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BOOK REVIEWS

The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments. By Thomas R. Schreiner. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013, xix + 714 pp., $44.99.

In 2000, D. A. Carson wrote of the "mushrooming interest in biblical theology" (*Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 90). Now, almost 15 years later, it appears to be that the interest in the subject is still mushrooming, despite the diversity of opinions concerning what the discipline biblical theology (BT) actually is. In recent years several biblical theologies have been produced by American evangelicals, including Charles Scobie (2003), Walter Kaiser (2008), James Hamilton (2010), and Greg Beale (2011). With *The King In His Beauty*, Thomas Schreiner has added his name to the list of those who have taken up the demanding task—especially challenging within an academic climate that prizes narrow specialization—of writing a BT of the entire Bible.

If one were to map out a publishing road map building up to a BT, Schreiner's writing career would serve as a reasonable model. In addition to several NT commentaries, Schreiner published a Pauline theology (2006) and a NT theology (2008). Maybe the only blemish on the map is that, while two thirds of his book covers OT material, he has not published much on the OT previously. In any case, Schreiner is a seasoned scholar whose ability to interact with the various books and genres of Scripture, including both OT and NT, is displayed in this volume.

It is important to evaluate a book that the author intended to write, not the book one wishes he had written. This is true of any review but especially relevant for the scholars who will be evaluating *The King in His Beauty*. Schreiner states, "I am also aware that I have barely scratched the surface in terms of secondary sources. I tried to read enough to get a sense of what biblical scholarship was saying about the theology of the various books examined. But I was concerned about being comprehensive; I mainly cite sources that proved to be of help in understanding the theology of the Bible" (p. x). This approach, of course, is not what many scholars—who delight in technical arguments, detailed footnotes, and thorough interaction with contemporary scholarship—will want to hear. Yet, Schreiner explains further, "My hope is that this book will be understandable for college students, laypersons, seminary students, and pastors. It was not intended to be a technical work for scholars" (p. x) Thus, this review proceeds keeping Schreiner's aim in mind.

Schreiner opens by briefly touching on prolegomena material and manages in just a few pages to explain concisely the approach he has taken. Referring to the current common consensus, Schreiner believes there is no one theme that captures the Bible's message. Instead, by concentrating on one of the Bible's major themes, he intends to unpack the storyline of Scripture. He makes his thesis clear by stating, "I intend to argue in this book that the 'kingdom of God,' if that term is defined with sufficient flexibility, fits well as a central theme of the entire Bible" (p. xii).

The chapters that follow the preface methodically work through the books of Scripture, summarizing how each fits into the overall canonical storyline and is related to the concept of "kingdom." Schreiner has grouped thirty-four chapters into nine parts. At the conclusion of each of the nine parts, he includes what he refers to as an "Interlude," in which he provides a short synopsis of the books included in the section and their connection to his overall thesis.

Schreiner feels that the importance some place on the significance of a particular canonical order (Christian versus Hebrew order) has been exaggerated, and states that OT theology is not dramatically changed no matter what order is used in interpretation. Accordingly, he believes that it is "legitimate and fruitful to examine the biblical story line from many different perspectives and angles" (p. 429). He chooses the standard English Bible ordering for the OT, but arranges the NT books in a more eclectic fashion in which he groups certain books together by corpus and other books together based on other factors. The Synoptic Gospels are grouped together with Acts. Luke and Acts are studied in the same chapter as a two-volume work. John's Gospel and the Johannine epistles are treated in the follow section. Next, Paul's epistles and the remainder of the NT epistles are considered. Finally, though he acknowledges Revelation could be studied alongside the rest of Johannine tradition, Schreiner places it last as a fitting conclusion to the canon.

The book is written out of the Reformed tradition as it pertains to issues of soteriology and providence. In other words, without denying human responsibility, Schreiner affirms God's sovereignty over human history and divine election as determinative for salvation. Schreiner also appears to understand the Scriptures within the framework of what is now labeled by some as "New Covenant Theology." He understands the Mosaic Law (including, but certainly not limited to the Decalogue) to function as a covenant document for the nation of Israel. Thus, the Mosaic Law is no longer binding on the New Covenant believer, though some of the precepts are still normative under the New Covenant. Moreover, while there is still a future for ethnic Israel (Romans 11), they too must be grafted back into the one people of God by believing in Jesus Christ, who himself embodies the true Israel.

In a volume that covers so much material one is tempted to comment on various smaller points of agreement and disagreement that stood out, but this approach would yield too long of a review and could miss out on more significant considerations. Hence, the following evaluation focuses on the book's strengths and weaknesses at a broader level.

One of the strengths of this volume is that it is written in clear language and is concise in its treatment of the various biblical books. It is rare that one would describe a book that is around 650 pages of main text as concise. However, this is, after all, a BT of the entire Bible! To make this book accessible to a more general audience—which was his stated aim—Schreiner has to bypass most technical issues. Occasionally, he will go into more depth in a footnote to support his position, but throughout he resists getting bogged down in what would be viewed as minutiae by his target audience.

While Schreiner's concise approach can be viewed as a positive, it of course is a limitation. In particular, one wonders if more introductory material would have proved beneficial. A brief comparison of this volume to recent biblical theologies displays the disparity in regards to introductory material. Schreiner's prologue is merely 4 pages with 21 footnotes. Beale's BT (2011) includes a 25-page introduction with 96 footnotes and then he includes more on introductory matters in the sixth chapter of his book. Scobie's volume (2003) has 100 pages dedicated to prolegomena with numerous in text references to other works. James Hamilton (2010) included 29 pages with 116 footnotes in his opening chapter defending his approach to BT. It is likely that Schreiner has refrained from adding a more comprehensive introduction due to his stated intended reader, yet considering the diversity of opinion on what BT actually is and how it should be done, it is likely that many seminary students and pastors would have benefited from more material justifying his approach in view of the history of the discipline and other contemporary scholars.

Refreshingly, while working through OT passages, Schreiner does not hesitate to note where the NT picks up on OT texts and reads them Christologically. The fear of some scholars with this approach is that the original historical context will be lost. Yet Schreiner includes both the more immediate context and the canonical context in his survey of the biblical books, which seems to be a consistent approach for those who affirm both the diversity of human authors and the unity of a single canon inspired by one mind.

Schreiner does not make the mistake of trying to force all the data of Scripture into a single center. Many have tried to advance a single-center approach to BT, yet the majority of scholarship has become convinced that this approach tends toward domesticating Scripture's diversity to fit the determined framework. Schreiner properly nuances his thesis by carefully stating that the kingdom of God is only one of the major themes and then traces the storyline of Scripture through the lens of this theme. For instance, after acknowledging Paul does not often use the term "kingdom," he clarifies, "It is not the thesis of this book that kingdom terminology is predominant in every biblical writer. The thesis is that conceptually and theologically Paul fits with the remainder of the NT" (p. 579). Most readers of *JETS* will have no quarrel here; it has long been pointed out that word studies cannot encompass the study of a theological theme.

Yet, in observing Schreiner's statement that the "kingdom of God" must be understood with "sufficient flexibility" (p. xii) for his thesis to advance, one becomes aware of the danger of any particular theme becoming too elastic and being stretched to include data that would likely fit better under another major theme. For instance, terms such as "new creation," "covenant," "glory," and "reconciliation" are all featured in this volume, but the biblical data that accounts for each theme is ultimately subsumed under "kingdom." In other words, once the "kingdom of God," rather than a cluster of major themes, is used as the lens to view the storyline, the risk is that "kingdom" becomes too broad and loses some of its specificity in meaning. Or to put it generally, when a single concept is flexed to include so much, the concept becomes less useful. Perhaps tracing the storyline of Scrip-

ture using a cluster of important themes, with "kingdom" undoubtedly as one of those major themes, would prevent having to use as much "flexibility" with one concept and enable readers to better appreciate other equally important themes. And since storylines themselves are composed of several themes that are linked together by a metanarrative, this approach seems preferable to using a single concept in tracing the story line (see Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology* 165). With this warning stated, it should be noted that Schreiner insists that this volume is not the final word and more BTs that use different themes are needed in order to see the storyline from different angles.

In closing, not many would dispute that writing a BT of the entire Bible is a formidable undertaking. While the debate concerning method and definition is ongoing (and needed), the constructive task of actually getting on with writing a BT—rather than simply talking about how one should go about doing it—moves the discussion forward in a positive direction. *The King and His Beauty* will serve the church well by providing a non-technical and readable BT that will help many to see the grand canonical forest from the diversity of the biblical trees.

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The Violence of Scripture: Overcoming the Old Testament's Troubling Legacy. By Eric A. Seibert. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012, 220 pp., $23.00.

Eric Seibert is Professor of Old Testament at Messiah College, a member of the pacifistic Brethren in Christ Church, a trained conflict mediator, and author of the 2009 text *Disturbing Divine Behavior: Troubling Old Testament Images of God* (Fortress). As such, Seibert is well prepared to write a text on the violence of Scripture within the OT.

In his opening chapter, Seibert explains his purpose in writing *The Violence of Scripture* is "to advocate reading the Old Testament nonviolently in an effort to overcome the Old Testament's troubling legacy" (p. 3). Furthermore, Seibert notes that he has penned this volume in order to "offer guidance for dealing with violent Old Testament texts" (p. 4). As he pursues these goals, Seibert's methodology, as well as the structure of this book, is quite logical.

The book contains three major sections. In the first part of this text (chaps. 1–3), Seibert presents what he perceives to be the problem of violence within the OT and explores the practical results of such violence. Among other things, Seibert believes the legacy of violent scriptural texts entails justifying war, legitimizing colonialism, supporting slavery, persecuting women, harming children, condemning homosexuals, and distorting God's character. Seibert argues that these problems have arisen on account of a literal—or what he terms a "compliant"—reading of the Bible. Thus, in regard to such violence, he concludes, "The Old Testament itself is part of the problem" (p. 26).

Parts 2 and 3 of *The Violence of Scripture* are closely related. In the two chapters that comprise section 2 of this book, Seibert proposes a methodology for reading

the OT nonviolently. Here Seibert advocates what he terms a "conversant" reading of the Bible that rests upon what he believes is Scripture's "functional" authority. While this hermeneutic is explained over several chapters, it essentially entails the reader conversing with the violent passages in Scripture, challenging the text, and transcending violent narratives by focusing on the nonviolent character of God in Christ.

In the final section of his book, Seibert applies his pacifist reading strategy to various passages dealing with the Canaanite genocide, warfare, and violence again women. This third section of the book contains three chapters.

As will be discussed below, many readers of *The Violence of Scripture* will disagree with portions of this book—a fact Seibert repeatedly acknowledges. Yet, regardless of the aspects of this text with which readers may disagree, all should agree that Seibert is correct in calling believers to grapple with the many OT passages that contain and even appear to prescribe violence. Moreover, Seibert is to be commended for recognizing that throughout history much violence has been perpetrated in the name of religion. To ignore such passages and events is foolish at best, and may be reckless at worst. Yet, one must keep in mind that there is a difference between religious violence that occurs *because of* the Bible and religious violence that occurs *in spite of* the Bible. Seibert may be guilty of overlooking or confusing this distinction.

While Seibert can be commended for tackling a difficult topic in *The Violence of Scripture,* there are many troubling aspects of this text about which the prospective reader should be aware. First and foremost is Seibert's view of biblical authority, which is outside the bounds of traditional evangelical theology. In an appendix Seibert is very clear about his views on biblical authority. He writes, "I think all such attempts to tether the authority of Scripture to its presumed historical accuracy and theological reliability are misguided …. While there is much that is true about the Bible, the Bible is not always a dependable guide ethically, morally, or theologically" (p. 160). The problem here is that with such a minimal view of biblical authority, Seibert's hermeneutic becomes a game in which the goal is to get the text to conform to his own pacifistic bias, thus re-making God into his own image. Indeed, Seibert writes that the OT image of God is one "that people of faith today should no longer accept" (p. 117).

A second problem with *The Violence of Scripture* is that Seibert does not adequately deal with biblical passages that appear to contradict his hermeneutic; thus, he appears to be selective and inconsistent in his arguments. Perhaps Seibert's lack of engagement with NT passages that contain or prescribe violence (e.g. Jesus' clearing of the temple and Paul's teaching that the state bears the sword) can be excused in that his text focuses on the OT. Yet, it appears that the hermeneutic of certain NT characters, which is also applied to the OT, differs from Seibert's reading strategy. For example, Jesus seems to believe that those in Noah's day, as well as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, were violently and divinely judged (cf. Matt 11:20–24; 24:36–39). Moreover, the writer of Hebrews seems to view the subduing of kingdoms, as well as valiance in warfare, to be marks of faith (cf. Heb 11:32–34). Such conclusions appear to be at odds with Seibert's hermeneutic.

