Diagnostic Shards") introduces the method: searching for distinctive, redactional features of one text appearing in another. Goodacre patiently lays out how this method works and what we can legitimately expect from it, and he anticipates some counter-arguments for this evidence in *Thomas*. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on distinctive Matthean and Lukan redactional features respectively that are discernible in *Thomas*, and chapter 6 looks at a special case, *Gos. Thom.* 79 and Luke's Gospel. While some of these examples are compelling on their own, such as Goodacre's treatment of the "wheat and tares" parable (Matt 13:24–30; *Gos. Thom.* 57) and his special focus on the "womb and breasts" sayings (Luke 11:27–28; 23:27–31; *Gos. Thom.* 79), the cumulative case made from all of Goodacre's examples seems unassailable: *Thomas* is indeed familiar with both Matthew's and Luke's Gospels.

However, Goodacre is not finished. In the seventh chapter he focuses on the phenomenon of "The Missing Middle in *Thomas*," reflecting one of Goodacre's most distinctive contributions to Gospels source criticism. The idea is this: when one author takes over a story or saying from another, occasionally they leave out a middle segment, whether unintentionally in working with the prior material from memory, or intentionally as a way of abbreviating the prior material. An inadvertent side effect sometimes results, when the removal of this middle segment—the "missing middle"—produces a "continuity error" or other "inconcinnity," an incongruous or even unintelligible feature in the story or saying. Goodacre gives several examples of this "missing middle" in *Thomas*. One such example is in *Gos. Thom.* 57, where the man in the "wheat and tares" parable speaks to an inexplicable "them": no possible plural audience has been introduced in the story. A solution arises in comparison with Matthew's version of the parable: the middle of the story from Matthew 13 is missing, in which "servants" are mentioned as the antecedent of "them." *Thomas* has taken over the parable from Matthew (see above) and abbreviated it by removing the middle of the story, but the author has failed to change the pronoun "them" to make his version of the story work smoothly.

One of the most common arguments for the primitivity of *Thomas* and thus independence is the supposed "oral character" of the *Gospel of Thomas*. Goodacre addresses this issue in his next chapter ("Orality, Literacy, and *Thomas*"). He begins by providing a lengthy and helpfully nuanced discussion of orality and literacy as it relates to Christian origins and NT studies more broadly. Goodacre then assesses the "oral character" of *Thomas* in light of this discussion, concluding that the oft-discerned orality of *Thomas* is overblown (e.g. simplicity is not a sign of primitivity), and that many of these features are explainable by recognizing the genre of *Thomas*, acknowledging the *Gospel of Thomas* for what it claims to be: a *written sayings* collection (*Gos. Thom.* 1).

In the ninth chapter Goodacre turns his attention to the date of the *Gospel of Thomas*. The latest possible date is relatively simple to establish: it can be no later than its earliest textual witness, c. AD 200 (P.Oxy. 1). Determining the earliest possible date for *Thomas* is more complex as it involves judgments regarding literary

relationships, relative dates for source works, and significant historical events reflected in the text. Having demonstrated the familiarity of *Thomas* with the Synoptics, Goodacre discusses the dates for Mark, Matthew, and Luke, determining a post-AD 70 date for all three in subsequent order. The predictions of temple destruction are the key evidence here, and two sayings in *Thomas* provide additional elements not found in the Synoptic temple predictions: "I will destroy this house [the temple], *and no one will be able to build it*" (*Gos. Thom.* 71); and "But they [your persecutors] *will find no place at the place where they have persecuted you*" (*Gos. Thom.* 68). In these additional elements (italics mine), Goodacre sees evidence of a post-AD 135 period, after the failed Bar Kochba rebellion when it was apparent the temple would indeed remain desolate.

In a final chapter ("Secrecy, Authority, and Legitimation") Goodacre explores how and why *Thomas* used the Synoptic Gospels. He argues that "*Thomas*'s use of the Synoptics is an authenticating device, a means by which the author can charge his newer, stranger material with an authenticity it derives by association with older, more familiar material" (p. 172). Goodacre makes a solid case here, drawing especially on the authorial self-representation in *Thomas*'s incipit and the particular way *Thomas* weaves together well-established Synoptic sayings with his own material. Thus "*Thomas* reinvents Jesus as the mysterious, enigmatic Living One who sometimes sounds suspiciously like the Synoptic Jesus but who, in the end, is not the same man" (p. 191). Goodacre concludes with a short summary of the book, followed by a bibliography and indexes of authors, subjects, and ancient texts.

Thomas and the Gospels is a must-read for all Gospels scholars and graduate students of the Gospels, but evangelical Gospels scholars will be particularly interested in Goodacre's case for use of the Synoptics in *Thomas*. As Goodacre notes in the opening chapter, "Several scholars who identify themselves as evangelicals are among those who argue for a later, dependent *Thomas*," primarily for apologetic reasons (pp. 3–4). After all, an early and independent *Thomas* would be a witness to an early Christianity not grounded primarily in Jesus' death and resurrection, the heart of early apostolic and historically evangelical theology (cf. 1 Cor 15:1–11). These evangelical scholars have an ally in Goodacre, made all the stronger because he does not share these evangelical, apologetic concerns but is instead motivated by the historical questions.

In summary, *Thomas and the Gospels* is meticulous in its argumentation and clear in its presentation. The result is a compelling case for the knowledge and use of the Synoptic Gospels in the *Gospel of Thomas*. Those who hope to make the case for the independence of the *Gospel of Thomas* from the Synoptics will now have a very hard row to hoe indeed.

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Opening Paul's Letters: A Reader's Guide to Genre and Interpretation. By Patrick Gray. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, x + 176 pp., $19.99 paper.

Associate Professor Patrick Gray holds the Albert B. Curry Chair of Religious Studies at Rhodes College (TN) and has previously written *Godly Fear: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Greco-Roman Critiques of Superstition* (Atlanta: SBL, 2003). Gray has written an eminently usable and student-friendly introduction to understanding Paul's writings as examples of ancient letters. In non-technical prose he guides students through various aspects of ancient letters (e.g. structure, rhetoric, etc.) and shows how these insights can be fruitful for interpretation. The author is able to pack a great deal of balanced information into a brief compass, all the while introducing students to key scholarly issues and giving bibliographic hints for further study. The liberal use of contemporary illustrations like King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" or cell phone usage among teenagers, along with occasional text-boxes, should make reading easier for undergraduates and general audiences. Each chapter ends with discussion questions that are well suited to stimulate further class investigation. Due to the epistolary focus, the book does not cover Paul's life or theology, investigate matters of history and background, or give an overview of letter content.

Chapter 1 provides a brief introduction to the Jewish, Hellenistic, and Roman contexts of Paul's letter-writing. The author notes a few points on the relevance of this information to epistolography (e.g. letters as a means of maintenance for social relations), but this material seemed less integrated into the overall epistolographic aim of the book.

Chapter 2 on the genre of letters brings the main burden of the book. "Every genre has its rules …. The rules help readers know how to navigate a text …. Departures from the norm send signals … about what is distinctive" (p. 39). Gray introduces students to some of the major scholars and developments in epistolary study (Deissmann, Stowers, Klauck, Stirewalt, etc.), then discusses various types of ancient letters using the forty-one types listed by Pseudo-Libanius. Next follows the author's attempt to classify the genre of each Pauline letter. He acknowledges that Paul is not enslaved to a single genre but regularly mixes letter types. Thus, for example, 1 Corinthians combines responding, self-commending, censorious and commanding letter genres, and 2 Timothy resembles a last will and testament cast in the form of a paraenetic letter. Shorter literary forms like virtue and vice lists, chiasm, and household codes round out this treatment.

Because of the central character of this chapter in terms of the aim of the book, I expected a bit more than was delivered. The discussion of the individual letters seemed more oriented to *themes* of the letters than to formal epistolary or genre features. It could be strengthened by interaction with a number of important genre debates that could prove fruitful for interpretation. For example, some see Philippians as a "friendship letter" (e.g. Fee); this helps explain why certain issues typical of that genre are addressed and may be significant in the debate over the letter's integrity (expected typical warning in 3:1b–3). Or, what is the validity of

Hanson's choice of the category of letter of rebuke for the structure and argument of Galatians?

Chapter 3 combines two important topics, epistolary structure and rhetorical criticism. The typical content and significance of letter openings and closings, along with the interplay of exposition and exhortation in the letter body are addressed. Students learn how slight omissions or expansions may say much about Paul's aims in a letter. For example, the stress on "sharing" in the opening of Philippians (1:3–11) announces an important theme of the entire letter. Along with a number of recent interpreters, Gray raises questions as to one standard conclusion in NT courses—the omission of a thanksgiving in Galatians may not be as significant as often thought, since 1 Timothy and Titus likewise lack thanksgivings. Perhaps because Gray does not see much influence of Jewish epistolary practice on Paul, he explains Paul's standard greeting ("grace and peace [***charis kai eirēnē***]") as an expansion on the typical Hellenistic letter greeting (***chairein***) rather than as a combination of Hellenistic and Jewish (***shālôm***) greetings.

Chapter 4 looks at the audiences of Paul's letters. Here Gray's skill as a classroom teacher comes through in his use of a letter to Helen Keller to illumine the importance as well as the difficulty in identifying letter audiences. He then reviews the varying audiences of Paul's letters. Ephesians, for example, turns out to be a circular letter, not simply a letter to Ephesus, since Gray adopts the variant omission of "in Ephesus" (1:1). Adding brief discussions of "implied audiences" or of the potential dangers of "mirror reading" would have strengthened this section.

Chapter 5 deals with Paul's use of the OT and helpfully introduces students to allusions, LXX text form, and contemporary interpretive methods (e.g. 7 rules of Hillel), etc. Readers should be able to begin practicing source criticism after reading this chapter. His reference to Paul's failure to use quotation marks (p. 122) is odd, since Koine Greek did not use such marks.

Chapter 6 addresses pseudonymity in the Pauline letters. Gray provides a balanced presentation of the debate and leaves the conclusion open in regard to the disputed Paulines. I appreciated his willingness to address the question students so often bring to such academic debates: Does it really matter whether Paul wrote a particular letter? He acknowledges the theological aspect of this question (apostolic inspiration), but rightly focuses on the literary aspect for this book. Can we understand an ancient letter without knowing from and for whom it was written and for what situation? One might expect a ringing "absolutely necessary," but Gray seems caught in a dilemma. His volume does not intend to solve the pseudonymity question (thus, left open-ended), but the particularities of a letter have been presented as crucial to proper interpretation. Perhaps Gray has done the best an author can do in such a situation, alert students to the issues and leave it up to them (or leave it up to their instructors to guide them through the thicket).

The volume closes with an epilogue that notes non-Pauline NT letters (1 Peter, Jude, etc.) and with two appendices that give a chart of various dates for the letters and suggest authorship scenarios in cases where Paul may not himself have dictated/written a letter (e.g. post-mortem editing of his notes by a school). Two indexes (general and source) conclude the volume.

While Gray may challenge the views of more conservative evangelicals on a few points, the book is still an outstanding secondary text for beginning courses on Paul or the NT. Paul's letters are handled with respect and with critical acumen as a foundation for understanding them better.

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Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism. By Matthew V. Novenson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, xiii + 239 pp., $74.00.

Christ among the Messiahs is Novenson's revised doctoral dissertation from Princeton Theological Seminary, supervised by Beverly Gaventa. Employing historical-critical methodology with a particular interest in "the syntax of messiah language" (p. 4), the author argues that "χριστός in Paul means 'messiah'" and Paul's χριστός language is an "example of messiah language in ancient Judaism," which facilitated a great degree of flexibility (p. 3). This book consists of five chapters accompanied by an introduction and conclusion.