In summary, *The Violence of Scripture* is an important book in that it looks at an important topic. Yet I question the ultimate impact that this book will have. Siebert's view of biblical authority renders his text unattractive to those with a less novel view of biblical authority; moreover, others have provided Christian pacifists with more consistent ways of interacting with texts in the OT that contain violence. The above critiques notwithstanding, I do think this book is a worthwhile read and cautiously commend it to those who are interested in the field.

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Genesis 1–11. Reformation Commentary on Scripture. Edited by John L. Thompson. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012, lxx + 389 pp., $50.00.

The first volume of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture, covering Genesis 1–11, is a superb tool for expositors and preachers alike. What it offers and what it intends to accomplish is delivered with thoroughness and finesse. With the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation within five years of its publication, one of our tasks as biblical scholars, theologians, and pastors ought to be to get to know the Reformers and their works, to appreciate the mighty shoulders on which we now stand, and to pass on this enthusiasm to the entirety of the Church.

As put forth in the General Introduction to the entire series, General Editor Timothy George sets out four goals to accomplish in this series of commentaries: (1) enriched contemporary biblical interpretation through exposure to the Reformation-era exegetes; (2) renewed contemporary preaching as a result of the insights gleaned from Reformation writers; (3) a greater comprehension of the history, figures, and perspectives of the Reformation; and (4) to recover, discover, or rediscover the treasure trove of robust spiritual theology and devotional passions that sprang from the Reformers' serious engagement with the Bible. All of these goals can be summarized as a commitment to the renewal of the church of our day (p. xiii).

John L. Thompson then narrows the focus as he presents his introduction to this compilation of Reformation commentators on Genesis 1–11. Thompson appropriately makes his readers know that what we have in Genesis—and the commentaries that flow from it—is vast in scope and inexhaustible in depth. We have the voice of God through Moses in his first writing, we have pre-human history as well as human prehistory, the creation of man, the fall of man, the curse of man, the proto-evangelion, the first murder, the generations of men, the judgment of deluge, the salvation through Noah, the life and generational trajectory of Noah, the rebellion of the people at the Tower of Babel, and the dividing of the languages.

Without presenting the Reformers as having a simple consensus among themselves concerning these major topics, Thompson gives a brief sketch as to their commonalities in mindset and methodology when they exegete these passages in Genesis. Such approaches generally included the indefatigable attitude of *sola Scriptura* without the fallacy of ignoring the past cloud of commentating witnesses, a

deep sense of indebtedness to the Church fathers, medieval scholars, classical Greek and Roman writers, and even the rabbis. They saw themselves as members of one continuous community with the past in understanding God through his Word. Their commentaries were neither solely for the use in the academy, or the pulpit, or the pew; they were for the church at large and could be used in all arenas. The Reformers by and large were engaged in the true, plain, simple, genuine, literal sense of Scripture. They believed the biblical authors had something to say and it was their job to present that authorial intent, and to expose that intent in order to let the text do what it was meant to do, and in so doing, prompt the readers and listeners with the task of doing that very thing.

Thompson gives us a reading protocol, a key component in approaching such a volume as this. Though Timothy George has already admitted this collection of excerpts is not necessarily for scholarly use, since a full study of a commentary or treatise in its entirety would be demanded (p. xviii), still other misuses must be avoided. The excerpt format might allow some to lapse into the malpractice of recruiting these figures' comments for exploitation or their vilification. The protocol to reading this volume—like anything else, including the Bible—is context (p. xlvi). This context is provided in several ways: (1) Timothy George's general introduction to the Reformation and key figures; (2) John Thompson's introduction to this volume on Genesis 1–11; (3) the overview that precedes the Reformers' comments of a given pericope; and (4) for the diligent, every excerpt has a footnote to follow for the full text and treatment.

The bulk of this volume is rightly the actual comments on Genesis 1–11 by the Reformers, both well known and relatively obscure, as well as quasi-Catholics such as Erasmus and Cardinal Cajetan. The format is simple and friendly. The biblical text of each pericope is provided in the ESV with an overview of the text and the Reformers' general approach to the text. Then verse-by-verse through the pericope, Thompson presents the Reformers' comments, which are given bold-faced headings appropriate to the main thrust of the entry.

What is striking is the radical difference between reading these great Reformation authors and reading modern commentators. For example, the literal six-day creation was by and large their accepted interpretation; they even denounced their usual exegetical hero Augustine on this point, who interpreted creation as being instantaneous vis-à-vis the age/day interpretation so prolific today. No, to them the six-day creation meant a six-day creation. The truth of creation was taken to be universally true in contrast to dismissing such misguidance as being a product of pre-scientific times. The justification of marriage and healthy human sexuality was mined for all its worth to counter the Catholic views on this issue, whereas today in Protestant circles, the justification of clerical marriage is simply presumed. The initial introduction of the *Tetragrammaton* in Gen 2:4 was treated as having theological importance, not as an indication of another author. The text was treated with an assumed integrity as opposed to viewing it as assembled fragments of various authorial hands. Doublets were approached as intriguing, not troubling. *Sola fide* and covenants were on the interpretive radar while such an approach in our contemporary models would be treated as betraying a bias. Interpretation employed an histor-

ical-grammatical method that led to sound theology, but today many interpretations focus more on historical and literary analysis but largely leave any theological ramifications alone. Christocentrism was an—or *the*—interpretive grid as opposed to a hermeneutic of suspicion.

With regard to the express goals of this series, indeed, it broadens our exegetical horizons to include the voices of the Reformation. It will undoubtedly find its way into the contemporary preaching of the Word, and as we are on the cusp of the 500th anniversary of the sixteenth-century Reformation, we will inevitably grow in our interest of the Reformers and their words, perspectives, theologies, and passions. What a better place to start this journey of reading the Bible with the Reformers than where the Bible begins—in Genesis. Not only is this commentary compilation of the Reformers enlightening and impactful but I must also admit that it is nothing short of—if I may use the word—fun.

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Judges. By Serge Frolov. FOTL. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013, xv + 374 pp., $55.

Much commends Serge Frolov's lively volume *Judges* in the Forms of the OT Literature series, but its most impressive achievement may well be the interaction between exegetical method and interpretive insight. In short, his book offers a carefully theorized answer to James Muilenburg's call years ago for exegetes to employ a full complement of literary devices—the process Muilenburg called "rhetorical criticism"—in order to utilize the strengths of form criticism but avoid its limitations ("Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* [1969] 1–18).

No wonder, then, that structure defines the nature of Frolov's broader concerns about Judges: (1) the book's relation to the Pentateuch (either separate from it or part of a Hexateuch [Noth], a Heptateuch [von Rad], or an Enneateuch); (2) the structure of the book itself (a three-part, self-contained, symmetrical narrative [1:1–3:6 as prologue; 3:7–16:31 as episodes; 17–21 as epilogue] or a less tightly organized but unified and literarily sophisticated part of a multi-book portion of the canon; (3) the relation of plot and theme to the books of Joshua and Samuel; and (4) the coherence and flow of the cycles involving disobedience > punishment via oppression > plea for divine help > provision of a judge-deliverer), though such cycles do not appear in chapters 17–21, of course, and Frolov rejects the chapters as an epilogue [pp. 25, 27–28]). These broader concerns appear related to Frolov's review of another, earlier commentary on Judges (*CBQ* [2009] 386–87). There, along with his commendations, arises a pointed complaint about the earlier commentator's inadequate attention to structure in Judges. Frolov's present commentary demonstrates the importance of framework, his literary exegesis challenging both academics and laity to examine far more closely the plot and its functions in the Judges text.

Frolov's *Judges,* resembling the format of the seventeen other published commentaries in the FOTL series, treats the OT book as a corpus of various forms or

structures. These forms have their own setting, genre, and intention. Following an initial chapter about the book of Judges as a whole, chapters 2–14 address the biblical text as three "Major Components" (1:1–26, 1:27–3:6, 3:7–1 Sam 7:17), with the third component further divided into ten parts. Each component and each part is analyzed in a separate chapter. Afterward follows a bountiful appendix: (1) a chapter that situates Judges within an Enneateuch (Genesis 1–2 Kings), a collection of Israel's history from the Creation through the Monarchy, with the book of Judges narrating Israel's unfaithfulness following the Conquest (book of Joshua) until the defeat of the Philistines (1 Samuel 7), a conflict unfinished by Samson but completed by the final judge Samuel; (2) a chapter that explains the use of both diachrony and synchrony in form criticism; (3) a glossary of genres; and (4) a list of supplemental books and articles. The appendix, like the entire commentary, has a distinctive way of condensing crucial information and pointing to some of its key implications, all of which sets up an engaging methodological dialogue between the older atomistic perspective in biblical scholarship and a more current holistic, literary approach.

Frolov's agile form criticism and artful discussion of rhetorical interplay within a particular structure display a welcomed fluidness. Enhancing this flow are two features, one local, the other global. Locally, a few lighter moments occur in some chapter subtitles: see chapter 6, for example ("Major Component 3, Part 2: Whacked in the Outhouse [Jdg 3:12–31]") or chapter 7 ("Major Component 3, Part 3: [Really]) Desperate Housewives [Jdg 4:1–5:31]"). A third example, from chapter 14, "Major Component 3, Part 6, Section 4," echoes either William Butler Yeats or Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe and carries a sort of double-edged wit: "Things Fall Apart (Jdg 19:1–21:25)." The subtitle may echo either Achebe's best known novel or a line (borrowed by Achebe) from Yeats's poem "The Second Coming," all of which may remind readers either that disobedience does lead to social disintegration or that each Israelite judge-deliverer represents a sort of "second coming," a return of YHWH to his people to chastise and purify them.

Globally, Frolov's classification of the book of Judges as mainly narrative draws upon crucial terms from current narrative theory: exposition, complication, resolution, and denouement (pp. 90–92). His approach here not only shows the rhetorical depth and dimension of the plot but also provides a model for analysis of other predominantly narrative OT books.

These particular strengths more than offset a couple of quibbles. One is the term "buildup of tension" (p. 90) as part of narrative theory applied to Israel's pleas to YHWH for help amidst the subsequent struggles with Midian, Amalek, Ammon, and Philistia. These clashes do increase tensions and belong to the category complication. But omitting the phrase "buildup of tension" would avoid the potentially troublesome question, "Can a conflict in a plot be something other than a complication in that plot?" Unlikely, but such a question should not even arise and thereby distract from Frolov's robust and fluid discussion of the "serial stories" that together, he observes, classify Judges as a "narrative series" (p. 91). This latter term deserves mention because it shows how Frolov simultaneously argues for a unified plot in Judges and argues against the facile (and popular) view of Judges as a self-

contained literary unit supposedly with a "harmonious internal structure" (p. 25). This thesis about internal harmony withers under the convincing expositions in this commentary, and the term "buildup of tension" does not diminish that persuasiveness.

A second minor point relates to layout and aesthetics. Chapter 1 (an overview) begins literally with five pages of bibliography beneath the title; could not this bibliography appear at the end of the chapter, as other bibliographies do in chapters 2–14? A similar question about visual appeal pertains to the Table of Contents. All chapter titles are set flush left, though a crucial premise of the commentary itself is the two major forms, that is, the three "Components" and the ten "Parts" of Component 3. Indenting the titles of the parts would distinguish them from the components, thereby reinforcing the commentator's hypothesis about the structure of Judges and at the same time supporting the integrity and importance of each form (i.e. each component and each part).

As trivial, perhaps even insensitive, as these quibbles may seem, especially today when costs of printing are somewhere above the ionosphere, these visuals communicate key theoretical issues. Interpreting Judges depends heavily upon one's assumptions about the nature of narrative and the structural relationships of individual forms to each other and to the book itself. Besides, according to the rear dust jacket, this volume is the "first full-scale form-critical treatment of Judges" in nearly a century. To be sure, a few faults in graphics will not deter academic researchers and general readers from appreciating Frolov's many suggestive analyses and insights. (Nonspecialists may want to begin by reading the succinct yet lucid "Methodological Introduction" about the nature and function of form criticism [pp. 1–10].) Indeed, the vivid explications throughout this volume represent a striking moment, exegetically and methodologically, in research in Judges, illuminating some of Israel's darkest times and their instructive value for godly thought and living today.

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1 & 2 Samuel. By Robert B. Chisholm Jr. Teach The Text Commentary Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013, 337 pp., $21.99.

Robert Chisholm Jr., Head of the Old Testament Department at Dallas Theological Seminary, offers the *1 & 2 Samuel* version of the Teach The Text Commentary Series as the first OT commentary in the series. For over a century, authors of commentaries have attempted to blend exegesis and homiletics or scholasticism and piety, with the inevitable tilt to one side of the other. Leaning over to the piety side of the scale, this series presents a bare bones exegetical analysis of 1 and 2 Samuel designed specifically for the pastor who preaches weekly.