In the first chapter, Novenson reviews the history of research on the meaning of χριστός in Paul. The author discusses the positions of F. C. Baur and the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (especially W. Bousset) as well as their dominating influence over the following generations of scholars. Novenson notes, "[The] idea that χριστός undergoes an evolution from title to proper name and that Paul represents a late stage in that process has become a commonplace in scholarship even to the present day" (p. 17). In other words, although most NT scholars appreciate Paul "in primarily 'Jewish' rather than 'Hellenistic' terms," following the lead of W. D. Davies and E. P. Sanders, "on the question of the meaning of χριστός they nevertheless perpetuate the old *religionsgeschichtliche* thesis that Paul is revising, transcending, or otherwise moving beyond the messianic faith of the earliest Jewish movement" (p. 32).

The second chapter tackles ancient Jewish "messiah" language. This chapter begins with another history of research review—this time on the messianic idea in ancient Judaism. Between pre-World War II scholarship, which assumed the meaningfulness of the term "messiah," and the post-war scholarly consensus that "the extant messiah texts … do not warrant any form of the older idealist paradigm of the messianic idea in Judaism" (p. 41), Novenson finds a mediating position by interacting critically with William Horbury's case for messianic hope and paying particular attention to a competent group of language users (pp. 42–47). The author remarks, "the meaningfulness of ancient messiah language derives neither from the self-expression of a reified messianic idea nor from the mass psychological phenomenon of a shared hope … [but from] a linguistic community whose members shared a stock of common linguistic resources," that is, the Jewish Scriptures (p. 47). Novenson observes that scriptural citations and allusions "in ancient messiah texts cluster around a relatively few … source texts" such as Gen 49:10, Num 24:17,

2 Sam 7:12–13, Isa 11:1–2, Amos 9:11, and Dan 7:13–14 (p. 57). He also finds that the word "messiah," in fact, does not appear in any of these scriptural texts while the imagery contained in those source texts enables the interpreters to read them messianically (p. 58). Illustrating with four messiah texts that utilize Isa 11:1–10 (i.e. *Pss. Sol.* 17:21–32, *1 Enoch* 48:10–49:4, Rom 15:8–12, and *b. Sanh.* 93b), the author then suggests that "every messiah text is a 'creatively biblical' linguistic act" (p. 62). That is, while "something is always added by the interpreter[s]" in producing messiah texts, the Jewish Scriptures remained as their communal linguistic resources (p. 62).

Novenson opens the third chapter by hinting at the importance of Christ language in Pauline writings: "Paul … uses χριστός some 270 times, counting only the seven undisputed letters, more than he uses any other word for Jesus and more than any other ancient Jewish author uses that word" (p. 64). He then goes on to navigate various onomastic categories relevant to Paul's days, with the current name-versus-title debate in mind. Novenson provides an alternative to the debate: χριστός in Paul is neither a proper name nor a title of office, but an honorific (i.e. that which was usually granted to the bearer "in connection with military exploits or accession to power … and could occur in combination with the bearer's proper name or stand in for that proper name"; p. 95). The author offers Greek, Latin, and Hebrew examples of honorifics including "Epiphanes" applied to Antiochus IV, the Seleucid king, and "Bar Kokhba" used for Shimon bar Kosiba (see pp. 87–97).

The fourth chapter discusses χριστός phrases in Paul (e.g. "Jesus Christ," "Christ Jesus," "in Christ," and "the Christ of God"). Here, the author interacts critically with Nils Dahl's philological observations against the messianic connotation of Paul's use of χριστός (pp. 102–15) and N. T. Wright's philological observations in favor of the term's messianic significance (pp. 117–33). According to Novenson, "[I]f Dahl's negative philological observations do not exclude the possibility of messianism in Paul, neither do Wright's positive philological observations prove it" (p. 134). The author rightly evaluates that "the sense of χριστός cannot be read directly off the syntax of the phrases in which Paul uses it" (p. 135) and, thus, he moves to a sentence/paragraph-level discussion of Paul's χριστός language in the following chapter.

In the fifth and last chapter, the heart of this study, Novenson engages with nine χριστός passages in Paul (i.e. Gal 3:16; 1 Cor 15:20–28; 2 Cor 1:21–22; Rom 9:1–5; 15:3, 9; 15:7–12; 1 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 5:16–17; Rom 1:3–4) and argues for the messianic significance of the polysemous Septuaginal term, χριστός, in these selected passages. Using these Pauline samples, the author contends that Paul's Christ language is an example of ancient Jewish messiah language in that Paul refers to a character designated as χριστός by employing a pattern of speech drawn from a specific set of source texts, that is, the Jewish Scriptures.

Novenson's argument in this volume appears to be focused, consistent, and overall convincing. His nuanced presentation on the messianic meaning of Paul's Christ language is commendable. I expect that henceforth any type of serious treatment on χριστός language in Paul should include an interaction, either affirma-

tive or critical, with this fine study. I agree with and appreciate Novenson's treatment of the topic generally; however, I have specific criticisms, too, as follows.

First, it would have been beneficial if the author could have added, especially immediately before his conclusion, a chapter examining the significance of his discussion for understanding Paul's Christology and ancient Jewish messianism. Discussion on the relationship between Paul's Christ language and other aspects of Pauline Christology, for example, would have been rewarding. Although the author appears to provide some fragmental hints within his short conclusion (pp. 175–78), his account is too general and too brief to be an instructive and meaningful discussion.

Second, while the author emphasizes that χριστός in Paul's writings is *neither a proper name nor a title of office*, but an honorific, he seems committed primarily to proving that Paul does not use "Christ" as a proper name (see chaps. 3–5). Novenson appears to be, in fact, successful in refuting that option. Nonetheless, it would have strengthened the author's argument if he could have elaborated more substantially on why Paul's use of χριστός is not titular and/or what kind of pay-off one should expect from reading χριστός as an honorific, rather than a title.

Third, Novenson employs a somewhat artificial—in my estimation—dichotomy in reading Paul's Christ language. Namely, he appears to drive his readers to make their choice between two opposite options—Paul's χριστός language as a "sample" of ancient Jewish messiah language *versus* Paul's χριστός language as a "contrast" to ancient Jewish messiah language (p. 174). Novenson is undoubtedly in favor of the former and, again, his efforts in finding consistency between Paul's Christ language and ancient Jewish messiah language seem to be successful overall. Nevertheless, it would be equally—if not more—valid to interpret "Paul's anomalous usage" (Novenson's own words on p. 176) of χριστός in a more mediating manner. The author could have accomplished this by investigating in what ways such anomalous usage is similar and dissimilar to the use of messiah language in ancient Judaism and what kind of historical and Christological/theological significance those similarities and dissimilarities possess respectively and collectively. At least, the author should have provided a (better) justification for his dichotomistic arrangement.

Fourth, in light of the author's claim that "this is a study not of Christ language in Paul but rather of messiah language in ancient Judaism, with Paul as a test case" (p. 176), I wonder whether Novenson should have discussed ancient Jewish messiah language more extensively in chapter 2 prior to moving into his Pauline discourse in the three following chapters (chaps. 3–5).

Finally, in view of the fact that chapter 5 constitutes the central portion of the author's argument, inclusion of further exegetical details in handling the selected χριστός passages in Paul would have been beneficial.

With these criticisms addressed, however, I value Novenson's genuine contribution to our understanding of Paul's χριστός language, in particular, in relation to ancient Jewish messiah language and thus recommend this volume for scholars, theological students, and pastors who are interested in Pauline Christology and/or ancient Jewish messianism.

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1 & 2 Thessalonians. By Gary S. Shogren. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012, 375 pp., $32.99.

Paul's two letters to the Thessalonians had been neglected for a long time by biblical scholars—so much so that they were once named as "the Cinderellas" of the Pauline corpus. Happily, the situation today has changed as these two letters have now finally "made it to the ball" and begun to receive over the past decade or so the attention that they deserve. This renewed interest in 1 and 2 Thessalonians can be seen in, among other things, the appearance of several significant commentaries in English: Abraham Malherbe (2000), Gene Green (2002), Greg Beale (2003), Ben Witherington III (2006), Victor Furnish (2007), Linda McKinnish Bridges (2008), and Gordon Fee (2009). To this growing list may now be added the commentary by Gary Shogren.

Shogren's volume is part of a new commentary series entitled "Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament" (ZECNT). Key features of this series include: the practical use of Greek, a concise one or two-sentence statement about the main point of each passage, the pragmatic use of word studies, a graphical display of the grammatical flow of each passage (in English), commentary on the text by evangelical authors, a summary of key theological insights from each passage, and a discussion of the relevance of the text for contemporary Christians. In other words, like most commentary series, it claims to do everything a busy pastor, Bible teacher, or scholar would want a commentary to do. Unlike many commentary series, however, this one—or, at least, this volume by Shogren—largely delivers on its claims.

Shogren has been teaching at ESEPA Bible College and Seminary in San Jose, Costa Rica since 1998 and the emphases of his teaching setting—an evangelical perspective, missions, and practical ministry—are all reflected in his commentary. Introductory issues are treated in a brief manner (20 pages out of a 375-page volume), and traditional evangelical understandings of the two letters are affirmed: Acts is a reliable source in reconstructing the historical origins of the Thessalonian congregation; the church was established during Paul's second missionary journey; the congregation consisted of a majority of Gentiles and a minority of Jewish believers; the two letters date to AD 50 or 51; both 2:13–16 in the first letter and the whole of the second letter are authentically Pauline; the canonical order of the letters is likely correct; the Thessalonian church was actively involved in evangelism and was experiencing persecutions that were economic, familial, social, and physical;

another major issue facing the congregation involved questions of eschatology. More debatable assertions involve the confident and repeated claim that Timothy delivered both letters and that the church "consisted of several assemblies, each with a few dozen members, in various parts of the urban area" (p. 24).

Introductory matters, however, are not the place where users of a commentary will spend most of their time. The true measure of a commentary is found in its exegetical analysis of the biblical text, and it is here where Shogren delivers on the various claims of the ZECNT series. Each passage is treated according to the following pattern. First, there is a discussion of the literary context—placing the passage within the overall structure of the letter. Second, there is the "Main Idea"—a one- or two-sentence summary of the key idea at work in the passage. Third, there is the author's translation of the text, given in the format of a grammatical outline with headings in the far left column about the function of each main clause, sub-clause, or prepositional phrase. This graphical display of the grammatical flow of the text is accompanied by a discussion of the passage's internal structure which then leads into a proposed "Exegetical Outline" of the passage.

The lengthiest section involves the "Explanation of the Text" where Shogren engages in a detailed analysis of the relevant pericopes—an analysis that surprisingly follows not the headings proposed in his "Exegetical Outline" but a verse-by-verse treatment of the text. This section frequently consists of citing the original Greek and engaging in a detailed discussion of grammatical issues. Shogren does a fine job in discussing technicalities of the Greek language in a user-friendly way. This emphasis on the original language is in keeping with the claim of the ZECNT series that "this commentary series might be for you if you have taken Greek and would like a commentary that helps you apply what you have learned without assuming that you are a well-trained scholar" (p. 7). However, there is much more in the "Explanation of the Text" section than commentary on the Greek text. Taken up in this section are also literary and especially historical issues that are a necessary part of good exegesis. Overall, Shogren does a fine job in finding a balance between, on the one hand, treating a given issue with enough detail that the contemporary reader is helpfully informed about the subject at hand but not, on the other hand, doing so in such a lengthy and technical manner that one becomes overwhelmed with details of minutia that are either not helpful or become confusing. Shogren is clearly in command of his material: he demonstrates throughout the commentary a good awareness of the key issues and the diverse viewpoints on these issues and treats them in a judicious manner. Scattered periodically in this main exegetical unit are also "In Depth" sections where specific issues are treated in a more detailed manner (e.g. "Were the Thessalonian Believers Evangelistic?" "Was Paul Anti-Semitic?" "Did Jesus Teach That He Would Return at the End of the Age?"). Each section concludes with a "Theology in Application" section that examines the theological issue(s) at work in the text and that also considers its relevancy for the church today.

I will now survey some of the conclusions reached by Shogren about various key issues found in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The fact that I disagree with a number

of these conclusions should serve to nuance but ought not to negate the many positive features of his commentary already identified above.

(1) Co-senders are listed in both letter openings (1 Thess 1:1 and 2 Thess 1:1–2), and this raises the question of who actually authored these two epistles. Shogren argues for a more literal understanding in which Paul may be the dominant voice but Silas also had an active role. This is a minority position as most commentators see instead here a *literary* plural in which Paul is the primary author. Shogren also hints that Timothy played a part, too, as letter writer but an even lesser one than Silas: "while Paul was the author, Silas and *to an extent* Timothy are involved in the production of the letter" (p. 243, emphasis added). Unfortunately, Shogren never clarifies or justifies this active yet diminished role of Timothy.

(2) In his treatment of the thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:2–10) Shogren argues that "this extended giving of thanks also functions as an *exordium*" (p. 49). He thereby introduces a category from rhetorical criticism, although no other section from either letter is classified according to this methodological perspective, nor is there any broader discussion about the legitimacy of treating Paul's letters by means of a rhetorical rather than epistolary approach.

(3) Shogren rejects the older, traditional idea that Paul in 2:1–16 is defending himself and adopts the view, widely held today, that this passage has an implicit *paraenetic* function in which the apostle presents himself to his readers as a model for them imitate. There exists compelling evidence, however, that a smear campaign was waged against Paul by the believers' "fellow citizens" (2:14) who charged the apostle with being just another religious charlatan who curried people's favor and then ran out of town at the first sign of trouble. Paul, then, feared that his infant church, under heavy opposition, might buy into these trumped up charges, and so he opens the first half of the letter body (2:1–3:13) with a calculated defense of his integrity, intended to reaffirm his readers' trust in him such that they would hear and heed his admonitions in the second half of the letter (4:1–5:22).

(4) Shogren rightly sees Paul in 2:1–16 develop the three metaphors of presenting himself and his co-workers as infants (2:7b), wet-nurse (2:7c) and father (2:11). He also has a lengthy "In Depth" section that deals with the perennial textual problem in 2:7 of whether Paul wrote "infants" (νήπιοι) or "gentle" (ἤπιοι), and correctly defends the former reading as original.

(5) Shogren downplays the seriousness of the concerns addressed in the second half of the letter (4:1–5:22), stating: "Paul is not offering the Thessalonians any word of rebuke" (p. 156). This ignores, however, the apostle's explicit statement in 3:10 that he has been repeatedly praying that God will allow him to return to the Thessalonian church and "supply what is lacking in your faith." As positive as Timothy's report was about the Thessalonians' faith in God and their love for Paul (3:6), he also shared with Paul some areas where these believers were "lacking" in their faith—areas that the apostle takes up in the immediately following second half of the letter. Furthermore, the fact that in 4:1–12 Paul four times reminds his readers that they already had been instructed in these subjects (4:1, 2, 6c, 11b), as well as the strong warning "the Lord is an avenger concerning all these things" (4:6b), all suggest that the problems of sexual conduct (4:3–8) and idleness in the context of

brotherly and sisterly love (4:9–12) were, in fact, significant issues in the apostle's mind.

(6) The issue of identifying precisely the problem lying behind 4:13–18 is more complex and difficult than is often recognized. Shogren treats this problem at some length already in the introduction of the commentary, concluding that "the Thessalonians were earlier taught the resurrection as we know it from 1 Thess 4 and other passages, and that under duress some failed to apply it properly; some 'forgot' it altogether" (p. 36; see also p. 176).

(7) On the issue of whether Jesus' return in 4:17 envisions a final destination on earth or in heaven, Shogren sees in the key term "reception" (ἀπάντησιν) a clear allusion to the ancient practice of sending a delegation party outside the city first to welcome a visiting dignitary and then to escort that person *back* into the city. This, in turn, leads to the following conclusion: "Based on this conventional usage of 'meeting' (ἀπάντησιν), it may be concluded with a relatively high degree of certainty that Paul envisions Jesus coming in the air; resurrected believers and then living ones will ascend to honor him and *they will accompany him back to earth*" (p. 190, emphasis original).

(8) On the debate over the background of the phrase "peace and security" in 5:3, it is difficult to discern Shogren's position. He first seems to support an OT background by stating that this phrase "has its roots in Jeremiah's complaint against Judah," but then one paragraph later asserts: "It seems more than coincidence that Paul echoes a well-known slogan of the Roman empire, *Pax et securitas* ("Peace and security"), which comes from living under the *Pax romana*" (p. 203).

(9) The vocative ἀδελφοί is consistently translated by Shogren as referring broadly to "brothers and sisters." Yet in 5:14 he argues that in this lone instance it refers more narrowly to leaders in the church (p. 221). The more likely alternate understanding of referring here also to "brothers and sisters" has an important contemporary application: *all* Christians—not just ordained or paid leaders—have a responsibility to minister to troubled congregational members (5:14–15).

(10) Shogren treats 2 Thess 2:1–12 as an independent unit rather than recognize the several literary clues that show that this unit actually continues to include the immediately following material of 2:13–17. Determining the proper ending of Paul's argument in 2 Thessalonians 2 is important for discerning his primary purpose in this discussion of end-time events. If one reads only up to verse 12, the passage closes with a note of judgment for unbelievers. If, however, one reads all the way to verse 17, the passage closes with a note of comfort for the Thessalonian Christians (note the double occurrence of "comfort"—the noun form in v. 16 and the verb form in v. 17). Paul's eschatological discussions are never intended to *predict* but rather to *pastor*, that is, to comfort his readers (note how both 1 Thess 4:13–18 and 5:1–11 conclude with the exhortation "Comfort one another!").

It is clear from the above survey that I do not agree with Shogren on several key exegetical issues arising in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Nevertheless, in many of these disagreements I readily acknowledge that Shogren enjoys the support of other Thessalonian commentators, and so his positions are by no means esoteric or without grounds. Furthermore, this brief survey distorts the fact that there are

many more examples of exegetical conclusions with which I concur. In summary, Shogren's commentary involves a detailed yet pragmatic analysis of 1 and 2 Thessalonians from an evangelical perspective that will be used profitably and thus appreciated greatly by both pastor and scholar alike.

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James. By Chris A. Vlachos. Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament. Nashville: B&H, 2013, xxx + 225 pp., $24.99 paper.

Chris Vlachos's exegetical guide to the Greek text of James is a unique resource amidst a growing field. While James no longer suffers under the kind of neglect it once did, this sort of focused exploration of the Greek has not been done quite like this since Ropes provided his brief commentary on the Greek text in 1916. What sets this work apart from the recent commentaries on the Greek text (besides the fact that Davids's NIGNT came out in 1986 and Martin's WBC in 1988, leading to flexibility to the use of the word "recent") is Vlachos's incredible brevity, even amidst his consistent focus on the grammar of the epistle and on how understanding that can help one unpack greater depth and meaning from the text.

Vlachos's book follows a straightforward format—similar to a commentary—of introduction followed by textual investigation (oddly, the exegetical outline is given at the very end of the book). In the six-page introduction, one is immediately clued in that the author does not intend to write or substitute for a full commentary. Instead, Vlachos quickly lays out the various positions taken regarding authorship, date, and occasion and purpose, and in very brief order presents the arguments for an early date of writing by James, the brother of Jesus. He does not, however, presume to have settled the discussion. Instead, this pattern sets the tone for the rest of the book: discussions of complicated issues will be short, both sides presented but the chosen interpretation given slightly longer argumentation. One bonus in the introduction is his description of the five commentaries focused on the Greek upon which he depends most. For the new student who is unfamiliar with the various commentators, his reviews of Davids, Dibelius, Martin, Mayor, and Ropes—one sentence summarizing the content and one sentence discussing the biases of the texts (pp. 7–8)—could provide a profoundly helpful introduction.

Following the introduction, the book then cycles through a consistent format: a descriptive summary of the structure of a given small section of text, and then a verse-by-verse discussion in which every grammatical tag is given, and relevant debates regarding grammatical or lexical points are laid out in simple fashion. Where there are two or more positions of interpretive significance, these appear in outline form, followed by translations and commentators that defend each. Where relevant, a star (*) signals the position supported in the exegetical guide. Following this is a section entitled "Further Study," in which Vlachos provides a select bibliography regarding any number of topics raised by the section (e.g. the one on 1:13–18 includes such topics as "temptation and sin," "God the giver of good gifts,"

"God as Father," and "the metaphor of first fruits"). These do not function as comprehensive bibliographies, but instead as helpful starting points for the student or pastor who wishes to pursue further one or another topics raised. Finally, each detailed section concludes with two to three "Homiletical Suggestions," wherein sermon outlines of various types (more "simple" exegetical outlines as well as more "poetic" outlines) are offered to aid the preacher.

The strengths of this book are manifold. First, for the student or pastor looking for a quick reference guide that will orient them to the linguistic issues of the text, Vlachos's succinct yet detailed discussion has no parallel. Vlachos proves to be a fairly uncontroversial interpreter of the text, focused upon the student or pastor with some Greek familiarity but who may not remember all the rules (e.g. on p. 115 he reminds the reader about the principles of elision for *kata* becoming *kath'*), and he rarely takes a particularly undersupported position (but see p. 190, where he follows Mayor on the passive adverbial translation of 5:16b). The clarity with which the various alternate translations are placed into outline format is of significant help for the visual learner who can find the complexity of commentary arguments confusing. Here the alternates are bulleted first, and then the discussion given in logical order, generally within a single paragraph. The resources mentioned along the way, although kept in simple parenthetical form, are comprehensive (cf. p. 95 wherein Epictetus and diatribe appear in relation to 2:20; or p. 137 where he distinguishes between the NIV[1] and NIV[2] on the translation of 4:5). Likewise, the format of the book in offering bibliography for further study on key issues is helpful for the student who wishes to read more than the brief discussions provided in the text, leading them in the direction of journal articles and monographs focused on each topic from which they can progress. The homiletical outlines provide significant aids for the pastor who may need a creative boost in thinking through the main ideas of the passage and how best to present them.

While an incredibly useful tool, the book is not without its dangers. There are times when the discussion of a difficult text may actually be too brief to convey the complexity of interpretive differences. For instance, the complexity of determining where the opponent's challenge ends in the dialogue of 2:18 is dispensed with in two paragraphs (p. 93), which represents the general length of text dedicated to complicated passages. This can lend to an unwary reader the sense that issues can be sorted "simply," even while much may remain unresolved. A second weakness follows from a great strength of the book: the sermon outlines. Vlachos calls the entirety of 1:2–18 one section ("The Testing of Faith"), but he only provides sermon outlines for the smaller exegetical groupings. Thus, within the one section of 1:2–18, the reader has five full sermons, composed of 1:2–4, 5–8, 9–11, 12, and 13–18. There is no sense ever given, either in the text itself or in the homiletical outlines, of how these smaller sections may all fit together into a bigger picture. If one were to follow the suggested guides through the book, it would take 21 weeks to preach this epistle in 1 to 12 verse sections. While the homiletical outlines are one of the strengths of this book, it could have been even stronger had there also been a sense given as to why the small sections fit within the larger headings at all, as well as a picture of the development of the themes throughout the book (to coun-

teract the critique of Dibelius given on p. 8). Finally, one might be tempted to say that Vlachos can find a chiasm at every corner, although this can also be a strength as he forces the reader to examine the connections within each section closely.