The material is divided into five sections: Each six-page study begins with a "Big Idea," or summarizing truth. "Key Themes" are listed in a block on the second page in each section. "Understanding the Text," or exegesis, includes the struc-

ture and context, background, verse-by-verse insights, and theological insights. "Teaching the Text" includes one or two themes and applications that are linked to the Big Idea. Finally, "Illustrating the Text" includes stories or songs that help illuminate the key themes.

Chisholm follows the style of the series. This is not to say the commentary lacks in exegetical understanding. For the pastor who does not have the time nor the academic inclination to study form critical analyses or textual variants of the Stuttgartensia texts, Chisholm provides a well-rounded and neatly-packaged textual guide that may help to keep the preacher from straying too far from the text's original meaning and context.

Many attempts to shrink a computer into tablet form failed, since software designers were not able to downsize those large programs and still get them to work well. Then Apple came up with the idea to expand a smartphone up to a tablet, and the iPad changed the industry. Those small apps were able to work on a larger screen. Similarly, many editors have attempted to shrink a full-blown academic commentary into a made-for-preachers commentary, often accomplishing this by leaving out sections, such as authorship or literary-critical studies, or just offering a surface study of critical matters. Robert Chisholm, as well as the editors of the Teach The Text Series, have managed to build a practical help for pastors, not by dumbing down a commentary, but by academically expanding a devotional study. Since they are not trying to shrink or omit heavy introductions and adapt scholasticism to piety, they have the advantage of making the work look simple and easy to read.

The former instructor and student in me struggled as I read, looking for textual variations or rhetorical studies, along with documentation for every sentence. But the pastor part of me enjoyed the simplicity of reading six pages and getting it. When I prepare messages, I spend time translating the text both as a practical exercise and to make sure I get the meaning of the words in the text. But I also want to make sure I get the context of the text, and to do that I often must wade through my academic books and journals to glean a morsel of context in the midst of pages of minutia just to make sure I am on the right track.

This commentary series looked as if it could help, so I decided to preach from 1 and 2 Samuel as I was reading the book, and to use the material in preparing messages. By looking at it as a pastor, I was able to see what worked and what did not. The message on Eli worked out perfectly, since the call of the Lord to Samuel contrasted how Eli should have heard and missed it. All the material about Eli was relevant and easily presented, leading me to prepare what I consider a strong message.

The Samuel sermon worked just as well, with the focus on 1 Samuel 7. The insights given in the book were neither laborious nor useless; I gleaned a good deal from the six pages, with the exception of the "Illustrating The Text" section. (More on that later.) Little insights like the name Ebenezer used as a place of victory for Samuel and as a place of defeat for Eli, helped frame the message that the reputation of a place or an event can change from negative to positive with a choice of obedience or disobedience and the consequences.

Saul's failure to destroy all the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15 served as the text for the sermon on Saul. Chisholm's clear description of *herem* helped me explain a difficult concept.

When Saul feared Goliath, he showed why David was to be the king. The commentary on 1 Samuel 17 helped target the heart of the message on David and Goliath—that appearances do not reveal reality, only the Lord's power does.

The four-sermon series on the four men of Samuel worked well, using only Chisholm's commentary, a translation, and the original text for preparation. I appreciate the information on the text without the history of the information on the text; it gave me what I needed to know without a lot of discussion on the pros and cons of a viewpoint. For the scholar who wants to follow the decision-making process of the author, this commentary will disappoint, but for the pastor like me, it is a blessing.

The only area that I found lacking was the "Illustrating the Text" sections. The illustrations were mostly dated around World War II or older. Appropriate illustrations are difficult to discover anyway, but five out of six good sections is not bad. That is not to say they would not be useful to others, but they were not particularly useful to me.

This commentary on 1 and 2 Samuel will serve as a great tool for pastors who want to gain understanding of the text for sermon preparation, as well as for a serious church study of the texts. Like *The Interpreter's Bible* from a generation ago, this commentary series will help bridge the gap between exegesis and homiletics. I plan on purchasing and using the rest of the series as each is published.

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Job. By Tremper Longman III. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 496 pp., $44.99.

Tremper Longman, Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA, has invested much ink over his scholarly career on the subject of OT wisdom literature. In his own words, after writing a commentary on Qoheleth (NICOT), he "was hooked on wisdom literature" (p. 15). Following works on Song of Songs (NICOT) and Proverbs (BCOTWP), Longman has most recently turned his attention to the key, yet controversial, book of Job. In this final installment of the Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms series, Longman aims primarily at present and future pastors (seminary students), relegating technical discussion to footnotes, focusing on the text's meaning in its historical setting, and concluding with theological implications to show the book's continuing relevance. Personally, the author's stated hope that this volume would "stimulate reflection on and passion for this marvelous book" (p. 13) was proven true as I read through these pages during my own study of Job.

The introductory section (75 pages) covers a host of issues related to Job's composition, genre, structure, interpretation, and theology. First, Longman analyz-

es arguments for/against proposed dates of writing. He aptly notes the fallacy that Job's implied patriarchal setting (due to his intercessory role) demands an early date; if the book is inspired, could it not be written later? He also points out problems with any prehistory that separates the prose and poetry sections, as the prologue prepares for Job's dialogue with his friends (2:11–13) and the epilogue explains God's reaction to the friends' preceding counsel (pp. 24–25). In contrast, Longman focuses on Job's canonical form, while not denying the possibility of a prehistory.

Second, Longman posits that the genre of Job is a wisdom debate. From God's opening encounter with "the accuser" (1:9–11) to Job's final encounter with YHWH (38:1–42:6), he contends that the central theme of Job is wisdom. "Wisdom does not come from human beings, but God is the only wise one" (p. 32). Certainly, Job's suffering is a major theme. But as the dialogues drag on and the various parties (Job, his friends, and Elihu) restate their claims to wisdom and ridicule the wisdom of others, such futile attempts to explain the suffering of Job highlight the inadequacy of human wisdom. Third, in addition to the unity of the prose and poetry sections, debates over the book's structure often focus on two seeming anomalies: Job's wisdom psalm (28:1–28) and Elihu's dialogue (32:1–34:24). Longman uses the themes of wisdom and suffering to explain the placement and function of these sections. While some suggest that the omission of Elihu in YHWH's rebuke is an implicit affirmation, Longman argues that no response (Job or God) is "the ultimate putdown" (p. 25). And on the difference in tone and thought between Job 28 and the surrounding context, such dissonance is explained as "confusion typical for the mind of a sufferer" (p. 38).

In order to capture the contribution of this commentary, the unfolding story and message of Job will be briefly summarized. According to Longman, the prologue (Job 1–2) sets the stage to explore the book's central question, what is the source of wisdom? Job is described as "innocent and virtuous, fearing God and shunning evil" (1:1, 8; 2:3). Since the Hebrew Bible often connects purity and wisdom with prosperity and wealth (Deuteronomy 27–28; Prov 22:4), Job's great riches, good health, and large family are quite expected. Yet, the accuser's question about Job's motivation—"Does Job fear God for nothing?" (1:9)—hits at the heart of true wisdom (cf. Prov 1:7). Granted permission to test Job, the accuser strips away his wealth and his health. When Job holds fast to his integrity (1:20–22; 2:10), the test is over and the accuser is disproved. However, Job's unjust suffering merely prepares the reader for the rest of the book, raising to the fore the more important question of the source of wisdom (p. 54).

After sitting in silence with his friends, Job wishes for his own death, questioning God's wisdom and goodness in forcing those who suffer to continue in life (3:20–26). In response to this complaint, Job's friends are compelled to debate the cause of his suffering and offer a solution to his problem. With the wisdom of observation (4:8) and tradition (8:8; 15:7; 20:4), as well as a united belief in retribution theology ("sin leads to suffering, so suffering is a sign of sin," p. 159), Job's friends repeatedly return to two points: Job's suffering is caused by his own personal sin, and the solution to his problem is to repent and be restored (p. 57). While Job also believes in retribution (9:1), he holds fast to his innocence. Thus, based on his own

wisdom (13:1), he concludes that his suffering is an act of God's injustice and arbitrary treatment of people (9:22–24). With growing confidence, Job longs for the ability to argue his case with God and set him straight (9:32–35; 16:18–22; 19:25–27; 31:35–37). Yet, these three cycles of debate, a veritable contest of wisdom, bring confusion rather than resolution (p. 60).

Job begins his monologue (28:1–31:40) with an unusual moment of clarity, affirming that YHWH is the source of true wisdom (28:28). But he quickly reverts to his previous perspective, contrasting the purity and prosperity of his past life with the suffering and silence of the present (29:1–30:31). Longman attributes this seeming contradiction to the psychology of a sufferer, who "reaches a period of calm in the midst of an emotional storm only to again feel the effects of calamity and collapse back into distress" (p. 61). Job concludes his speech with a final protest of his innocence, confident in his ability to contend with God (31:35–37). Yet, before hearing God's response, Job must listen to the wisdom of Elihu (32:1–37:24). In contrast to the wisdom of experience from Job's friends, Elihu claims a spiritual basis for his wisdom (32:8). But he offers nothing new, preaching the same message of retribution and urging Job to repent and be restored. Longman posits that the lack of response to Elihu indicates the rejection of his wisdom (p. 63). In these attempts to explain Job's suffering, the message is clear: human wisdom fails miserably (p. 64).

Finally, God responds to Job's repeated request for an audience with his judge. From the whirlwind, God assaults Job with questions that he cannot answer regarding the creation of the world and the way of creatures within it (38:1–42:6). Rather than "setting God right" with regard to his suffering, Job is put in his proper place as a human creature before God (pp. 64–65). Through this display of his power and wisdom, God brings Job to repentance. He no longer seeks an answer to his suffering but simply submits to God's wise and just rule over his creation. After his repentance and intercession for his friends, God graciously blesses Job by restoring his fortunes, renewing his relationships, and replenishing his quiver (42:7–17).

This volume has much to commend. The binding is strong, the layout is clear, and the type is well-set and pleasant to read. Longman's translation is faithful to the original, with an appropriate amount of linguistic discussion. Both translation and commentary are lucid and well written, easy to follow for both scholar and pastor. Yet, the 40+ essays that cover theological implications are a valuable and unique contribution (e.g. "Godliness and Reward," "The Patience of Job," "The Aseity of God," "Speaking on God's Behalf"). These essays will be a tremendous help for pastors and teachers to consider the continuing relevance of Job today.

However, there are also a few weaknesses. The bibliography is noticeably missing some important secondary literature on Job. While Longman noted his reliance on Clines's magisterial 3-volume work (WBC) for philological issues, foundational articles from Tsevat ("The Meaning of the Book of Job," *HUCA* [1966]) and Fox ("Job the Pious," *ZAW* 117 [2005] and "Job 38 and God's Rhetoric," *Semeia* 19 [1981]) were overlooked. In addition, Longman neglected to discuss the possibility that the divine speeches could also be read with a reassuring rather than

sarcastic tone. While an element of rebuke is certainly present, YHWH's survey of creation may seek to restore Job's humility and his faith in God's wise and just rule over creation (cf. Luc's "Storm and the Message of Job," *JSOT* 87 [2000] and Fox's "God's Answer and Job's Response" *Bib* 94 [2013]). Despite the above critiques, Longman has adeptly bridged the technical-expositional divide, successfully producing a work that will be immensely helpful for scholars and pastors.

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Psalms. By John W. Hilber. Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013, 149 pp., $16.99 paper.

The goal of the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary series is to present a pictorially rich and historically accurate assessment of the background of the Scripture. This volume by John Hilber succeeds in that purpose, though the seasoned reader of OT commentaries must be mindful of this visual nature. Also, no one will find this working lacking in breadth, as Hilber incorporates a virtual exhaustive array of ANE background texts.

With three pages of text, Hilber introduces the reader to ancient hymnody, Psalm titles, and Hebrew poetics; then, he immediately begins his psalm-by-psalm commentary. In his introductory words, Hilber reveals an evangelical approach to the inspired Psalms rather than just seeing the Psalms as another part of ANE literature. Following this line of thought, Hilber often notes when the Psalms themselves point to the surpassing greatness of God over other ANE deities, and this is a high point of his work. Since this is a background commentary, the reader is right to expect focus on particular issues from each Psalm that have similarities with ANE literature and archaeology, such as the divine warrior motif, as opposed to verse-by-verse exegesis. The visual presentation of ANE artifacts is stunning, and the beginning OT student will appreciate this fact—as will veteran interpreters. The callout sections such as "A Duplicate Royal Song of Thanksgiving" (p. 17) and "Demons in the Old Testament" (p. 101) are both informative and visually appealing. Hilber also displays intellectual honesty when addressing topics (such as demons) that have little conclusive evidence from the Psalms.

While this entire work will edify the reader, the author shows particular adroitness in addressing Psalms 8, 29, 50, 74, 104, 110, 120–134, and 139. The treatment of Psalm 8 displays the place humans occupy as the crowning glory of creation (a little lower than gods) versus the ANE idea of man only being created so that the gods could be at ease. Hilber demonstrates that Psalm 29 cannot be a direct borrowing from a Canaanite hymn about Baal because "no comparative hymn exists from which Psalm 29 may have derived" (p. 33). Psalm 50 clearly shows the superiority of Yahweh to other gods in that he does not eat, and thus is not dependent on humanity for sustenance. In Psalms 74 and 104, Yahweh views Leviathan as "a mere plaything" (p. 69) whereas the Baal epic from Ugarit demonstrates that Baal earned the right to be a king by bravely fighting and killing the

mythical sea monster *Yam*. Artwork from Middle Kingdom Egypt strikingly demonstrates a young prince seated on his governess's lap with a footstool of his enemies beneath his feet. Additionally, Hilber addresses the metaphor of the right hand as a metaphor of privilege and protection in Psalm 110, which corresponds with both Assyrian and Egyptian backgrounds. Verse 4 of this Psalm denotes an eternal and kingly priesthood, which the Canaanites and Assyrians understood—and of course, which Jesus ultimately fulfills as the Davidic kingly priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The treatment of the Psalms of Ascents gives the reader an opportunity to experience vicariously either generically going up to the temple to worship or specifically singing each of these fifteen psalms on the steps going up to the temple mount. Finally, Psalm 134 demonstrates that even though other ANE deities could at times "discern the thoughts and intentions of human hearts" (p. 119), these lesser gods never equaled Yahweh in his comprehensive knowledge of the seemingly hidden recesses of the inner person.

Additional excellent features exist in this work. One of them is the cross-referencing. Hilber is thorough and precise in linking thematic and lexical elements that appear in multiple Psalms, and as stated previously, his work at showing how the Psalms demonstrate the surpassing greatness of Yahweh is commendable. He has a total of 687 endnotes, thus revealing much support for his conclusions. His bibliography is a bit brief, but adequate. This book could work well as a supplemental text in an exegesis course of the Psalter.

One item I would like to have seen is a comparison of the Babylonian theodicy texts to Psalm 73. This psalm demonstrates that even a questioning follower of God can see the correct end of the wicked rather than simply concluding that the gods have included the perversion of justice into their governance of the cosmos. Once again, Yahweh is superior, and Psalm 73 foreshadows the ultimate justice (and thankfully, also mercy) of God being dispensed.

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Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets. Edited by Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012, xxvi + 966 pp., $60.00.

The *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (*DOTP*) is the fourth and final volume of InterVarsity Press's highly regarded set on the OT. The goal of the volume and the series is to include a wide variety of views. Consequently, both evangelical and non-evangelical views are present and both Jews and Christians contribute. The justification for this is that the interpretational issues of these works is keenly debated and constantly changing, and that learning best takes places with a broader range of viewpoints (p. x).

DOTP is devoted to features specific to the prophetic literature, rather than including matters already found in typical Bible dictionaries. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order; each includes cross-references to other articles and a bibliography of significant works. All original languages are given only in transliteration.

Three indices complete the work. The Scripture index is quite extensive and includes the Apocrypha. Next is a subject index containing references to topics in the articles that might be treated in a typical Bible dictionary, but which have no separate entry in *DOTP* (e.g. "Samaria"). The final index is a list of the 113 articles.

For this review I identified eight types of entries, and will deal with each in turn. (1) Central are articles on each biblical book. This includes Daniel and Lamentations, even though they are both in the Writings according to the Jewish arrangement, because in the Christian arrangement the former is among the prophets and the latter is located after Jeremiah. The major works Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, are treated twice, first in a general introduction and second by an article on the history of interpretation. Each of the Minor Prophets receives its own treatment in a single article, but the Twelve are treated in two articles in the same manner as the Major Prophets. These articles are not uniform in the topics covered, but discuss topics special to each given book. For example, the article "Isaiah" has five sections, including "King and Messiah," where the Jeremiah article contains ten, including "Some Elements of Hope" and "The Septuagint of Jeremiah."

B. H. Lim's article on the "History of the Interpretation of Isaiah" identifies four historical eras from Second Temple to modern times. In the Second Temple period, he identifies connections between the postexilic canonical books themselves beginning with Ezra's statement in 1:1 about the Lord stirring up Cyrus (cf. Isa 41:2, 25; 45:13) and moving to Zechariah 1–8 and its extensive use of Isaiah 54. Lim includes interpretation of Isaiah by the LXX, the Qumran documents, and the NT.

(2) Theology and ethics articles includes articles on "Afterlife," "Day of the Lord," "Idols, Idolatry, God," and "Wealth and Poverty." Daniel Carroll arranges his entry, "Ethics," chronologically, analyzing various approaches to study since the twentieth century. When discussing approaches to ethics that are based on redactional decisions of the text, he insightfully warns on the one hand that such approaches require so much academic expertise that it undermines the utility of the texts for the needs of faith communities, and on the other hand that failure to tie ethical passages to the biblical text and to historical and cultural setting "reduce [the text's] ethical teaching to disembodied, transcendent moral principles" (p. 188). He concludes that future approaches will involve first a shift from the prehistory of OT texts to the time of their production, that is, the Persian period. Second, he sees a movement towards a theological interpretation of the OT as Christian Scripture and the church as the ideal sphere of the practice of these ethics. Third, he raises new topics from the prophetic books, such as ecology (pp. 191–92).

(3) Several articles treat prophets and prophecy, including "Prophecy and Psychology." "Writing and Prophecy," by Alan Millard, answers the questions of when and why prophecies were put into writing. ANE prophecies were recorded to inform rulers of the oracles and preserve the contents for posterity (pp. 885–86). Millard then turns to the implications for OT prophecy. Given that ANE evidence, when it may be known, suggests that recording was often done at the time of or very soon after the oracle was given, OT scholarship must reconsider the axiomatic notion that prophetic utterances passed through a lengthy oral stage before being

written. Furthermore, writing implies collecting, copying, and rereading, and the account in Jeremiah of the various editions of his book should be considered ordinary (pp. 885–88).

(4) On interpretation are both separate articles on modern approaches and on imagery. In the article "Hermeneutics," Richard Briggs reviews hermeneutical frameworks, modes of reading the prophetic texts, modern approaches to reading the prophets, and proper principles of application to today. Within the modern approaches, Briggs discusses texts as performative actions. He follows scholars such as W. Houston, who distinguishes the illocutionary act (the intent of a prophetic judgment speech) from the perlocutionary act (the wide range of possible response by the hearers). Reading in this way helps the interpreter to explain why Jonah's implied warning to Nineveh in the form of a judgment speech elicits a response from the audience that only apparently renders the proclamation as failed (pp. 326–27).

(5) *DOTP* has articles on languages and genres. John Cook's article "Hebrew Language" is organized around three topics: poetry, language and composition, and temporal orientation. Cook describes the difference between poetry and prose based on the "prose particle count" method, alerting the reader that statistical results also produce a large category of ambiguous passages. The result is that the versions that graphically distinguish poetry often differ. Furthermore Cook points out that scholars who linked prose as literary and poetry as oral sometimes oversimplified matters and drew false conclusions (pp. 307–8). There is a useful discussion of the difficulty of understanding and rendering the Hebrew Perfect and Imperfect forms. He takes the (common but debatable) position that tense is not encoded in the morphology; nevertheless, he concedes they are used as "default" temporal indicators.

(6) Articles exist on personages and places such as "Babylon," "Divine Council," "Mountain," and "Nations." Samuel Meier's article "Angels, Messenger, Heavenly Beings" devotes a section to the Angel of the Lord (pp. 25–26), explaining the occurrences in the Hebrew Bible and the later interpretations in the LXX and Church fathers. David Firth's article "Messiah" is a must read, helping the reader come to grips with themes and theology that help Christian readers of the OT read in context.

(7) Axiology receives attention in such articles as "Peace, Rest" and "Warfare and Divine Warfare." Tchavdar Hadjiev in "Honor and Shame" (pp. 333–38) begins with a list of the Hebrew vocabulary. Honor and shame are on display in judgment and salvation and are primarily limited to the present world. But honor and shame exist also in divine-human relationships. Shame represents a disruption in this relationship; honor is the normal way the relationship functions. Honoring the Lord is done objectively in cult signaling human appreciation of the divine and subjectively by attitudes of submission and adoration. The Lord also honors his people by bestowing prosperity and dominion over oppressors. Hadjiev distinguishes shame from guilt in that the former depends upon how others view a person rather than on the actual rightness of the person's actions. Guilt is more objective and may result in shame, if his conscience is attuned to that standard of right-

ness. This leads into the final section on the honor of God. The Lord is the only one having a claim to honor, and this is due to his holiness, power, and absolute dominion. This stands in stark contrast to arrogant humans. God cannot, therefore, be shamed on the basis on his own actions or failures, because his actions are perfect and right and his plans never fail. However, he can be shamed in the sense that his people's shameful behavior and their punishment can harm his reputation in the eyes of the world. His honor to the world matters, because he wants to have relationship with the Gentiles, too.

A final category (8) is canon and text, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. Russell Fuller, "Text and Textual Criticism" (pp. 775–81), treats general matters, Qumran manuscripts, and tools for scholarly research. After mentioning the role of versions, he treats chiefly the Hebrew witnesses. He gives a useful explanation of the large issues of the LXX witness to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Fuller concludes with a useful list of scholarly resources.

DOTP has references to rabbinic literature scattered about, but no entries prominently feature rabbinic interpretation. Even Lim's article mentioned above, where rabbinic interpretation is of great interest, discusses rabbinic literature only with respect to canon and composition, not theology. In fact, rabbinic literature is not even indexed (nor is patristic literature, for that matter).

DOTP is an excellent resource for study of the prophetic literature. The articles are written at a level difficult for lower undergraduate students, but certainly usable for advanced undergraduates and all seminarians. Preachers as well as scholars who read *DOTP* will grow in exegetical and theological awareness.

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Isaiah 40–55. By R. Reed Lessing. Concordia Commentary Series. St. Louis: Concordia, 2011, 737 pp., $49.99.

R. Reed Lessing is Professor of Exegetical Theology and director of the graduate school at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. He received degrees from St. John's College (B.A.), and Concordia Seminary (M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.). He also served in pastorates for some 13 years. The book is part of the Concordia Commentary series that the publisher says endeavors to "enable pastors and teachers of the Word to proclaim the Gospel with greater insight, clarity, and faithfulness to the divine intent of the biblical text" (book jacket). Further, the series interprets Scripture as a "harmonious unity centered in the person and work of Jesus Christ …. Every passage bears witness to the Good News that God has reconciled the world to Himself through our Lord's life, death, and resurrection" (book jacket).

This is an exceptional commentary and is to be highly commended and recommended. Any serious student of Isaiah, and particularly of Isaiah 40–55, would benefit from the accessible scholarship in this volume. Lessing demonstrates a skilled touch with the text, offering his own translation, and is clearly comfortable in dealing with the vocabulary, syntax, and thematic diagramming that provide the

bases for his interpretations. His analogy of a "sonata allegro" is well considered and shows an extensive and intensive grasp of the text:

> The main theme of Isaiah 40–55 is stated in 40:1–2 and is then repeated and developed throughout the 16 chapters. The way in which Yahweh comforts His people, speaks to Jerusalem's heart, ends her warfare, and forgives her sins comes through the second topic of the Suffering Servant, which complements the main idea. Yahweh's plan of comfort through his Servant is further developed as other themes are explored such as Cyrus, creation, idolatry, and mission. These sections come in unpredictable places and are connected to the main composition while also distinct from it. Other multiple keys enhancing the composition are employed as *Stichwörter*, or "catchwords." They include "arm," "peace/well-being," "everlasting," "covenant love," and "gather." (p. 49)

Lessing highlights the "Servant Songs" (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12) and effectively unveils that is it Jesus of Nazareth who entirely fulfills the four servant songs. It is a masterful treatment: "While this commentary considers *typology* to be the hermeneutic employed by the NT citations of 42:1–9, *rectilinear prophecy* defines the manner in which the NT understands the Servant in the Second, Third, and Fourth Songs. This Servant is Jesus, and Jesus alone" (p. 83).

There are substantial bibliographical resources cited—some 400 entries. Lessing weaves an effective argument for the literary, historical, canonical, and poetical designs of Isaiah in general and of this section in particular. He also offers a succinct summary of the historical theologies as they touch on Isaiah. The Index of Subjects (28 double-column pages) is detailed and complete. The Index of Passages (36 triple-column pages) is both useful and illustrative as to the attention the author has given to all of Scripture.

Lessing always seems to write with clear, confident connections to the greater context of Isaiah and to the whole Bible. He does so without slighting either the near or far view of Scripture's scope and sequence. This is not a small thing and is one of the great strengths of this commentary.