Those critiques notwithstanding, for the student or pastor who does not expect this book to function as a replacement for commentaries, this is a profoundly succinct yet complete book of the exegetical issues facing the student of this epistle. It is clearly for someone who has taken Greek—and not just an introduction, but enough to have familiarity with grammar and syntax. This book provides a beautiful distillation of the critical questions in an impeccably clear format. With the brevity of the discussion, it is clear that this book was never intended to replace the commentaries from which it draws, but it provides an invaluable first step for those who approach the epistle of James—whether scholar, student, or pastor—giving them the lay of the land in concise but comprehensive fashion, whence they can better delve into the greater complexity of the commentaries. For the newly initiated to this epistle, Vlachos's book provides a warm welcome. For the scholar who has been working in James for many years, this book is a gift of precision and detail given by someone deeply familiar with the text.

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Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory: The New Testament Apostle in the Early Church. By Markus Bockmuehl. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, xvi + 223 pp., $24.99 paper.

Over the last decade, few NT scholars have given more sustained attention to Simon Peter than Markus Bockmuehl. In this work on Simon Peter's legacy in Scripture and in memory, Bockmuehl is intending to complement his earlier, more exhaustive work *The Remembered Peter* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). Although *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory* covers much of the same ground as the earlier volume, it is intended to be a more accessible volume for students and non-academics. Moreover, Bockmuehl also moves the conversation forward in several interesting ways, particularly in his "case studies" in the third part of the book.

This volume is divided into three major sections. In the first, Bockmuehl provides an overview of his approach and research method. In addition to the general textual evidence relevant to Peter, he also gives careful consideration to eyewitness memory (in spite of all its problems). Although most of the eyewitness evidence comes from written sources, he also uses different forms of archeological evidence as access points for different memories along the way.

From an overview of the NT and other early evidence, Bockmuehl concludes that, once we move beyond the Gospel accounts, all we can know about Peter is that he was a dominant figure in the early church and often connected to Rome in some way. Beyond this, there is not much we can be certain about. However, Bockmuehl is intrigued by the somewhat cryptic reference to Peter departing and going to "another place" in Acts 12:17. Rome perhaps? The imaginative possibili-

ties are certainly fascinating, and Bockmuehl does not hesitate to hypothesize about Peter's movements during the "silent periods."

In the second part of the book, Bockmuehl addresses the "living memory" of Peter in the first and second centuries. By looking for the living memory of Peter, Bockmuehl is seeking witnesses who are only one step removed from Peter. That is to say, he is looking for testimony from those who were direct eyewitnesses of Peter.

In this quest, Bockmuehl divides the evidence into Eastern and Western testimonies about Peter. Using the graffiti found at the traditional site of Peter's house in Capernaum as a metaphor for layers of evidence in the East, he considers the testimony from Serapion of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Ignatius of Antioch, as well as Matthew, Mark, and, somewhat reluctantly, 2 Peter, from the NT. From this, Bockmuehl concludes that the "Eastern Peter" is a remarkable figure, well-known as the "Rock" of the early church, but also an enigmatic figure who departed for the West fairly early in his ministry.

The "Western Peter," on the other hand, is attested by far more evidence. Key figures like Dionysius of Corinth, Phlegon of Tralles, Clement of Rome, and even Marcion provide possible windows into the living memory of Peter. While over 200 documents can be considered, Bockmuehl focuses primarily on Luke-Acts, Paul's letters (especially Galatians and 1 Corinthians), and 1 Peter. He concludes that in the West Peter's presence in Rome is well-attested and his influence on the early development of the church in Rome is undeniable. If the metaphor for the Eastern Peter is Peter's house in Capernaum, then the metaphor for the Western Peter is his traditional tomb in Rome. It is there that we can see both the evidence of Peter's lasting influence on the Western church and the historically questionable and downright superstitious additions to the memory of Peter that have accumulated over the centuries.

In the last part of the book, Bockmuehl presents two case studies that provide further clarity about details of Peter's life, while also raising new questions for exploration. In the first case study, Bockmuehl discusses the evidence for Peter's conversion in the Gospel of Luke. In his typically creative use of source material, he begins his quest by considering the way the third-century artwork from Dura Europos and the second-century *Acts of Peter* point to the resurrection as the decisive turning point in Peter's life. These "exegetical footprints," coupled with the link between the new birth in 1 Pet 1:3 and the conversion story in John's Gospel leads Bockmuehl to conclude that "it is the crucifixion-resurrection sequence that marks the moment of Peter's conversion" (p. 163).

In the second case study, Bockmuehl considers Peter's possible birth and upbringing in Bethsaida. While John is the only Gospel that names Bethsaida as Peter's hometown, Bockmuehl uncovers archeological evidence of Hellenism in the village that explains the possible Hellenistic influence in Peter's early life (and thus his knowledge of Greek language and culture, not to mention his brother's Greek name). It was not until he was married and possibly seeking stronger links to Jewish life and culture, Bockmuehl argues, that Peter moved to Capernaum. Therefore,

Peter's early multi-cultural experiences can help situate his multi-cultural mission in Acts.

Bockmuehl concludes the book with a series of reflections on the implications of his study. He argues that both Protestants who chaff at an overemphasis on Peter's authority and Catholics who have built Peter's ministry into an office filled with "power and opulence" have something to learn from a study of the historical Peter. Bockmuehl insists that, in spite of and perhaps because of the fragile nature of both the man Peter and the evidence that we have about him, "the enduring magnitude of the mission is greater than the volatile fragility of the man to whom it was first entrusted" (p. 183).

We can find much to appreciate about this volume. One cannot help but admire Bockmuehl's ability to combine a careful assessment of traditional scholarly sources with his creative consideration of non-traditional material such as archeological sites and early Christian works of art. At the same time, however, it is perhaps only in the study of Simon Peter that one must be forced to lean so heavily on non-traditional sources. In other subjects of study, such as Jesus and even Paul, the early textual evidence is much more thorough. While it would be a worthy study in and of itself to compare early archeological and artistic depictions of Paul's ministry to the available textual evidence, such a study could also provide further confirmation of Bockmuehl's innovative method.

While the limited textual evidence outside of the NT is certainly worth the careful attention that Bockmuehl gives it in this study, his more sustained attention to the NT evidence is appropriate. The dearth of reliable historical material on Peter outside of the NT should in no way undermine confidence in the historical reliability of the Gospels and Acts. On the contrary, as Bockmuehl has demonstrated throughout this volume, this early evidence provides a consistent basis for determining the reliability of these later documents.

However, for many readers (myself included), Bockmuehl's position on the date and authorship of 2 Peter will be unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, he does present the best evidence for a late date for this letter and, regardless of whether one is convinced, we must reckon seriously with his arguments. This review, however, is not the place to enter into that debate. By way of contrast, Bockmuehl also argues that 1 Peter, while not directly from the pen of Peter, is also not "a fully pseudonymous composition." In other words, Bockmuehl appears to take a position on the authorship of 1 Peter that seems more consistent with the biblical, theological, and historical evidence.

Regardless of whether one reads the evidence the same way that Bockmuehl does throughout his study, when all is tallied, two primary conclusions stand out from this fine study. First, the canonical Gospels remain, by leaps and bounds, our best source for the historical Peter. All of our other sources must be evaluated in the light of the Gospels. Second, when isolated from the larger plot line of the Gospels and the NT in general, Peter's story is remarkably fragmentary. In the larger scheme, the same could be said of Paul. This leads us to the conclusion that the central story of the NT is not in fact the life of the apostles, but rather the mission

of Jesus of Nazareth. All of our studies of the history of the NT and early Christianity must intersect with this reality.

In conclusion, there can be little doubt that any serious student of Simon Peter and his historical, theological, and ecclesial legacy must interact with Bockmuehl's work in his previous volume, in this volume, and in his future work on Simon Peter.

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The Spirit and Christ in the New Testament and Christian Theology. Edited by I. Howard Marshall, Volker Rabens, and Cornelis Bennema. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xx + 367 pp., $60.00 paper.

Max Turner is well known in NT scholarship, especially for his work on the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts. This *Festschrift* contains contributions by his colleagues, former students, and friends. Following a brief "Introduction to Max Turner" by Steve Walton, there are twenty essays, most on pneumatology, as well as a few on Christology, including exegesis, historical theology, and proposals for a modern pneumatology, followed by a list of Max Turner's many publications. The essays focused on the NT can roughly be divided into Luke-Acts, John, Paul, Hebrews, and Revelation. This review will highlight the essays that seem most significant or helpful for current scholarly discussions.

In general, the essays adopt the same general perspective on the Holy Spirit as Turner has argued for. The essays include James D. G. Dunn, "'The Lord, the Giver of Life': The Gift of the Spirit as Both Life-giving and Empowering"; John R. Levison, "The Spirit, Simeon, and Songs of the Servant"; Steve Walton, "Whose Spirit? The Promise and the Promise in Luke 12:12"; Robert P. Menzies, "The Persecuted Prophets: A Mirror-Image of Luke's Spirit-Inspired Church"; Cornelis Bennema, "The Giving of the Spirit in John 19–20: Another Round"; D. A. Carson, "Is Faith in Christ without Evidence Superior Faith? A Re-examination of John 20:29"; Joel B. Green, "'Was it Not Necessary for the Messiah to Suffer These Things and Enter into His Glory?': The Significance of Jesus' Death for Luke's Soteriology"; Conrad Gempf, "Apollos and the Ephesian Disciples: Befores and Afters (Acts 18:24–19:7)"; Volker Rabens, "Power from In Between: The Relational Experience of the Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts in Paul's churches"; Desta Heliso, "Human Spirit and Divine Spirit in Paul in the Light of Stoic and Biblical-Jewish Perspectives"; Chris Tilling, "Ephesians and Divine Christology"; Robert W. Wall, "Salvation's Bath by the Spirit: A Study of Titus 3:5b–6 in Its Canonical Setting"; Steve Motyer, "The Spirit in Hebrews: No Longer Forgotten?"; John Christopher Thomas, "New Jerusalem and the Conversion of the Nations: An Exercise in Pneumatic Discernment (Rev 21:1–22:5)"; Richard Bauckham, "Moses as 'God' in Philo of Alexandria: A Precedent for Christology?"; Mark L. Strauss, "Jesus and the Spirit in Biblical and Theological Perspective: Messianic Empowering, Saving Wisdom, and the Limits of Biblical Theology"; Anthony N. S. Lane, "Cyril of Alex-

andria and the Incarnation"; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "'By the Washing of Regeneration and Renewal in the Holy Spirit': Towards a Pneumatological Theology of Justification"; Graham McFarlane, "Towards a Theology of Togetherness—Life through the Spirit"; and André Munzinger, "Creative Reason and the Spirit: Identifying, Evaluating, and Developing Paradigms of Pneumatology." Many of the essays explicitly interact with Turner's writings, often seeking to build on or make a slight modification to Turner's views.

Dunn's essay, "'The Lord, the Giver of Life': The Gift of the Spirit as both Life-giving and Empowering," presents (again) an unconvincing argument that, when Luke spoke of the Samaritans in Acts 8 as believing and being baptized, he did not regard them as having received the life-giving Spirit. Instead, this awaited the laying on of the apostles' hands, which gave the Samaritans the life-giving and empowering Spirit. One wonders how Dunn could conclude that Luke spoke of baptized converts to Jesus who did not have the Holy Spirit in them at all. Dunn seeks to support this by arguing that in John 20, Jesus breathes upon the disciples, which gives them the life-giving Spirit, commissions them, and equips them for mission. In fact, however, nothing is said about equipping or empowering in this narrative, and John 20:21–23 could be comparable to Luke 24:47–49 rather than Acts 8.