In the setting of such earnest scholarship it is also refreshing to read: "Commentary writers are not doing the primary work of the church. To import a war analogy, the front line of the battle is taking place as pastors preach and teach the gospel and administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper …. Authors of commentaries are behind the front lines, assisting soldiers to be fully equipped with their chief offensive weapon: 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God'" (p. 11).

In light of that statement, this volume serves as an exegetical and hortatory resource for preachers and teachers. It would serve the beginner well but also the seasoned expositor. There is a considerable devotional thread woven throughout the volume and Lessing has managed to avoid the pedantic pitfalls of commentaries that conceal more than they reveal. The design—to make this commentary useful—may also explain the few faults that might be found in this volume. Minor to be sure, but they are noticeable.

At times the commentary takes a colloquial turn with a penchant for cliché (e.g. "the tables will be turned'), but on the whole this may help expositors, espe-

cially inexperienced ones, and so that mutes the criticism. In addition, stylistically, the 15 thematic icons are not different enough in appearance and at times seem to clutter the margin. However, repeated use would make them more identifiable and effective. The thematic name of each icon listed as it appears throughout the volume would enhance a future edition.

One further caveat: this volume is distinctively Lutheran, specifically conservative Missouri Synod Lutheran. For example, considering election the author says, "Jesus is the Elect One and through His election, the baptized are elected before the creation of the world" (p. 220). In Isaiah 43, the author finds assurance that salvation comes "through the Word and the saving Sacrament of Baptism" (p. 319). To Lutherans the volume's denominational distinctive may prove an advantage; to others perhaps a distraction.

Lessing concludes his treatise with powerfully evocative praise:

> Throughout Isaiah 40–55, creation celebrates Yahweh's restoring gift of *shalom*. "Sing to Yahweh a new song …. Let the wilderness and its towns lift up [their voice]" (42:10–11). The cadence is picked up in 44:23 and again 49:13. Why is the music so loud? Because Yahweh has condemned Babylon, "the great prostitute who defiled the earth by her immorality. And He has avenged the blood of His servants from her hand" (Rev 19:2; see Isaiah 47). The world empire is deposed and 'the Lord God Almighty reigns' (Rev 19:6; see Isa 52:7).
>
> The opening words of Isaiah 40–55 ring with hope: "comfort, comfort my people" (40:1). In the closing words of Isaiah 40–55, Yahweh promises "[My Word] will do that which I please and it will accomplish [that purpose for] which I send it" (55:11). The ancient promises to Abraham and Sarah will be repeated. The exodus of Moses will happen again. The covenant of mercy with David will be renewed! Eden and with it all creation will be restored. Because of Christ's shed blood and His resurrection power, we have this prophetic Word made more certain. When He *returns*, we will be led forth into the new Jerusalem, where everything will be marked by *shalom*. (p. 671)

This is a commentary that draws the reader more deliberately into the Scripture it seeks to exposit. It makes the original text more accessible and understandable. It never attempts to undermine or obfuscate the message the Holy Spirit has given. Lessing never loses sight of the metanarrative of redemption and emphatically keeps the glory of God at the center of the study.

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Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary. By Shalom Paul. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xiii + 714 pp., $68.00 paper.

In the present commentary, Shalom Paul demonstrates his exegetical, philological, and literary aptitude to translate and interpret Isaiah 40–66, also known as Deutero-Isaiah. The commentary is divided into three parts: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary. The commentary also includes selected bibliographies and indices.

The first part, "Introduction," provides an opportunity for readers to hear Paul's introductive voice regarding Isaiah 40–66. Paul introduces his opinion against the theory of Trito-Isaiah (Isaiah 56–66). According to Paul, many scholars distinguish between 40–55 and 56–66 by arguing the different emphasis between the two, the different geographical locus of the prophecies, the difference regarding the redeemer and redemption, and so on. In contrast, Paul maintains that chapters 40–66 comprise one coherent work composed by a single anonymous prophet. Chapters 40–55 and 56–66 have been written as one unit and added after the work of Isaiah ben Amoz of Jerusalem (Proto-Isaiah, p. 1). To support his argument, Paul points to numerous terms and ideas that originate in 40–55 and are repeated in 56–66 (pp. 8–9) and such shared ideas and terminologies imply a single author, since the author "may very well cite" his earlier comments (p. 9). Paul introduces the following shared ideas in the introductive section: "Consolation of the People," "The Expectation of an Ingathering," "Jerusalem as 'Daughter of Zion'," "An 'Eternal Covenant Made between the Lord and His People," "Images of the Lord as a Female Figure," "An Ambivalent Attitude toward the Nations," "Shared Expressions of 'the Lord's Presence,' 'His Presence,' 'My Presence,' 'A Light of Nations,' 'For the Light of Peoples,' and 'And Nations Shall Walk by Your Light.'" Continually, Paul finds the image of God as creator of a new heaven and a new earth employed in both parts of the book (pp. 10–11).

Particularly, Paul shows the various potential meanings of the terms "*RISHONOT"* and "*HADASHOT"* (his transliteration of the Hebrew). By introducing fruitful meanings of the two terms, Paul relates God's deeds to 'the new things' (p. 17). In this way, Paul effectively demonstrates his ability to unveil key concepts, ideas, and understandings of terms, phrases, and sentences in Deutero-Isaiah. The introduction section also displays Paul's distinctiveness in finding inner-biblical traditions and influences of Deutero-Isaiah in his reading of Deutero-Isaiah. Paul discovers inner-biblical traditions such as God's victory over the primeval dragon and sea prior to creation, the tradition of the Garden of Eden, the tradition of the flood, the tradition of Abraham and Sarah as the progenitors of the nation, the name "Jacob," which is one of the most commonly used epithets to address Israel in Deutero-Isaiah, and the tradition regarding Israel's descent to Egypt (pp. 44–45).

Besides inner-biblical traditions, Paul introduces inner-biblical influences of Deutero-Isaiah. His unique ability to discover the Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic influence on Deutero-Isaiah and the influences of Proto-Isaiah, Jeremiah, Psalms and the parallel relationship between the book of Lamentations and Deutero-Isaiah, and the relationship with other ancient extra-biblical texts by finding similar or same words, phrases, sentences, and idiomatic usage provides his readers with valuable insight on uncovering similarities, disparities, and function of (Hebrew) words, phrases, sentences, and idioms in Deutero-Isaiah and enhances their readings and interpretation of Deutero-Isaiah. Clearly, Paul's distinctive exegetical and philological abilities are expanded in the commentary section.

As Paul mentions in the preface of the book, the uniqueness of this commentary is "the exegesis of the Hebrew text with its emphasis on the philological, poetic,

literary, linguistic, grammatical, historical, archaeological, ideational, and theological aspects of the prophecies, in which every word, phrase, clause, and verse is examined and explicated, and … aided by both inner-biblical allusions, influences, and parallels, and extrabiblical sources, primarily from Akkadian and Ugaritic literature" (p. ix). After his own translation of Isaiah 40–66, his commentary was sufficient to evince his statement in the preface.

The commentary section clearly highlights Paul's discoveries of the themes of each chapter by examining its literary structure and the repetition of key words (*Leitmotif*). Particularly, Paul begins his interpretation of each chapter from chapter 47 to chapter 66 by introducing the main themes of the chapters. Although he does not dedicate space to mention the main themes of the chapters from chapter 40 to 46, he explicitly delivers the thematic information of each chapter in his exegesis. The main themes and thematic information seem to be related to two key terms introduced in the introduction section: "*RISHONOT"* and *"HADASHOT"* ("former things [that God did]" and "new things [that God will do]"). Second or Deutero-Isaiah begins with words of consolation and encouragement (p. 127). The words of consolation and encouragement convey God's redemptive work and deeds and his creative acts for new things. Exclusively, God's redemptive work and deeds are validated by his accurate and truthful prediction of the future deliverance of his people in Isaiah 44. God's accurate prediction for the future for his nation and people delivers his uniqueness (p. 229). It is God alone who can predict the future with absolute accuracy as well as fulfill the prediction.

In terms of interpretation, Paul exudes his copious knowledge of the Isaiah scrolls from Qumran and exceptional aptitude to find meanings of *hapax legomena* through his readings of other biblical sources (e.g. Job, Jeremiah, and Psalms), other versions (LXX, Vulgate, Peshitta, and Targum), and extrabiblical sources (Akkadian and Ugaritic literature). The paralleled and comparative studies for key words, phrases, and terms and especially, *hapax legomena* help to provide a clear understanding of ambiguous readings in Deutero-Isaiah.

Readers may appreciate Paul's unique and distinctive reading of key words, terms, and *hapax legomena*, but they may want to see Paul's further study of those key words and/or terms to discover any ideological or theological meanings or implications in the key words or terms in Deutero-Isaiah. Paul's interpretive reading of Deutero-Isaiah in the commentary could be expanded to consider the dialogical interaction of key words, phrases, or terms in Deutero-Isaiah with paralleled words, phrases, or terms in other sources and the different possible implications of words, phrases, or terms in a different context. For instance, Paul uses the image of cloud in Job 7:9 and 30:15 to explain the image of God's pardoning of transgressions in Isa 44:22. However, the question is whether the parallelism is legitimate or ideologically correct. Since these passages reside in different contexts, the implications of the image of a cloud in Isa 44:22 and Job 7:9; 30:15 might be different, even though they seem to be delivering a similar meaning. Consideration should be given to the possibility of different meanings of words and terms in different contexts.

In summary, Paul's commentary of Isaiah 40–66 is an excellent, useful, and valuable source to advance scholars' and research students' exegetical, philological, and literary reading of Isaiah 40–66. In particular, his distinctive works in finding similar, paralleled, and repeated words and phrases in Deutero-Isaiah from other biblical and extra-biblical sources in the commentary may advance intertextual studies in the scholarship on Isaiah 40–66. The intertextual studies of Isaiah 40–66 with other sources may serve as an impetus to further the interpretation of the book of Isaiah in biblical scholarship in general.

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The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction. By Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, xxiv + 872 pp., $49.99.

The George Ladd Professor Emeritus of New Testament at Fuller Seminary has crowned his illustrious career by producing a magnificent NT introduction. Covering all the expected topics concerning the authorship, date, and circumstances of each of the NT books, Hagner adds a major "value-added" bonus by delving deeply into the key themes of each work, as well as providing one or more entire chapters on OT and intertestamental background; the historical Jesus; source, form and redaction criticism; the gospel genre; the life and theology of Paul; Paul as writer and missionary; Paul and Jesus; pseudonymity; the tendencies of early Catholicism; the transmission of the text; and the formation of the canon.

For those who want striking new insights, they will not find them here. This is the distillation of a lifetime of reflection, and Hagner never adopts a position that is not well supported in scholarship. What one does typically find, however, is an acknowledgment of major alternatives, judicious interaction with them, and cautiously worded conclusions. One view is often described as "slightly" preferable with a second one being "very possible." The perspectives are all within the broad range of what is generally considered evangelical, even if in a few cases Hagner tentatively opts for pseudonymous authorship. However, he stresses that this is not the kind of pseudonymity that was intended to deceive, merely the work of a disciple of an apostle or other Christian leader giving credit to the original fount of his ideas. One may decide that the arguments for pseudonymity are not convincing for a given book of the Bible, but, in an era when high-profile scholars like Bart Ehrman seem to be joining hands with those conservatives who see all pseudonymity as forgery, it is good to be reminded that there are scholars like Hagner who argue for a quite different take while also maintaining a high view of Scripture.

The constraints of this review make it impossible even to summarize the wealth of information contained in this splendid tome. Some highlights, however, may be listed. The Christian faith "rests squarely on the reality of historical events" (p. 1), necessitating both historical and critical study. The Gospels and Acts are equally historical and theological without either cancelling out the other. The overlap of the ages forms a rubric that allows us to summarize NT theology. What is

most debilitating in the quest for the historical Jesus is the shift of the burden of proof from the skeptic to the believer: "Such a negative bias applied to historical sources would make the historical study of antiquity practically impossible" (p. 96).

Recent debates about redaction criticism are best resolved by a "both-and" position: the evangelists wrote both for specific local communities and for a wider Christian readership. The two-source hypothesis remains the most convincing solution to the Synoptic problem, but affirming Q scarcely enables us to say much more about it. Mark and Matthew were most likely written before AD 70, probably in the 60s, while Luke seems to be later, in the 70s, especially because of his rewording and explaining of the abomination of desolation (Luke 21:20). The key to the secrecy motif in the Gospels, particularly in Mark, involves the paradoxical nature of a suffering Messiah. Matthew's understanding of the fulfillment of prophecy frequently includes "a divinely intended correspondence between God's saving activity at different times in the history of salvation, with the earlier foreshadowing the latter" (p. 201). Whatever sense of delay Luke may have felt in Christ's return only fueled his conviction of its imminence.

The scales tip slightly in the direction of the traditional authorship claims for the four Gospels, though John has been put in its final form by his disciples. Under the inspiration of the Spirit, the Fourth Gospel reflects on the historical Jesus more from a post-resurrection perspective than do the Synoptics, but there is no fundamental contradiction between the portraits in the two. A plausible date for John falls in the 90s.

If the Synoptic Gospels focus on the announcement of the kingdom of God, Acts highlights the means by which the kingdom comes, and the epistles demonstrate the fruit of the kingdom. In Acts, "Luke marks out a new time frame, the age of the church as an eschatological age, an age of the new, Spirit-endowed community" (p. 326). The heart of Acts discloses the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles. Yet the church age begins with Jews believing they are creating true Judaism, and it will end with a great outpouring of faith among ethnic Jews.

The apostle *par excellence* to the Gentiles is, of course, Paul, but he must be interpreted in categories that are fundamentally Jewish. His conversion and his call are one and the same. Paul is familiar with numerous teachings of Jesus; there is more continuity between Jesus and Paul theologically than is often realized. While the "new perspective on Paul" has formed a helpful corrective to our understanding of first-century Judaism, Paul speaks of the end of more than just the Law's badges of national righteousness, at least as the covenant to which God's people are obligated. Paradoxically, it is only as Christians are free from the age of the Law that they are empowered by the Spirit to pursue righteousness more effectively. Paul's letters adopt various Hellenistic forms, especially the epistle to the Galatians (as in Betz), but they are never bound by them.

Galatians is more likely dated early (48 or 49) and addressed to South Galatia. First Thessalonians depicts a post-tribulation rapture, and 2 Thessalonians should be viewed as Pauline, written just a few months after the first epistle. The Corinthian correspondence discloses four letters from Paul altogether, the letter of 1 Cor 5:9, 1 Corinthians, the painful or sorrowful letter, and 2 Corinthians. Chapters 10–

13 could be a fifth letter but more likely reflect what Paul wrote after receiving fresh news about problems in Corinth and before completing what we call his second epistle. Paul developed his theology most systematically and in greatest detail in Romans because he had not previously ministered in Rome and because the church there needed greater unity after the return of the Jews expelled under Claudius.

Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are best viewed as coming from a Roman imprisonment in the early 60s. Colossians is probably authentic, written just before the devastating earthquake in Colossae in AD 61. Ephesians, on the other hand, is probably pseudonymous, written by one of Paul's followers, closely imitating Colossians but without its situation-specific information. The Pastorals were even more likely penned by someone other than Paul but within the main orbit of his influence, quite possibly Luke. The restrictions in 1 Tim 2:12 are due either to situation-specific circumstances in Ephesus or meant to prevent women (and men) more timelessly from teaching heresy.

Hebrews is clearly not Pauline, and we have no way of determining the author. It does appear to have been written prior to the onset of the Neronic martyrdom of Christians (Heb 12:4) in Rome and addressed to Jewish believers in that community. James is a general treatise promoting righteousness among Jewish Christians everywhere, most likely from the half-brother of Jesus and therefore prior to that James's death in AD 62. When one defines the key words properly, there is no contradiction between James and Paul on faith, works, and justification. First Peter is authentically Petrine; 2 Peter is not. The three epistles of John may well come from John, likewise Jude from another half-brother of Jesus. Revelation is most likely from a different John. Amillennial interpretation makes most sense of the apocalypse, and Hagner repeatedly unleashes his only strong rhetoric anywhere in his book against dispensationalist interpretation of Revelation, without differentiating among the various kinds of dispensationalism.

One could have hoped for some discussion of the integrating theme of spiritual warfare that Clinton Arnold has repeatedly highlighted as tying Ephesians in directly with circumstances in Ephesus (Acts 19:13–19). It was surprising to see no mention of Luke Timothy Johnson's use of mandate and personal parenetic letters to defend the authenticity of the Pastorals. James is almost certainly not a general encyclical, given all the pointed information that deals with the rich discriminating against the poor day-laborers. However, these are comparatively minor complaints in light of the wealth of extremely helpful and thorough discussions more generally.

Extremely full and helpful bibliographies also appear at the end of each chapter, right up through works published in early 2012. Still, they, too, contain some curious omissions, especially among the commentaries—most notably Stein's BECNT on Mark, Garland's ZECNT on Luke, Ciampa and Rosner's PNTC on 1 Corinthians, and McKnight's NICNT on James, each arguably the best current evangelical commentary on the NT book treated. Still, the undertaking was immense; perhaps such omissions are inevitable. We remain in Hagner's debt for a

magisterial and measured treatment of far more topics than in any other "introduction" to the NT currently available.

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The Prophet Jesus and the Renewal of Israel: Moving Beyond a Diversionary Debate. By Richard Horsley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, vi + 161 pp., $20.00 paper.

Richard Horsley, distinguished professor emeritus of liberal arts and the study of religion at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, is a prolific author with numerous books behind him. Within the last decade or so, he has published an array of books arguing for a distinct anti-imperial aim in the mission of Jesus utilizing historical reconstructions, new definitions of main categories, and text readings. In his new book, *The Prophet Jesus and the Renewal of Israel*, Horsley summarizes much of his earlier work in a well-structured 160-page presentation of his major viewpoints.

Horsley's aim is not a modest one. He wishes to tackle the entire field of historical Jesus research, starting with Schweitzer through to the Jesus seminar, and to replace it with a "third way" reading of Jesus that avoids what he claims to be two thoroughgoing problems in historical Jesus research, namely: (1) the dichotomy between a non-apocalyptic and an apocalyptic vision of Jesus; and (2) the Western split between religion and politics that, combined with the individualism of Western thought, leaves us with a picture of a non-engaged Jesus focused on the inner or non-earthly life. We need to "cut through such synthetic and often essentialist scholarly constructs" (p. 153) of apocalypticism, Judaism, Christianity, and the like and to free Jesus from the "grandiose Christocentric, Germanocentric, and Eurocentric" (p. 150) straightjacket that Jesus has been clothed in since Schweitzer.

Horsley's alternative proposal is presented already in the title: Jesus was a prophet who aimed at renewing lsrael. That is, in reworking themes from the Israelite tradition like those in Amos and Jeremiah, Jesus aimed at renewing the Galilean and Judean village communities facing disintegration in the wake of the Roman imperial suppression whether in the form of puppet rulers like Antipas or the corrupt priesthood in Jerusalem. Jesus engaged his time and place and was not a "religious" messiah dying an atoning death to free his disciples from this doomed world in a soon-to-happen apocalyptic scenario. At the most, Jesus was a martyr who took on the full force of the imperial oppression and died a "political" death on the cross in order to disarm the Roman force from within: "The crucified Jesus … became a martyr for the cause of his renewal of Israel under the direct rule of God" (p. 156).

The book falls in two parts. The first (chaps. 1–5) is reserved for a presentation and critique of the research positions that Horsley wishes to overthrow, whereas the second (chaps. 6–10) outlines Horsley's own views. First (chap. 1), Horsley deals with the apocalyptic view as presented by Schweitzer and

followed by Bultmann, which he finds to suffer from two basic weaknesses. Neither of them was able to take Jesus' national agenda into account. Israel and the twelve tribes are lost in Schweitzer's cosmological catastrophe leading to a new aeon. The second is the preoccupation with isolated sayings of Jesus, which of course came to be the hallmark of Bultmann's form criticism. Jesus' agenda for social reform and equality more or less vanished into the sky (p. 12). Horsley admits that some of the weaknesses in Schweitzer's original apocalyptic view are bettered in renewed neo-apocalyptic presentations, especially that by Dale Allison, but the thorough critique is upheld (chap. 3). The most acute problem is the wrong reading of the apocalyptic texts, which according to Horsley are not to be taken as literal descriptions of coming events at the end of days, but rather as subtle critiques prompted by actual historical crises and aimed at known historical suppressive rulers.

Horsley also shows no mercy on the non-apocalyptic view (chap. 2), which, as presented by the Jesus seminar and especially John Dominic Crossan, operates according to Horsley entirely within the same conceptual understanding of apocalypticism. The only difference is that Crossan *et al.* filter out all the apocalyptic sayings of Jesus from their database subscribing them to John the Baptist or the later church, so that they are presented as the "apocalyptic foils" of the real historical Jesus, who in stark contrast envisioned a this-worldly sapiental kingdom.

Finally, in part 1, Horsley critiques the way in which apocalyptic texts generally are understood for being too dependent on Schweitzer's view of apocalypticism as an end of the world scenario. Horsley insists that the apocalyptic texts of Daniel, 1 Enoch, and the like are thorough prophetic and political in aim and language: "The whole tradition of such oracles was sharply political, pronouncing condemnation of oppressive domestic or foreign rulers and the people's deliverance from such rulers … and it was not intended to be taken literally" (p. 42).

Horsley's triple critique of the apocalyptic Jesus, the non-apocalyptic Jesus, and the prevailing understanding of apocalypticism in the first place paves the way for the second part of the book presenting Horsley's alternative reading, which stands on three main pillars: The first concerns Horsley's view of the history of Israel and especially Galilee. Horsley has for almost three decades argued for an increasing "spiral of violence" resulting in widespread popular unrest. His recent focus on empire reinforces this even more, pointing out how for example Herod Antipas laid crushing burdens on local Galilean village life. Unfortunately, Horsley does not deal with the bulk of the archaeological and historical research on Galilee at the time of Jesus, which points in the exact opposite direction.

The second pillar is Horsley's analysis of two major sources to the story of Jesus: Mark and Q. It is an interesting move within historical Jesus research to see an argument for establishing the aims of Jesus through a narrative reading of complete sources rather than searching for authentic layers via different criteria. Horsley's main point is to avoid a modernistic reading of the sources producing the "unengaged Jesus." Instead the sources should be read on the background of

imperial pressure. What Horsley finds is that Mark and Q share one thing: the picture of Jesus as a prophet protesting against injustices. Bypassing the atoning elements in Mark (10:45; 14:14, especially), Horsley concludes that the picture in front of us in Mark as well as in Q is one of a Jesus who neither expected the end of the world nor taught people to live wisely, but of a prophet who reacted strongly against the disintegration of the small Israelite communities.

The final pillar consists of two chapters (chaps. 9 and 10) in which Horsley reads the life of Jesus as it unfolds from Galilee to Jerusalem by determining what he believes to have been Jesus' primary aim and mission. The points presented have by now all been stated more than twice, and in a sum, Horsley wants to exchange messiah for martyr, apocalypticism for empire-critique, and savior for renewer.

In evaluation, the following may be said. First, Horsley's work is important. His call for cutting through "synthetic and often essentialist scholarly constructs" (p. 153) should not be taken lightly. The recent focus on imperial and post-colonial readings are at the very least a help to deal with some of the ways our Western culture blindfolds our reading of Scripture. Second, there is much to be appreciated in Horsley's reading of the Jesus-story. Jesus was a prophet who engaged the actual historical place and people he lived in and among. However, third, Horsley's presentation of his case in this book is so full of corners cut that it will not convince many who are not already convinced beforehand. The soteriology embedded in Mark will not go away that easily. While the cross in Mark surely embeds a horizontal protest against imperial injustices—and we probably need to rebalance our presentation of the cross with "horizontal" perspectives—it is simply not convincing to skip the entire setup in Mark presenting the cross-event in "vertical" Christological, kingly, and atoning terms throughout (10:45; 14:24, 62; 15:32; 15:39; etc.). The "normal" way of dispensing with this perspective is to call it a later gloss or churchly layer. Since Horsley does not wish to go down that route, thereby becoming guilty of cutting the sources into bits and pieces, which he so strongly criticizes others of doing, he more or less plainly ignores these "vertical" parts of the cross-event. Fourth, from a historical viewpoint, it is a major flaw in Horsley's presentation that he completely lacks a discussion of other presentations of Galilee not to mention a discussion of the growing awareness of purity concerns at the time of Jesus as attested in the widespread use of ritual baths and more so. I would like to refer the reader to my own recent discussion of this topic ("Purity and Politics in Herod Antipas's Galilee: The Case for Religious Motivation," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 11 [2013] 3–34). I just wish to state here that I find Horsley's presentation too highly one-sided and that it ignores the elements that are not easily explained as some kind of covert forms of imperial resistance.

Finally, do I recommend this book? Yes, especially to the reader who wishes to find a *tour-de-force* in Horsley's theology. The book builds on earlier and more profound treatments and should be viewed as a semi-popular presentation. With this in mind, Horsley's book is important and could function as a road sign to one of the important NT questions in the years to come: Is the Gospel story originally

not intended to tell about the atoning death of a messiah but rather intended to inspire resistance against evil empires and oppression wherever these might be?