All the characters in Luke 1–2 are arguably significant for Luke's project. Levison emphasizes this in "The Spirit, Simeon, and Songs of the Servant." He argues that Turner has underestimated the significance of Simeon in Luke 2. Simeon, not least in his prediction to Mary, uses the Servant songs, not only alluding to them but affirming their relevance to the baby Jesus. Simeon is an important character whose words foreshadow future events in the Gospel. Walton examines the implications of the relation of the Holy Spirit to Jesus in "Whose Spirit? The Promise and the Promise in Luke 12:12." Walton argues that the promise of the Holy Spirit to teach the disciples what to say while they are on trial has no OT precedent. Walton argues convincingly that the Holy Spirit in this passage is personal, *contra* Turner's perspective. Luke 12:12, when read with Luke 21:14–15 and Acts 2:33, points to Jesus as having the same relation to the Holy Spirit as YHWH has, aiding as YHWH aids, and saving as YHWH saves.

Menzies offers a contribution to the question of Luke's audience in "The Persecuted Prophets: A Mirror-Image of Luke's Spirit-Inspired Church." He contends that "the evidence is compelling" that Luke wrote to encourage a church facing persecution (p. 54). Menzies argues that "and they shall prophesy" in the last days (Acts 2:18) shows that the promise of prophetic power is applicable to Luke's church (and ours), not only to the apostles. The ongoing debate over the presence or absence of atonement theology in Luke-Acts is addressed by Green. Challenging the view of many scholars that for Luke Jesus' death had no soteriological significance, in "'Was it Not Necessary for the Messiah to Suffer These Things and Enter into His Glory?': The Significance of Jesus' Death for Luke's Soteriology," Green argues that Luke should be read on his own terms (not via Paul or other authors) and that a key aspect of this for atonement theology is the meaning of salvation in Luke-Acts. Jesus' exaltation has soteriological significance in showing that the res-

toration of Israel has begun, that Jesus' status as savior has been confirmed, and that Jesus is identified as the one who can dispense salvation. While Luke might not develop any atonement theology very far, by including the Eucharistic words of Mark (Luke 22:19–20) and Acts 20:28, which is similar to Paul's notion of God purchasing a people, it can be seen that the topic of Jesus' atoning death is not absent from Luke-Acts. Concerning Isaianic servant imagery, Green argues that Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and exaltation fund "for Luke a robust soteriology" and that Luke interprets Jesus' ministry in Isaianic terms (p. 81). Luke's soteriology, when understood in terms of "status transposition" and connected to Jesus' career, which went from humiliation to exaltation, is correlated with Luke's focus on the Isaianic servant of YHWH.

Contending that the figures of Apollos and the Ephesian disciples can seem puzzling, Gempf considers how Luke narrates the form-critical "healing story" of Apollos and the Ephesian disciples in "Apollos and the Ephesian Disciples: Befores and Afters (Acts 18:24–19:7)." Based on the before of Apollos and the after of the Ephesian disciples, it is clear that Luke included these two stories, told like healing stories, to show that anyone can join the people of God, including disciples of John the Baptist.

Despite debates over authorship, Chris Tilling argues in "Ephesians and Divine Christology" that Ephesians has a role to play in debates over early Christology. After describing the place of Ephesians in the NT Christologies of Bauckham, Hurtado, Fee, and Dunn (except for Dunn, all of these scholars see a divine Christology in Ephesians), Tilling argues that the God-relation and Christ-relation in Ephesians point to the presence of a divine Christology in the letter. This is a welcome departure from many treatments of Paul, such as Dunn's on Paul's theology, that make little use of Ephesians for understanding Paul's thought.

Even less considered in understanding Paul's theology, not least his pneumatology, are the Pastoral Epistles, which makes the essay by Robert W. Wall, "Salvation's Bath by the Spirit: A Study of Titus 3:5b–6 in Its Canonical Setting," a valuable contribution to this volume. Wall considers this a crucial but neglected text on the Spirit. According to Wall, the judgment that Titus is inauthentic, along with the resulting neglect of the letter in preaching, "has been nothing short of catastrophic" (p. 199). Wall argues that Titus 3:5b–6 is "a definitive synthesis and 'canonical harmony' of Pauline pneumatology." He suggests that the Pastoral Epistles could have been added to the ten-letter Pauline corpus in the second century to deal with disagreements among Pauline churches. Titus 3:5b–6 provides a hermeneutical perspective for understanding Pauline pneumatology. This essay is helpful in showing how the shape of the canon may contribute to the proper way to interpret specific portions of it, which is not usually considered in exegetical works.

Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's essay, "'By the Washing of Regeneration and Renewal in the Holy Spirit': Towards a Pneumatological Theology of Justification," argues that the traditional Reformed doctrine of justification by faith needs a new formulation. He seeks to offer a new, more global, culturally appropriate formulation (or formulations) that is more pneumatological and more trinitarian. According to Kärkkäinen, the problem with the traditional Protestant doctrine of justification is

that "it claims too much when it is made *the* right formulation" (p. 304). Simply making such an assertion will at least raise a few eyebrows among some readers. The Lutheran formulation of justification was highly contextualized in late medieval "divinely sanctified hierarchical culture," which has passed away and is not relevant to the third millennium. The Reformation doctrine is based upon a specific understanding of the relation of Gospel and law. This has changed for many in light of the New Perspective on Paul. Kärkkäinen argues that as long as the work of the Spirit in salvation is understood only as "subjective" or "external," the "gift of salvation is in danger of being diminished" (p. 316). More work is needed on the implications of the more communal, ecstatic existence in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Many collections of essays can be rather diverse and vary in substance among authors. This collection, on the other hand, is full of substantial, creative essays that together form a fitting tribute to Max Turner. Those wrestling with exegetical issues related to the Spirit in the NT will find several essays helpful, while other readers will find helpful theological proposals from valuable conversation partners. The volume is highly recommended for those all across the spectrum on pneumatology.

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Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament. By Paul Trebilco. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, xii + 375, $99.00.

One emerging growth field in NT studies concerns early Christian identity. How did these early followers of Jesus understand themselves vis-à-vis other groups within their world? Paul Trebilco furthers this work through his analysis of seven common self-designations used by such groups according to the NT. Specifically, these self-designations are: the "brothers and sisters," the "believers," the "saints," the "assembly," "disciples," the "Way," and "Christian." An introductory chapter explains the criteria used in selecting terms and, importantly, frames the investigation within the discipline of sociolinguistics. Seven subsequent chapters treat each of the chosen designations. Each of these seven chapters first examines usages of the term in both Greco-Roman and Jewish contexts before looking at the use of the term in the work of each NT writer where it occurs. Trebilco maintains a particular interest in how these terms originated among the early Christian groups where it appears. A concluding chapter effectively synthesizes Trebilco's central conclusions and highlights their significance for further research. The book includes a thirty-one page bibliography plus indices of selected authors (extremely helpful for any researcher), subjects, and texts.

Trebilco limits his investigation to those designations used often and across a range of NT writings. In other words, he is not interested in terms used by any one single group. However, he makes two exceptions to this broad rule. First, he selects the "Way" since it seems to be a term of some importance for a number of early

Christian groups, though it occurs only in Acts of the Apostles. Second, the descriptor "Christian" is chosen because, while occurring seldom in the NT, it carries significant importance moving forward from that early era.

Trebilco's study is well justified. Self-designations offer concrete, accessible evidence into the social world of early Christians. Groups are characterized by shared patterns of conduct, including patterns of insider language. These shared linguistic practices, especially self-designations, express and give shape to their experience in their world. So while we have limited access to actual social interactions for these groups, we do have access to vital social data via their linguistic practices.

By calling itself the "saints" or the "holy ones," a group not only states vital information about its self-understanding, it also reflexively reinforces and forms that embodied communal self. By way of illustration, individuals joining groups become socialized into those groups in significant part through the use of these descriptors. They convey to these newcomers the contours of whom they now are within their world. Furthermore, use of such self-descriptions entails differentiation from other groups. The appellation "saints" reveals not only that the group understands themselves as a group (important in and of itself) but also that particular details of that selfhood are defined in contrast to outsiders. We understand how these early Christians understood themselves, in part, by understanding what they perceived themselves not to be.

A review of one chapter should give a flavor of Trebilco's work. Chapter 2 contains a fifty-one page treatment of *adelphos*, which he translates "brothers and sisters." *Adelphos*, drawn from the fundamental world of familial relations, enjoyed widespread metaphorical use among a variety of different groups in the ancient world. Trebilco draws heavily upon Plutarch to note the obligatory nature of sibling relationships and the value placed on harmony and cooperation therein. He furthermore notes the hierarchy (by age, abilities, etc.) characteristic among siblings in the ancient world, a hierarchy taken for granted by Plutarch, though Plutarch himself tries to mitigate its effects. Trebilco then turns to the NT, giving substantial treatment to Paul's letters before devoting eight pages to considering the origin of Christian usage. He finally turns to what he sees as post-Paulines (Ephesians and the Pastorals separately), Acts, the four Gospels, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Johannine letters, and Revelation.

Trebilco demonstrates the use of this descriptor across a wide spectrum of early Christian groups, though he notes that its use decreases in what he believes are later writings such as the Pastorals. Furthermore, he argues that the origins of this use likely stem from its OT use for the people of God. However, he contends that it is widespread among early Jesus groups primarily because it originates with Jesus himself who claimed his followers were part of a new family (cf. Mark 3:31–35 pars.; Matt 28:10; Luke 22:32; etc.). This self-conception then continues from Jesus right on through the NT era, developed in some ways such as Paul's argument that Jesus' followers are all siblings because Jesus is the firstborn Son of their family (Rom 8:29). Trebilco notes that while a self-conception as siblings contributes to an ethic of mutual concern, the discord common to family experience comes with this new family as well. So, while the Corinthian community seems to

be characterized by divisions, in 1 Corinthians Paul addresses them as *adelphoi* thirty-nine times.

Trebilco by no means attempts to flatten out his examination of the evidence. He notes commonalities in the usage of sibling language across NT writings. Yet he is careful to emphasize that the term takes on distinctive nuances in different writings. So, for example, in Revelation *adelphoi* language seems to be only used of martyrs and prophets. In the Johannine letters, such language is applied only to the particular Johannine group, not to Christians generally. For Paul though, sibling language applies to all followers of Christ everywhere. In Acts, *adelphoi* is applied to Jewish believers from the beginning of the book, but Luke uses it of Gentile believers only after the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15.

Overall, Trebilco draws several important conclusions. Here I will merely list several I regard as noteworthy. He contends sibling language is the earliest self-designation since it goes back to Jesus himself. The "saints" is likely early as well, going back to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem owing to its OT roots. On the other hand, the designation "believer" probably stems from Greek-speaking circles since its usage depends on the LXX. By the time we get to the earliest NT writings with Paul (*c.* 50), we find a number of self-designation already in use. This indicates a variety of such appellations, meaning the self-conceptions conveyed by them, took root early on. Self-designations, furthermore, tell us something of early Christian ethos. Patterns of life drawn from the family realm were central. They helped form strong communal boundaries, distinguishing insiders from outsiders but redrawing boundaries between previously divided Jews and Gentiles. Finally, common self-designations took on contextual nuances. In other words, these descriptors allowed flexibility, being capable of becoming drawn upon according to the needs of the situation. This list could go on, but it suffices in giving the flavor of the overall outcomes of the research.