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Jesus und die Steuerfrage: Die Zinsgroschenperikope auf dem religiösen und politischen Hintergrund ihrer Zeit. By Niclas Förster. WUNT 1/294. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012, ix + 418 pp., €114.00.

This careful and thorough work (*Habilitationsschrift*, Wilhelms-Universität Münster, 2009/2010) represents investigation of the historical Jesus of the very best kind. The question is limited to the pericope concerning the question of paying tax to Caesar. The thesis itself is straightforward. In responding to the question of whether or not to pay tax to Caesar, Jesus not only escapes entrapment by his adversaries, he exposes their acceptance of Roman authority and thus their hypocrisy in raising the issue. That Jesus' adversaries accepted Roman authority was manifest in the denarius that was required for the tribute (cf. Matt 22:19), which obviously bore the image of Tiberius (Mark 12:16 and par.). In presenting the coin to Jesus, his adversaries had to handle the coin, to look upon it, and to do so openly before others. It was in this action that their acceptance of Roman authority was manifest; it violated the radical interpretation of the prohibition of images to which the Zealot-movement adhered.

A central element of Förster's thesis is that an increasingly radicalized understanding of the biblical prohibition of images took place within the Roman period, as a reaction against the threat of syncretism and the Roman power that furthered that syncretism. The rejection of imagery already had precedents in the Hasmonean coinage, which employed only symbolic objects. Of course, there were pagan coins in circulation among Jews that bore images not merely of human figures, but of gods. The Tyrian drachma is a well-known example. However, subjugation to Rome brought a clear and present offense for Jews, as is apparent, for example, in the standards that Roman soldiers bore, to which they made sacrifices, and which provided more than one occasion of confrontation with Jews. In an entirely plausible manner, Förster attributes a strict rejection of images and therefore of the Roman denarii required for payment of the head tax to the Zealot movement, springing from Judas the Galilean (and Sadduk the Pharisee), who led the revolt at the first census.

While Josephus mentions nothing of this motive among the Zealots, Förster brings forward the evidence of Hippolytus's elaboration of Josephus's description of the Essenes. Although the expansion divides the Essenes into four groups in a confused manner, it intriguingly speaks of a party of Jews who go beyond the measure of biblical requirements in that they will not touch a coin, since one must not either touch an image or look upon it, nor will they pass through a gate that is adorned with images. The text of Pseudo-Hieronymous, *de haeresibus Judaeorum*, of

which Förster provides the first critical edition (pp. 282–300), in a similar way speaks of the party of "the Galileans" who say that Christ has come and has taught them not to call the emperor "Lord" nor to use his money (p. 282). In testing and corroboration of these accounts, which in Förster's judgment likely go back to earlier accounts by Justin Martyr and Hegesippus, he richly documents the increased Jewish aversion to images in this period from the evidence of Roman awareness of Jewish sensibilities, Hellenistic and Roman coinage, explicit reports of Josephus and Tacitus, as well as the destruction of images in both the first and second Jewish revolts, including the evidence at both Qumran and Masada of the defacing of pagan coins during the first war. Especially when one takes into account rabbinic acceptance of Roman or other pagan coinage after the second revolt, it appears quite likely that Hippolytus and pseudo-Hieronymous contain authentic historical information concerning a group of Jews that rejected Roman coinage. They were most likely first adherents of Judas the Galilean, who then exercised ongoing influence in the subsequent period leading up to the first war with Rome. The refusal to pay the *tributum capitis* represented not only the rejection of Roman rule (and the refusal to attribute the title κύριος to an earthly ruler), it was at the same time an adherence to the biblical prohibition of images. Förster, who largely presupposes the late Martin Hengel's description of the Zealots as a more or less united movement, thus undergirds a fundamental element of Hengel's work: the ideology of this movement had a fundamentally religious basis. That is a challenge to much English-speaking scholarship, which has preferred to view the Jewish revolt in terms of mere social conflict between the haves and the have-nots. That question will have to be revisited now.

Jesus' request to be shown a denarius thus exposed the hypocrisy of his opponents, and not merely in terms of their benefiting economically from their use of Roman coinage, as has long been thought. In that his adversaries handled and viewed the coin, they openly displayed their acceptance of Roman rule, and the rejection of the position of the Zealots that had considerable sympathy among the people. In effect, Jesus' simple request turned the tables on his opponents.

Yet Jesus, too, in viewing the coin and rendering his well-known judgment to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" implicitly accepts Roman rule. Jesus is no revolutionary. The same is true of Paul, who in Förster's judgment, shows awareness of this saying of Jesus as he handles a related question concerning tax and tribute in Rom 13:1–7.

That is not to say that Jesus affirmed Roman government without reservation. The second major contribution of Förster's work is his fresh interpretation of Jesus' second word: "and (render) to God the things of God." Proceeding from 1 Chr 29:11–14, Hag 2:8, Joel 4:4–8, and other biblical texts, Förster shows that within Jewish tradition the expression "the things that are God's" describes God's ownership of all things, especially of the precious metals, silver, and gold. In Jewish tradition, especially in its eschatological hopes, it was expected that all the goods of the world that had been collected by other nations would return to God and to Israel his people. Just as Roman coins went forth from the emperor and returned to him, so the creation and all that is in it belongs to God and will be returned to

his undivided rule. The theme appears already in Scripture (e.g. Isa 60:1–7). Furthermore, Philo and Josephus, and even pagan literature use the expression "the things of God" (or "the things of the gods") to refer to earthly riches as belonging to God. In calling for his adversaries to render to God "the things that are God's" Jesus thus relativizes his implicit acceptance of Roman authority, by implicitly announcing the impending kingdom of God. Yet he does not call for the overthrow of Rome, nor does he make the kingdom into a maxim for political action. He does not look *finally* for the overthrow of the nations and the redistribution of their wealth and power to Israel. As his parables make clear, he expects the nations to be included in the eschatological banquet. The coming kingdom (Matt 6:10) is not merely a restoration of the original creation. It is the fulfillment of the original in a new reality (p. 222, citing Goppelt).

Through careful historical and exegetical work, Förster thus not only illuminates a critical biblical text, he presents a serious challenge to the current theological trend to interpret Jesus' message (as well as that of the NT as a whole) as "anti-imperial." The thesis is well-grounded. It will be hard to ignore.

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Inerrancy and the Gospels: A God-Centered Approach to the Challenges of Harmonization. By Vern Sheridan Poythress. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012, 238 pp., $17.99 paper.

Vern Sheridan Poythress, Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, has broad interests in mathematics, science, language, translation, hermeneutics, and, of course, biblical studies. In recent years he has produced a spate of books for Crossway on such subjects as *Redeeming Science: A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006); *In the Beginning Was the Word: Language—A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009); *Redeeming Sociology: A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011); and, most recently, *Logic: A God-Centered Approach to the Foundation of Western Thought* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013). A conspicuous concern in his writings is to be theocentric and God-honoring in what he does and how he thinks. In 2012 Crossway published two of Poythress's volumes on the subject of biblical inerrancy. His initial volume, *Inerrancy and Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible*, addressed the subject of biblical inerrancy at the broader level of worldview. He examined (and defended) biblical inerrancy in relation to challenges posed from both modern and postmodern viewpoints in the arenas of science, history, linguistics, and the social sciences. The present volume, *Inerrancy and the Gospels: A God-Centered Approach to the Challenges of Harmonization*, examines the phenomena of the Gospels with regard to harmonization. It contains 28 chapters organized under seven parts. The first four parts deal with broader principles. The final three parts deal with specific examples: individual cases, reporting speeches, and more cases. The volume closes with a brief conclusion. Appended are a bibliography and two indices: general and Scripture.

Part 1 (chaps. 1 and 2) focuses on the challenge of harmonization. Chapter 1 addresses difficulties in the Gospels. Poythress notes that one learns more from the Bible if difficulties are considered carefully and not avoided. His objective is to lay out some principles for dealing with such difficulties. Chapter 2 offers a sample study of the centurion's servant (Matt 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10). Poythress discusses differing approaches to variations in the two accounts (e.g. several stages of events, representatives acting on the official's behalf). He then draws some conclusions regarding the positive role of the differences in the accounts. He notes that Matthew emphasizes the centurion's *Gentile* status, while Luke emphasizes his *humility*. He affirms that both emphases are valid. Both the trustworthy character of the Gospels and their distinctive emphases need to be valued.

Part 2 (chaps. 3–10) delineates principles for harmonization. Chapter 3 outlines some general principles: inspiration, sources of help, the possibility of multiple events, omissions, the environment and theological emphases of the Gospels. The following chapter surveys the relation among history, theology, and literary artistry in the Gospels. Poythress notes that there is divine meaning in events and hence theological interpretation is not a biased imposition on neutral events. All theological exposition is necessarily selective. Theological significance and history are not in opposition, but are in harmony because God is Lord of both. Chapters 5 and 6 examine respectively the genre and authority of the Gospels. Poythress maintains that the genre "Gospel" is distinct from other genres in its time and that, as the word of God, the Gospels are authoritative.

The remaining chapters in part 2 offer additional principles: Poythress discusses the role of mental pictures (the attempt to fill out details in a written account, which is not always reliable), the role of truth in a biblical worldview, truthfulness versus artificial precision (with insights from Stonehouse and Murray), and the phenomenon of variations in writing history.

Part 3 (chaps. 11–15) concentrates on attitudes in harmonization. In this portion Poythress discusses such matters as confidence and doubt, a proper attitude toward God, limitations in human knowledge, intellectual suffering (believers may suffer intellectually and spiritually because of difficulties in the Bible for which they find no satisfying solutions), and what he describes as positive purposes in difficulties (God can accomplish his purposes in the midst of difficulties).

Part 4 (chaps. 16–17) looks briefly at special issues in harmonization. In chapter 16 Poythress looks at the Synoptic problem. Poythress reflects on the difficulties of this problem. He is of the opinion that it is unsolvable. As a result, believers need to concentrate on the Gospels as we have them. In the following chapter, Poythress examines the temporal order of events. The Gospel authors often employ a flexible chronological order. Sometimes, too, the Gospels reflect more than one event. Sometimes there are uncertainties as to the precise chronology because it is not a focus of the authors.

Part 5 (chaps. 18–21) focuses on individual cases. The initial chapter of this section focuses on Jesus' cleansing of the temple. Poythress places all four accounts side by side for comparison. Poythress is uncertain as to whether there was one or two cleansings. He cautions against a mental-picture theory of meaning. The fol-

lowing chapter looks at Jesus' rejection at Nazareth. Here he looks at the Synoptic accounts. Poythress concludes that the three accounts, taken together, do not provide enough chronological information to determine the precise relationship among the accounts. He maintains, however, that Luke's version is programmatic. Chapter 20 looks at Jesus' cursing of the fig tree. He maintains that both Matthew and Mark achieve their distinctive emphases for the way they present the events connected with this cursing. Matthew's account is compressed, whereas Mark divides the account into distinctive parts. The final chapter of this portion looks at Jesus' commissioning of the Twelve. He contends that all three accounts agree on the central points. Hence the details are harmonizable. He concedes, however, that some of the work of harmonization involves some guesswork.

Part 6 (chaps. 22–27) focuses on reporting speeches. Chapter 22 looks at Jesus' stilling of the storm. Poythress maintains some differences among the accounts include differences in thematic patterns. The next chapter surveys variations in citations. His overall intention is to argue that God himself at times uses interpretive wording that helps bring out implications in earlier Scripture passages. Meaning and intention is the focus of chapter 24. Human beings have the ability both to distort meaning as well as express it faithfully. Mere mechanical repetition does not guarantee that a speaker is doing justice to meaning. Re-expression of meaning through different words, by contrast, can faithfully represent meaning. Poythress next examines Jesus' speech in the Synoptic Gospels in connection to the stilling of the storm. Poythress cautions that in attempting to reconstruct speeches, particularly for apologetic reasons, one should note the limitations. Honesty is required of oneself and in relation to critics. Reconstructions always have a probabilistic character and hence can be speculative. Poythress examines Augustine on the reporting of speeches in chapter 26. He notes that Augustine considered it foundational to accept the authority of the Gospels. At the same time, he also acknowledged that there was no necessity of perfect precision in the Gospel accounts. The variations among the evangelists could have a positive benefit: they establish by their absolute authority a guideline for assessing truth and the case of ordinary human testimony. In the final chapter of this portion Poythress examines the Synoptic accounts of the rich young ruler. He attributes the differences among the accounts to the distinctive emphases of the evangelists. He notes that contrast, variation, and distribution, as aspects of language, mirror the Trinity, and hence function together in full communication. Jesus' one interchange can thus provide the context for the connections of complementary themes about the kingdom in the individual Gospels.