Remarkably little work of this nature has been done in NT scholarship. Studies of a single self-designation in one corpus of writings have been completed. One thinks of Reidar Aasgaard's *'My Beloved Brothers and Sisters!' Christian Siblingship in Paul* (JSNTSup 265; London: T&T Clark, 2004) or the various article-length studies on the "Way" language in Luke-Acts. Yet Trebilco has provided a lucid, thorough, and informed examination of the key terms used across the writings of the NT. As such, I expect this will serve as the standard examination of the subject for some time to come.

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Theological Method: A Guide for the Perplexed. By Paul L. Allen. London: T&T Clark, 2012, ix + 262 pp., $24.95 paper.

In this guide, Paul L. Allen is keen to provide an accessible overview of the methodological developments in the history of theology, and an equally accessible discussion of theological prolegomena. That said, the book is intended to be read

alongside Bernard Lonergan's *Method in Theology* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971), or some other "great book … dealing with theological method" (p. vii).

In his Introduction, Allen identifies both implicit and explicit objectives of, as well as "a more modest goal" for, the book (p. 2). His "implicit objective" is to confront the idea that conversations about method are "dull or irrelevant" (p. 1). His "explicit objective … is to survey and analyze the theological methods evident in a historically diverse range of figures of the Christian tradition" (p. 2). The "more modest goal … is to enliven and probe the key writings and figures of the Christian tradition for evidence of theological method" (p. 2). Regarding method, he notes: "Method in Christian theology is not necessarily a 'prejudice against prejudice', but perhaps a prejudice against pure novelty" (p. 7). Shoring up this more general observation via Lonergan and Hans-Georg Gadamer, Allen raises the question of "whether there is a way of knowing that is unique to theology" (p. 11). This question leads to a brief discussion of revelation, hermeneutics, and tradition before Allen turns to the substance of the book: a survey of theological method.

Chapter 1 begins with Paul and makes the case for the apostle as the Christian church's first theologian. Allen argues that Paul's theological method is hermeneutical and apostolic based upon consideration of four key issues: justification by faith, a holiness ethic, original sin, and the Holy Trinity. Allen concludes that Paul's theological method is "consistently two-sided" (p. 46), balancing Scripture and his own experience, his conversion experience in particular. Chapter 2 covers Irenaeus, Origen, and Athanasius, and examines the increasingly diffuse sources behind their respective theological methods. With Irenaeus, for instance, comes the notion of tradition as authoritative, and with Origen, a distinction between doctrine and speculation, the latter being increasingly dependent upon philosophy. Allen offers that Origen's theology is therefore best conceived methodologically as providing both foundations and a systematic attempt to push beyond doctrine (p. 65). Yet, Allen is careful not to refer to the Patristic Fathers as being "'more doctrinal' than Paul" (p. 71), preferring to speak of qualitative, as opposed to quantitative differences. Chapter 3 considers Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* in detail and highlights Augustine's hermeneutic of love as well as his more significant methodological contribution, i.e., "his account of theological sources and theological inquirer in an interwoven web of meaning" (p. 86). Chapter 4 surveys the theological methods of Pseudo-Dionysius, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas. While referencing the "tangled relationship" of medieval theology and philosophy, Allen seeks to highlight "other vital themes" (p. 90), emphasizing the role of language, the advent of natural theology, and the speculative character of medieval theology. Chapter 5 focuses on *sola scriptura* via Martin Luther, Philipp Melanchthon, and John Calvin. Allen argues for a nuanced reading, one that gives "attention to the procedures by which theologians of the Reformation do their theology" (p. 142). Along these lines, he calls attention to Luther's hermeneutical strategies that frame his biblical interpretation, "an extra-biblical doctrine about scripture, a shorthand rule, a canon about the canon" (p. 124). Chapter 6 provides a particularly helpful overview of Friedrich Schleiermacher, John Henry Newman, Albrecht Ritschl, and Adolf von Harnack, and focuses on the role of, as well as the tension between, history and doctrine in

theology. Chapter 7, the longest chapter of the book, engages Rudolf Bultmann, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Karl Rahner, and Edward Schillebeeckx, dividing them into correlationist (i.e. Bultmann, Tillich, Balthasar, Rahner, Schillebeeckx) and anti-correlationist (i.e. Barth) approaches. Allen concludes the chapter with a question: "Is it possible to construct a philosophically adept theology with methodical gravitas which, at the same time, contains within it a respect for historical judgements elaborated through doctrine on the basis on theological categories?" (p. 204). He answers: "The twentieth century seems, if anything, to have provided us with repeated suggestions that there is a mutually exclusive relationship between methodical awareness and theological identity" (pp. 204–5). In Chapter 8, Allen considers examples that seem to move beyond these methodological divisions, a collective third way. Taken together, radical orthodoxy (à la John Milbank), post-liberalism (à la George Lindbeck and Hans Frei), liberation theology (à la Gustavo Guitierrez), and Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) "explore the possibilities of theological method as wisdom" (p. 208). Such wisdom, for Allen, consists of "moving beyond strict boundaries between correlationist and anti-correlationist factionalism" (p. 224).

The book more or less succeeds in providing an accessible overview of the methodological developments in the history of theology as well as an equally accessible discussion of theological prolegomena. That said, I had four concerns: (1) Allen's conclusion at the end of Chapter 8 would have been better as a separate and proper Conclusion. As it stands, it seems disjointed (i.e. beginning with the summary at the bottom of p. 208, then picking it up again on p. 223), and a bit too brief. In the space of six pages, Allen returns to Lonergan as a sort of summary, responds to Kathryn Tanner's "methodological ambivalence" (p. 226), gives an answer to the question with which the book began (i.e. "Is there a theological epistemology?"), and closes with an all too brief word on "theological wisdom." A bit more on Lonergan would have been helpful, and a more thorough engagement with Tanner's "methodological ambivalence" seems warranted, especially because she undercuts Allen's "implicit objective." And clearly Allen's question regarding "theological epistemology" as well as his exploration of "theological wisdom" deserved more substantial consideration. (2) With few exceptions, Allen's consideration is limited to the Western church. The Cappadocians are mentioned (pp. 39, 59), but only in relation to Augustine and Origen. And what of the global South or the far East? With regard to the latter, texts along the lines of Yasuo Furuya, ed., *A History of Japanese Theology* (Eerdmans, 1997) might have been mentioned, even if in the nonexistent "Suggestions for Further Reading" (see my fourth concern below). Given the limitations of space, these omissions are understandable, but they should have been made more explicit in the book's introduction, especially because they work against Allen's "explicit objective." It should be noted that Allen does make the caveat that "it would be impossible to provide a comprehensive account," but his "more modest goal" makes reference to "the Christian tradition" (and without qualification; p. 2). Allen does limit the conversation in a subsequent paragraph (i.e. to Western culture and Western universities), but only as part of a more general conversation about the discipline of theology being sidelined. With regard to con-

temporary western theologians, William J. Abraham and David Brown would have been welcome additions, even if in a footnote. While Robert MacSwain and Taylor Worley, eds., *Theology, Aesthetics, & Culture: Responses to the Work of David Brown* (Oxford, 2012) was published several months after Allen's *Theological Method,* the publication of this sort of volume, a response to five recent books from Brown, supports my contention that Brown's work might have been mentioned even if not engaged. And here we return to my first concern as Brown's work would have been helpful in formulating a response to Tanner's "methodological ambivalence," particularly with regard to "social and cultural complexity" (p. 226). (3) The index was incomplete. On several occasions I found occurrences whose page numbers were not listed alongside other occurrences. For example, Bernard Lonergan, who looms large in the guide, has only eight entries on p. 260, but I found an additional thirteen occurrences that do not appear in the Index. In addition to some occurrences not being listed, some important topics were completely left out, natural theology being one example. And yet, though absent from the Index, it natural theology was thoroughly discussed throughout Allen's *Guide.* (4) More generally, it seems strange that the section "Suggestions for Further Reading"—suggestions called for in the series guidelines—was omitted.

Notwithstanding these concerns, this *Guide* is recommended for college professors and their students, individuals looking for a crash course in theological method, and postgraduates in interdisciplinary programs that come from non-theology backgrounds.

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God is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology. By Gerald Bray. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012, 740 pp., $40.00.

Faith has been so important to the Christian traditions descended from the Reformation that they have had a harder time knowing what to do with love, in spite of its preeminence in biblical revelation. One strange consequence of this has been that, since the Reformation, Roman Catholic—and more recently, liberal Protestant—writers have tended to sound more biblical with respect to their emphasis on love, than those who generally hold the Bible in higher regard, even if neither group has been able to appreciate properly love's dependence upon faith.

So, a magisterial theological work entitled *God is Love*, by a broadly-informed Reformation theologian, deserves our attention. Authored by Gerald Bray, Research Professor of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School, who has written notably on the doctrine of God and hermeneutics in church history, *God is Love* is a remarkable accomplishment in a number of ways. As already implied, its most important contribution is the fact that it was organized around the theme of divine love. Second, as its subtitle suggests, it aims at being a healthy blend of biblical and systematic theology (and, we might add, some historical theology). Producing either a systematic theology or a whole-Bible biblical theology has to be a daunting task. Most

authors attempting a synthesis of both in a single volume would be accused of overreaching, but Bray proves to be up to the task. The book's third most noteworthy feature is what we might call its "low church" orientation, evidenced by a lack of academic footnotes and relatively little theological jargon, and his exploration of many practical topics of Christian living and cultural relevance, demonstrating a biblically-informed common sense applied to an amazing variety of the issues of the day. Part of the joy of reading it was to discover Bray's take on many topics that we just don't often get to hear a theologian address. In summary, the product is a "fully Catholic, fully Orthodox, and fully Protestant" (p. 13), yet simultaneously creative, magnum opus of a stellar Anglican don at the height of his powers. Together, the three strengths combine to make the book a good choice for discipling young Christians, providing a competent, engaging, and fair-minded evangelical introduction to Christianity for the twenty-first century, and one more sensitive to the contours of biblical revelation than most systematic theologies.

As the full title suggests, the book is an amalgam of biblical and systematic theology substantially structured around the nature of God as love and the manifestation of that love towards human beings through the course of redemptive-history. Part One—The Language of Love—offers a prolegomenon, opening the book with a chapter on the experience of God and his love, moving to the nature of divine revelation and the Bible, a chapter on Christian worldview, a Protestant discussion of the classic ways of negation and affirmation to understand God, followed by chapters on the nature of theology, and the need for faith.

Part Two—God's Love in Himself—starts with the Trinity as love, followed by a discussion of God's attributes, and then a history of the revelation of the Trinity in the Bible, with subsequent chapters on the Son of God and the Holy Spirit. Because of Bray's intimate familiarity with the material, his examination of the early church's development of the doctrine of the Trinity in chapter seven is worth the price of the book.

Part Three—God's Love for His Creation—contains chapters on the biblical doctrine of creation; angels; the nature and validity of matter; the origin, nature, and general activities of the human race; and the nature and kinds of human relationships. Bray engagingly addresses a variety of practical topics in Part Three rarely discussed in a systematic theology: ecology, astrology, natural disasters, physical disabilities, drugs, work and leisure, gender, racial and ethnic equality, government, and many aspects of sexuality, including celibacy, marriage, divorce, polygamy, public nudity, and homosexuality.

The Rejection of God's Love is the heading of Part Four, which, as we might suppose, concerns sin and evil, topics which he also examines with a fresh eye. After reviewing what Scripture teaches about evil, the fall of the angels, and the fall of humans—combined with some plausible speculation—Bray discusses some of the most significant noetic effects of sin. Specifically, he considers how the nearly universal ethical and religious orientation of human life has been compromised and distorted in the human race, offering chapters on the world's major religions, Christian syncretism, cults, and atheism.

Part Five—God So Loved the World—opens with reflections on the preservation of the human race after the fall through common grace, has a chapter on God's covenant relation with Israel, and concludes with the life and work of Jesus Christ. Finally, Part Six—The Consummation of God's Love—begins with the sending of the Spirit and contains substantial discussions on the Christian life and the church, concluding with a seventeen-page chapter on eschatology, a surprisingly brief treatment in an otherwise thorough book. One can see from the outline just how biblically constrained is this systematic theology.

There are many particulars to appreciate, too few of which can be mentioned. How one begins a major work of theology is significant, because it makes a statement about one's orientation and priorities. As touched on above, this book opens, rather controversially, with a chapter on the Christian experience of God. This is not an opening, however, that Schleiermacher (nor Brian McLaren) could have written. In the first paragraph, Bray points to the relationship between Christ the Good Shepherd and his sheep, reminding readers of Christ's teaching that his sheep hear his voice. Those not his sheep, Bray says on the next page, are goats (boldly alluding to another teaching of Jesus), so they do not/cannot understand, until they too believe. So, in his book on love, Bray introduces the Antithesis right from the start, a strategy that will set some on edge, but others will consider prophetic—particularly fitting in a post-Christian age of accommodation, where most people in the West think of themselves as some kind of Christian—as he goes on to say that God loves "the goats" and "we [Christians] have a duty to tell them that what has happened to us can and ought to happen to them too" (p. 19).

Bray then sets up the apostle Paul as a model for Christians, as one who experienced and came to know Jesus Christ, beginning with that Damascus-road encounter. How can Christians know that they know the true God? Ultimately, they know only because they are believers in Christ. Knowledge is of the essence of faith, the circularity here being a stumbling block only for rationalists or those who have overreacted to rationalism. This is quite an opening, well exemplifying the evangelical spirit to contend for the faith.

But it is not an opening that is contentious. Bray also conveys an Anglican generosity of spirit throughout the book. To give one example, he tells his readers that "the Christian experience of God can never be fully captured in words. Love cannot be reduced to a formula, and there are many ways of expressing it, none of which is exhaustive" (p. 26). So, "What we call 'theology' is a work in progress." Yet, a little later, he warns, "there are false teachers who must be exposed and avoided" (p. 27). His is an orthodox generosity.

Yet, reflecting a recent shift in orthodoxy, Bray discusses the Trinity before addressing the general being (the attributes) of God. He explains: "If the fundamental principle of our theology is that God is love, then we must start with the divine persons and not with the unity of God's being. The love of the Trinity is best understood, he says, "as the kind of self-sacrifice that characterizes the relationship of one person to another" (p. 107).

Bray's familiarity with early church teachings is reflected in a careful, but clear description of the early church's development of a post-biblical set of terms needed

to understand the incarnation of the Son of God and its implications for the nature of God. With Wilkin and many others, he argues that while the early church was surely influenced by its intellectual climate, it was creatively submissive to Scripture and, at its best, it Christianized what it encountered, transforming not only the culture of the day, but that climate as well. "Early Christian theology was not a speculative exercise that tried to figure out how the divine and the human could interact, but an attempt to make sense of an event [the incarnation] that changed the way they thought of themselves and the world in which they lived" (p. 119). To do this, early church theologians had to use the linguistic options available to them, but in the process they came up with some new meanings for some old words, like (the Greek and Latin equivalents of) *being*, *substance*, *essence*, *hypostasis*, *person*, and *nature*.

His own understanding of personhood is contemporary-sounding but rooted in the classic formulations of the Trinity. "The best way to think of personhood is to say that being a person means having the capacity to give and receive love. The persons of the Godhead love each other fully and completely. Their mutual love constitutes their being and determines their actions" (p. 132). Human beings are persons too, because they are made in God's image, and therefore they "have been made for love"—the love of God and of each other. He adds that "personal relationship with God is the only way that we can communicate with him because personhood is something that we both share" (p. 133). Persons are those in relationship with each other. The interrelated themes of personhood, relationship, and image-bearing run throughout the book—not surprising, because one might also consider it an exposition of the relation between the doctrines of the triune God and how humans best represent that God on earth.

Yet, in a book focused on love, Bray surprisingly argues that, according to the Bible, the divine attribute of greatest *importance* is God's omnipotence, because it "provides the context in which we experience and come to understand the true meaning of his other attributes," at least insofar as his creation is concerned (p. 142). This seems deeply correct. God's love has to be distinguished from all human versions, and cannot properly be grasped apart from his glorious majesty and his rights as our sovereign Lord and Judge.

Not having the space to cover the book in detail, the following is a selection of a few of Bray's theological ruminations that especially intrigued me. He suggests the commandment "love your neighbor as yourself" tells us how God relates to us (p. 157). Though affirming Christ's sinlessness, he intriguingly asks, "Was [Christ] ever moody or depressed? We do not know the answers to such questions, but we must not exclude the possibility—even the probability—that he was" (p. 196). Additionally, he offers an appreciative Protestant interpretation of Mary as a privileged sinner in need of salvation; points out that humans have dominion over the creation in order to bring out what he calls its "hidden capabilities" (p. 230); suggests that some emotional suffering is due now to a finite, changing creation. Moreover, he gives a good, brief overview of Western marriage customs and how to integrate Christian principles into them; he provides a great discussion of the problem of evil; and in a useful overview of false religions, he understandably spends a good deal of time on Islam.

Any work this broadly conceived and wide-ranging will inevitably create a few disappointments for even its admirers. One for me was the virtual lack of citations of any extrabiblical authors—a problem that will be, to some extent, remedied by the future publication of a companion volume that will address controversies in church history. But this makes the present volume a little less useful as a discipleship book for young Christians, because part of the agenda of such a work should be to introduce novices to dead mentors, whom they can read later on their own. This absence may also convey to such readers the mistaken impression of an individualistic and presentist approach to the faith, reflective of a segment of evangelicalism, yet so contrary to Bray's own orientation and competences.

More jarring was the justification Bray seemed to give for the Israelite killing of the Canaanites, in the context of defending the Israelite sacrificial system as a "working out of the principle of love—love for God, in the first instance, and then love for neighbor" (pp. 420–21). I appreciate the goal to make sense of God's design in that campaign by tying it into the book's major theme. Moreover, though he did not spell out his rationale here, I think I know the three points he's trying to underscore: one, killing the Canaanites demonstrated God's rightful judgment of their idolatry; two, the Israelites' love for God was demonstrated by their faithful obedience to this difficult and unpleasant task; and three, it must have struck a potentially redemptive fear into the hearts of their regional neighbors. But one strains to see how the killing of the Canaanites could itself be reflective of neighbor-love. Bray makes a similar move when he argues that eternal punishment is due to God's continuing love of the person who rejects him (p. 372). I would like to think there is a way that argument can work, but it will have to take more than a paragraph. In a culture like ours that embraces euthanasia, many will see annihilation as a more loving end. As supremely important as love is, it cannot explain everything that God does. Divine virtues like love and justice may just be irreducible to another, even if they are ultimately harmonious in the simplicity of God.

Given the superlative value of this book's emphasis on divine love, it might seem categorically ungrateful to raise a question about the theme. However, lest false expectations be raised, and in spite of its support of the experience of God's love, the book tells more *about* God's love than it works at bringing us *into* it, at least directly. This is a book that amply feeds the intellect, but does not easily lend itself to *lectio divina*. Some may think this an inappropriate point to make, because it would seem unfair to fault a book for being written in a certain genre, and perhaps it is. I raise the issue, not to complain about this book, but to highlight the modern problem of the bifurcation of objectivity and subjectivity that influences even a great book on divine love like this one. In the pre-modern era, theologians like Augustine, Bernard, Julian of Norwich, Owen, and Edwards wrote on divine love in ways that more readily promoted worship and the return of love, certainly more than we find in the modern era. How do we find our way back? Knowing *about* God's love is essential, but as Bray himself reminds us, we need to experience that love too, so maybe it is not asking too much of our contemporary theologians to retrieve a lost art, and learn again how to write in that classical genre of theological writing that is simultaneously devotional and therefore aims explicitly at promoting

the experience of the truth *in the reading*, so that we might "know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph 3:19).

A few minor issues might also be raised. At one point, Bray suggests that God may not have known that Satan would fall (p. 347) and offers some intriguing speculations about Satan (pp. 352–70); Bray might have acknowledged the speculative nature of these proposals. Furthermore, he argues that our moral awareness acquired by the fall is a good thing (p. 375). Interestingly, union with Christ was not brought up until almost the end of the book (p. 620) and *after* sanctification and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—a particularly unfortunate misplacement, given that union with Christ is so central to God's love of us and our love of God. Moreover, when a ten-page discussion of baptism precedes a five-page exposition of justification by faith, a credobaptist like me gets a bit anxious. But the book's weaknesses are few and do little to detract from such a marvelous project.

Up until a few decades ago, for at least two or three centuries, one might have thought there was only one way to do theology—something comparable to the layout of Charles Hodge's systematic theology—constrained by a certain, strictly logical arrangement of topics. Such a format is exceedingly helpful for organizing biblical thought, but it is not divinely inspired. We are living in an era where different kinds of orthodox theologies are being written that do not fit that mold and that are constrained, more or less, by different agendas—whether the Trinity, drama, covenant, eschatology, biblical theology or, in this case, love—and the Christian community is becoming the richer for it.

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The Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation. By Richard Bauckham. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010, iii + 229 pp., $24.95 paper.

Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology. By Richard Bauckham. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011, xiv + 256pp., $34.95 paper.

The Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation provides a survey of biblical texts that support the modern ecological movement and firmly roots any attempts at reconciliation with nature in a theocentric, rather than the contemporary secular anthropocentric, or pantheistic biocentric, approaches. Bauckham persuasively locates humans as other creatures of God, along with the plants, animals, and angelic beings, while also cutting human hubris down to size through manifold examples of humility in the face of the omnipotent creator God. Hubris, which prompts humans to control, dominate, and otherwise manipulate nature in particular, is important to explore biblically, as the author cites this vice as the cause of our ecological problems against Lynn White's classic text "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155/3767 (March 10, 1967) 1203–7. With valuable footnotes, panoply of sources, and a dedication to interpreting the biblical texts as the

original audience would have heard them, this book provides persuasive arguments that modern humans, and indeed modern Christians, are not acting within the God-given limits of "dominion."

Chapter one views biblical stewardship as a byproduct of the interdependence and interconnectedness of humans to other created beings. Stewardship falls in between exploitation and preservation, where on the one hand we use until there is nothing left or, on the other hand, we never use our resources. Stewardship, as presented in this book, is akin to conservation in the secular world. Bauckham obtains the concept of stewardship through examining the various ways in which God has placed limits on human use of creation. He argues the Genesis imperative of subduing the land—interpreted as agriculture—and the injunctions against eating meat with the blood in it (Gen 9:3–4), serve as heuristic tools for human experiences of limitation. Bauckham's exegesis of Genesis 9, specifically his statement that "the violence that led to the Flood included killing for food" (p. 23), thus making humans carnivorous before the flood, is doubtful, considering the use of the present *lakem eh-kol* ["I now give you all"] in Gen 9:3. Yet this oversight does not alter the overall argument of interconnectedness, and the standard reading of the first humans being vegetarian from creation (Gen 1:29) until the Flood (Gen 9:3).

The second chapter allows the readers to enter the world of Job through the poetical book of the same name. By using the speech of God at the end of the book of Job (chs. 38–41), Bauckham both puts emphasis on the place of humans within the created order and builds a case for the delight of God in creatures for their own sake. With insightful analysis, chapter two reads like an expository sermon on God's creation, power, and omniscience of the world. Careful explanations of how the original hearers of Job would have interpreted God's control over the mysterious sea, the fickle and life-determining weather, and the fabulous creatures like the behemoth and the leviathan is where Bauckham hits the stride of the book through rich description. The author uses the book of Job to reiterate God's cosmic order and the limits of human beings while using the protagonist Job as a case study. Humans think they are in control, but the great orchestration of God's works in creation prove us wrong, cutting arrogance down to size, and "putting us in our place" as one creature among many.

Chapter three is the hinge chapter and acts as a bridge between the creation (Genesis; seen in chapter one) and the re-creation (Revelation; seen in chapter five). A variety of genres, books, and chapters from the Bible are chosen to expand and corroborate the claim that humans are created beings living in a community of creation, and that our place is not above the animals like demi-gods but among the animals as those who are able to worship the Creator. Through two psalms—Psalm 104, which speaks of "generous extravagance," and Psalm 148, which describes a "catalogue of worshippers"—humans begin to understand that nature also worships God. It is essential that Bauckham contrasts the biblical interpretation of nature worshiping God with the pantheistic interpretation of Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, thus bringing the focus back to God. Of similar importance to the Christian reader is the demarcation of creation as sacred (set apart) rather than divine (pantheistic) or secular (instrumental). Without these explanations, the uniniti-

ated reader might wander into non-Christian worldviews, a danger Bauckham is constantly fighting. Also of note in this chapter are the utilization of the prophets Hosea and Jeremiah and the book of Romans to contrast creation's worship with creation's mourning.

In the penultimate chapter the author addresses the accusation that the wilderness is primarily presented as negative in the Bible. Instead, Bauckham argues that the wilderness reinforces the limits of humans as place where we do not go; in fact, it can be viewed as an "ecotopia" of unspoiled splendor. The eschatological vision of peace, with animals and humans living in harmony (from Isaiah) is one such ecotopia. Moreover, by Jesus entering the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry, early Christians were reassured that messianic peace will reign. Before the eschaton, however, we must live in the world we were given, with the complexity of life among other creatures that are unique and sometimes feared. While these sentiments of biodiversity have been echoed before by Thomas Aquinas—"because goodness cannot be adequately represented by one creature alone, God produced many and diverse creatures" (*Summa Theologica*, pt. 1, q. 47, art. 1)—it was effective to have a Protestant point out the value of diversity as well.

The final chapter, true to its title "From Alpha to Omega," brought the survey of biblical texts on creation full circle through the use of the New Testament, and especially the book of Revelation. This metanarrative, or "eco-narrative" as dubbed by Bauckham (p. 145), puts Christ in the center of our three-fold relationship with God, other creatures, and ourselves. The use of eco-narrative allows us to see our relationship to both our fellow creatures and the one who created us. Although a few of the passages were interpreted in ways which I think might be anachronistic—for example, the "cosmic Christ" of Col 1:15 and John 1—and other interpretations bordered on universalism for all creatures in the "eternal destiny" for non-human creation through the incarnation of Christ (p. 164)—generally the point of Jesus being a part of the recreation of the material world is well taken.

Overall, this book is appealing to Bible-centered evangelicals. However, there are a few dubious exegetical passages in the book that I do not think hold up when taken to their logical extreme. For instance, the emphasis on animals being "fellow creatures" without the corrective of humans as image bearers of God—discussion only on one page (p. 30)—has the troublesome implication of seeping into deep ecology where, because all creatures and created things are of equal value, no one creature—humans included—have claim to life over another. Echoes of deep ecology are found elsewhere through the use of Wendell Berry and in interpretations of the imperative to "fill the land" (Gen 1:28) as a command not to "grow food for themselves (and so fill the land) to an extent that competes with the livelihood of other living creatures" (p. 17).

Perhaps the largest weakness of this book as a biblical studies text is that, in his effort to put humans in an ecological mindset by repeatedly making the analogy of humans as a part of the created community, Bauckham neglects to carefully demarcate how and when, but most importantly *why*, humans may use the world in which God has created us. This low anthropology is not needed to drive home the point that humans must better take care of our fellow creatures, and it is only a

helpful counterpoint to those who view nature as something to be exploited—not as a resource to conserve and use. I would guess that the intended, if not actual, audience of this book would fall in the latter camp and thus not need to be persuaded of the fact that we too are creatures. Nevertheless, both the neophyte and the committed ecologist will find *The Bible and Ecology* an interesting survey on biblical support for the green movement.

Published only a year later, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology* is Bauckham's second book exploring themes of ecology, conservation, and the Bible. Many of the same leitmotifs of preservation, the place of humans as one among many created beings, and nature worshipping God are revisited while other refrains are abandoned. The "ecotopia" which appeared so readily in *The Bible and Ecology* is all but absent in this second ecological book (though see p. 75). Also gone, happily, are the reliance on Wendell Berry and the reverberations of deep ecology. However, considering that this book is actually a compilation of essays published prior to 2011, thus reflective of the theological developments leading up to *The Bible and Ecology,* I would be nonplussed if the "return" to Berry and deep ecology were not found in Bauckham's subsequent work on biblical environmentalism.

While the book as a whole makes a strong argument for attention to the natural world, which humans are destroying, individual chapters are technical and disconnected from one another, thus making the book less readable as narrative. The advantage, however, is that individual chapters are better suited for utilization in many subjects from comparative religion to a secular ecology course.

In one of two original chapters, the opening essay clearly presents the author's view of the current "ecological catastrophe" (p. 1) and biblical rationale to halt further destruction. Of first importance is the abandonment of the notion of dominion and/or modern stewardship, and a reorientation to solidarity with the rest of creation. The sufficiency of creaturely praise without the mediation of human priests is a novel concept that reappears later in chapter seven.

Chapter two brings the author's arguments back to Genesis 1–2 to examine the meaning of "dominion." The historical definition that Bauckham presents is similar to the paradigm of *homo faber* in H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Responsible Self* (Harper & Row, 1963). In both cases, humans take whatever they want from the earth to construct a world of their choosing. Interestingly, both Niebuhr and Bauckham reject this proposal despite its prevailing position in theological anthropology. A summary of the dominant, human-centered views of creation is presented, with detail to original sources and time periods. This humanist view is surely what Lynn White was observing in his seminal article mentioned above.

As a check to the hitherto hegemonic notion of humans as the center of the created world, Bauckham presents a list of mostly coenobitic figures who lived in Christian harmony with the rest of creation. Most recognizable among these is St. Francis of Assisi. As the author returns to the theories of dominion, both the modern Baconian project and prevailing Christian cries for stewardship each are rejected in turn; fraternity and interdependence are proposed instead. The sustained academic argument of the second chapter is detailed, though definitely written from a Western male perspective. Women religious are conspicuously absent from both

the list of historical Christian figures who have shaped human-centered views on creation, and those who have rejected it; Eastern saints are likewise absent.

The ecological context of the synoptic Gospels is explained in the third chapter. This understanding is essential to Bauckham's interpretation of nature and the wilderness, as is his contention that the kingdom of God includes all of creation. Jesus' view of nature is juxtaposed, interestingly, with the stories of Jesus and the fig tree and the destruction of the Gerasene pigs. Overall, however, the point is well taken that Jesus lived in harmony with nature and thought highly of the role of animals in creation.

Chapter four is devoted entirely to Jesus and animals, which is put into perspective for the modern reader by recognizing the cultural and religious ties Jesus and his disciples had to Judaism. Although Jesus does show concern for animals through his allegory of the sparrows (Matt 10:29–31) and his "how much more" teachings (Matt 12:12), Jesus is nonetheless portrayed as a Jewish man who participated actively in temple sacrifices and meat eating. While most Christians would be hard pressed to describe Jesus as either anti-Jewish or vegetarian, the reiteration of Jesus' consumptive habits is somewhat jarring to the modern sensitive eater, in light of the "omnivore's dilemma." Bauckham could have demarcated the moral difference between the occasional and kosher eating of meat of Jesus' day with the cruel and inhumane practice of slaughterhouses, henhouses, fish farms, and mass-produced meat of our day, but this connection was not made.

The next chapter on Jesus and the wilderness reiterated much of Bauckham's previous work on the inauguration of messianic peace and does not need repeating here. However, in following much of the rest of the book, this chapter is more advanced theologically and relies on the original Greek passages, thus making chapter five more suited for those with a seminary education.

Chapter six takes up the Sermon on the Mount in an "age of ecological catastrophe." Structure, context, and audience are extremely important to Bauckham's arguments. With "hyperbolic extremity that characterizes Jesus' teaching throughout the sermon" (p. 143), readers see that God will feed the birds and clothe the flowers, but humans must limit what they eat and wear while also not waiting passively for God to provide. This lesson is sorely needed in a consumerist society, and Bauckham contributes a theology of contentment that thickens the notion of trusting in God.

The next chapter enumerates the ways in which the Christian tradition has presented (not personified) flora and fauna worshipping God. Using a variety of biblical passages, stories of saints, and Christian poets, Bauckham retells the many avenues for creature-praise. The most novel aspect of chapter seven is the contention that humans are not mediating priests of nature, and that nature can praise God directly without human assistance. The value of placing animals and nature in their own category of worshippers is to be truly commended and resonates well with even secular sensibilities that animals have worth independent of humankind.

From earthly creatures to the fantastic, the wheeled creatures in the book of Revelation are the subject of chapter 8. These heavenly animals are compared to the four living creatures in Ezekiel, and this comparison is then paralleled with the

apocryphal *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Ultimately, the four creatures are described as representing God's attributes and, interestingly enough, acting as "priests of creation" (p. 177), indicating once again that all creatures praise God.

Near the end of the book, Matthew Fox and St. Francis, and their relationship to nature, are described in some detail. Again, much of the first book is repeated in the section on Francis of Assisi. "Mysticism" is emphasized in the deeds of both these men and in the reflection of Christ in relation to nature.

Finally, chapter ten both condemns the egregious abuses of humans against nature and encourages a biblical perspective on biodiversity. Instead of appealing to self-interest, economics, or the sentimental value of nature for preservation, Bauckham maintains that a theocentric view of creation is the most persuasive reason for conservation of nature.

Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology lives up to its title. The book is written for an academically oriented audience, and the author draws on many resources. My biggest concern with the text is that preservation of nature, "noninterference," "keep[ing] our hands off," and the common refrain "letting creation be" (pp. 6–7, 132) are too restrictive. This concept needs development throughout the book, as it is not clear under which circumstances it might be appropriate to "encroach" on animal territory, nor is a quantifiable amount of land suggested for humans to use. This noble goal will be virtually impossible, furthermore, unless the twin issues of population growth and consumption are addressed. Bauckham does not attend to the former at all.

As an ethicist I am always looking for the practical application of theology, but even the biblicists who pick up this book expecting "green exegesis" will be disappointed by the lack of pragmatic, solution-oriented application for pressing ecological problems. This is the case with many other environmental theology texts such as those written by Denis Edwards, Sallie McFague, and John Hart. Unlike these other authors, however, Bauckham does have a clear conversionist goal for his books, which aim at action. Indeed, he asserts that "unless they make some contribution to Christian worship, Christian spirituality, and Christian practice" (p. xiv), his books will be of no use. This is a noble goal, to be sure, but the leap between information and action is one that is ignored in this book. Readers are left on their own to convert knowledge into action in order to achieve the author's purpose of Christian worship, spirituality, and practice. Yet without biblical guidance on specific steps towards "living with other creatures," it seems highly dubious that any changes will ensue. Fortunately, these books prepare the way for Christian ethicists, ecologists, and policy-makers to orient their philosophy in a green direction, making action more likely.

Bauckham's writings are well suited for courses in biblical studies, ecology, and even systematic theology. I would recommend one book or the other to readers, depending on their technical training in theology. *The Bible and Ecology* is a superb choice for lay people, pastors, and Bible college students, while *Living with Other Creatures* is a fine supplementary text in seminaries and graduate level classes.

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