Part 7 (chaps. 28–29) provides brief surveys of the accounts of the raising of Jairus's daughter and the healing of blind Bartimaeus. Poythress notes the differences in the accounts of the raising of Jairus's daughter. He observes once again the importance of the distinctive emphases of each Gospel as well as what they have in common. With regard to blind Bartimaeus, Poythress surveys various proposals regarding the differences in the Synoptic accounts with regard to the geographical placement of the episode. Poythress admits no clear answer. He conjectures that Luke was thinking in terms of a different city's center than that presupposed in Matthew and Mark.

Poythress's book is presented in simple, engaging prose and hence is accessible to general readers. One can imagine that it will find use in evangelical institutions as a supplementary text in Gospel-related courses. Its online accessibility at the "frame-poythress.org" website should help bolster wide usage. He is not dogmatic where he feels the biblical evidence does not lead to firm conclusions (e.g. chaps. 18, 29). Regarding Jesus' temple "cleansing" (I prefer "clearing"; chap. 18), for example, he does not come down firmly on the question of whether it took place once or twice. He simply points out that "even with this lack of exhaustive knowledge we know a great deal" (p. 137): namely, that Jesus cleansed (cleared) the temple, his zeal, and temple misuse. The volume exhibits many helpful reminders. Poythress notes that the Gospel texts, not hypothetical reconstruction of events behind them, are ultimate representations of Jesus and his ministry. Hence the Gospel narratives themselves are definitive, while harmonization, while not insignificant, is of secondary importance.

This book also has its limitations. Poythress does not engage with contemporary non-evangelical scholars outside of reference to Michael D. Goulder (p. 42 and n. 6) and several references to standard lexica (e.g. BDAG [pp. 68 n. 4, 129 n. 8, 210 n. 5]; Moulton and Milligan [p. 147 n. 4]; Liddell, Scott, and Jones [p. 210 nn. 5–6]). Augustine and Calvin receive ample attention throughout. Older scholars like C. J. Ellicott (1872) and John Brown McClellan (1875) receive some attention. There is also a brief reference to Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1947). Poythress's principal contemporary engagement partners are R. T. France (pp. 17 n. 1; 21 and n. 9; 23 n. 12; 30–31 and n. 8; 42–43 and nn. 5–6; 44; 117 n. 1; 120–21 and n. 3; 148 n. 5) and Craig Blomberg (pp. 21 and n. 10; 30 nn. 4, 6; 43 n. 6; 71 n. 6; 74 n. 9; 82 n. 11; 127 n. 3; 136 n. 2; 214–15 and nn. 2–3). The limited engagement with non-evangelical scholars is a principal weakness of the volume. In relation to the question of Gospel genre, for example, some engagement with Richard A. Burridge would doubtlessly have proved helpful (*What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* [SNTSMS 70; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004]). Additionally, the volume does not address directly some of the most controversial matters in contemporary Gospel (and historical Jesus) research, namely the content of the passion and resurrection narratives.

At the same time, readers with a high view of Scripture will appreciate Poythress's desire to be God-honoring in his approach to the Gospels and the many principles and insights evident throughout the volume. Poythress's study is a welcome reminder that all four Gospels are part of the one Christian canon of Scripture. The early Christians avoided gravitating *en masse* toward either Marcion's single-Gospel approach (a tendentiously reductionist version of Luke) or toward Tatian's artificially forced harmony of all four Gospels in a single narrative (*Diatessaron*). Irenaeus, among others, reflected the better and more spiritually discerning path: "It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are …. [I]t is evident that the Word, the Artificer of all … has given us the Gospel under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit" (*Adv. Haer.*

3.11.8). Contemporary Christians should keep this in mind as they wrestle with the ongoing challenges and limitations of harmonization.

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Apocalyptic Imagination in the Gospel of Mark: The Literary and Theological Role of Mark 3:22–30. By Elizabeth E. Shively. BZNW 189. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012, xi + 295 pp., €93.41.

Elizabeth Shively, Lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of St. Andrews, has made a significant contribution to the study of Mark's Gospel through her analysis of the apocalyptic character of Mark's narrative. According to Shively, Mark's story takes place within the context of the ongoing cosmic conflict between God and Satan, a conflict described by Mark with symbols drawn from apocalyptic thought. Mark 3:22–30—a passage in which Jesus responds to the charge that he casts out demons by the power of Beelzebul—is crucial for understanding this cosmic battle and therefore also for making sense of Mark's story as a whole. After an opening chapter that sets forth the approach of the book (chap. 1), Shively makes her case through an analysis of the literary context, structure, and content of Mark 3:22–30 (chap. 2), an exploration of apocalyptic discourse in Jewish texts more generally (chap. 3), and an examination of how the storyline found in Mark 3:22–30 fits within the narrative of Mark's Gospel as a whole (chaps. 4–6). The book ends with an epilogue that offers various conclusions and implications from the study (chap. 7).

Shively pursues two aims in this book. One aim is to offer a coherent reading of Mark's Gospel by identifying a continuous thread that ties the story together (p. 3). Mark 3:22–30 is programmatic for the overall story in that it takes up the cosmic characters from the prologue and dramatizes their conflict more completely, creating a storyline that is essential to the whole Gospel. "Mark 3:22–30 shapes the literary and theological logic of the rest of the narrative" (p. 41). In this passage, Mark presents Jesus as the Spirit-filled one who establishes God's kingdom by struggling against Satan in order to liberate people and to form them into a community that does the will of God (p. 252). In 3:22–30, Mark recalls the characters from the brief temptation account in 1:12–13—Jesus, Satan, and the Holy Spirit—expanding on their conflict and identifying the purpose of Jesus' ministry. Jesus has come to bind the strong man, Satan. Shively shows how, in the rest of the narrative, Jesus struggles against satanic power through his exorcisms but ultimately through his suffering, death, and resurrection. She traces the storyline of Jesus' conflict with Satan and the theme of Jesus' power through representative passages, such as the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (5:1–20), the eschatological discourse (13:5–37), the central section on discipleship (8:27–10:45), and the empty tomb account (16:1–8).

A second aim of Shively's book is to set Mark's Gospel within the context of contemporary Jewish compositions that employ apocalyptic features for rhetorical

purposes. For Shively, Mark's Gospel is an apocalyptic narrative in that it displays both a cosmic conflict between Satan and the Spirit-filled Jesus and an apocalyptic eschatology, the expectation of Jesus' imminent return as the Son of Man to overcome hostile powers and to gather the elect. In other words, Mark's Gospel contains both the vertical-spatial dimension and the temporal dimension common to an apocalyptic outlook. Therefore, Shively compares Mark's Gospel to other Jewish texts that engage in apocalyptic rhetoric, including Daniel, *I Enoch*, *Jubilees*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *War Scroll* (1QM), *Melchizedek* (11QMelch), and the *Testament of Solomon*. As with Mark's Gospel, the apocalyptic features in these Jewish texts (such as the persecution of the righteous, the activity of heavenly beings, and the future judgment of God) further the distinctive aims of the each of the works. Ultimately, the main rhetorical purpose of Mark's apocalyptic discourse is to persuade readers that God's power to save manifests itself through weakness, that is, through the rejection, suffering, and death of the Messiah (p. 257). Therefore, the followers of this Messiah should be ready to sacrifice and suffer for him, since in this way God will manifest his power in and through them.

Shively deserves recognition for highlighting a passage and a storyline in Mark's Gospel that have suffered from scholarly neglect. She is certainly correct that the earthly story of Jesus and of his relationship with his disciples, the religious leaders, and other human characters stands within the larger cosmic story of God's conflict with Satan and his demonic forces. The intersection of these two stories, "like planes intersecting in a line" (p. 1), provide an important thread to be traced through Mark's narrative. Without a proper recognition of the gravity of the larger cosmic struggle in Mark's Gospel, the earthly story of Jesus loses its significance as well.

My only question related to Shively's work is whether or not this study reflects sufficiently on how and why the cosmic conflict often recedes into the background in Mark's Gospel while at the same time the earthly story of the Messiah Jesus and of his interaction with human characters often moves to the front and center. For Shively, the cosmic battle is pervasive in Mark, and earthly conflicts can often be reduced to the attacks of Satan. One place where this issue arises is in Shively's treatment of the overall characterization of Satan in Mark's Gospel. Outside of the initial temptation account (1:12–13) and the Beelzebul controversy (3:22–30), Satan appears explicitly only in two other places in Mark's Gospel, Mark 4:15 and 8:33. Yet, according to Shively, Mark's concentration on the power struggle between the Spirit-filled Jesus and Satan in the temptation account and in Jesus' teaching in 3:22–30 establishes the presence of satanic activity throughout the whole of the Gospel (pp. 159–60). In Mark 4:15, Satan appears in the parable of the sower as the one who takes away the word of God (cf. 4:25). For Shively, Mark explains the problem of hearing but not receiving Jesus' teaching in terms of satanic activity, so that examples of a lack of response to Jesus and his message may be viewed as Satan's work even when Satan is not explicitly mentioned (p. 160). The problem, however, is that the parable of the sower identifies other causes for the failure of the word to bear fruit: affliction or persecution on account of the word, the worries of this age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for other things.

Satan is not the sole cause for every rejection of the word. In Mark 8:33, the other place where Satan is mentioned, Jesus identifies Peter's attempt to turn the Messiah away from the path of suffering and death as a satanic attack. For Shively, any temptation to turn aside from the way of the cross implies the activity of Satan, even when Satan is not directly mentioned. Therefore, Jesus' prayer and the distress of his soul in Gethsemane imply the work of Satan within Jesus' own being (p. 162). One problem with this explanation is that Mark's Gospel seems to go out of its way to present Jesus as completely alone with the Father in Gethsemane, and even more alone on the cross when he cries out to God in his forsakenness. I wonder if it is a mistake to think it impossible that Jesus all by himself—without the work of Satan—might waver in doubt before the cup, might cry out in distress on the cross.

Perhaps Mark's Gospel is a "Lord of the Rings" type of story, a story in which there is indeed a larger conflict, but also a story in which at times the larger battle recedes into the background long enough for the narrative to focus attention on the selfless deeds of the seemingly insignificant. Shively gives a central place to the cosmic battle, with the result that nearly every scene and conflict reduces to the struggle between Satan and the Spirit-filled Jesus. What tends to be lost is the earthly dimension of Mark's narrative, where the Messiah all alone submits to the Father's will, where selfish desires for authority and prominence harden human hearts, where fear of persecution and suffering presents a real danger, and where sacrificial deeds of service for those in need, though easily overlooked, take on eternal significance. Shively is correct that the cosmic battle is crucial for Mark's story, but at times Satan, the Holy Spirit, and even God himself step into the background, while attention focuses on the earthly story of Jesus and those who come into contact with him. The cosmic story gives significance to the earthly story, but the earthly story determines the course of the heavenly battle.

These reflections on Mark's narrative are not intended to diminish in any way the contribution of Shively's work. She is pointing to an aspect of Mark's Gospel, Jesus' conflict with Satan and the demons, that is crucial for making sense of the story as a whole. Instead, these reflections demonstrate the extent to which Shively's work encouraged me to think, certainly the sign of a good book. Her study is groundbreaking in that it opens up new avenues of research into the historical background to Mark's Gospel, the literary design of Mark's narrative, and the overall message of Mark's story of Jesus.

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Salty Wives, Spirited Mothers, and Savvy Widows: Capable Women of Purpose and Persistence in Luke's Gospel. By F. Scott Spencer. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. x + 348 pp., $30.00 paper.

Despite recent feminist critique from Jane Schaberg and others that characterizes Luke's Gospel as more threatening than friendly to women than it was once thought to be, F. Scott Spencer's *Salty Wives, Spirited Mothers, and Savvy Widows*

swings the pendulum slightly in the opposite direction. Although Spencer remains deeply troubled by the silence of women outside of the birth narratives, the virtual literary absence of women as Jesus' disciples following Luke 8:3 until they appear at the cross (23:49), and the suspicion and rejection of women shown by men (24:11), his exploration of Lukan vignettes featuring female figures unearths portraits of determination and strength resulting in Spencer's mixed evaluation of the Third Gospel.

Methodologically, Spencer continues to employ the eclectic combination of "grammatical, historical, sociological, literary, canonical, theological, postmodern, and feminist tools" (p. 20) that he used in his previous work (*Dancing Girls, "Loose" Ladies, and Women of "the Cloth"* [New York: Continuum, 2004]; "Feminist Criticism" in *Hearing the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010]). Spencer defends his on-going use of a hermeneutics of moderate suspicion in response to recent calls by Joel Green, Richard Bauckham, and Richard Hays for a hermeneutical posture characterized primarily by faith. Asking the question of balance and proportion between doubt and trust, Spencer argues that the hermeneutical struggle should be characterized by a mutual disposition of faith and suspicion as modeled in the lament tradition: "suspicion is born of faith: because we believe you are a just, compassionate, gracious, present God, as disclosed through your word, we suspect something is out of kilter when you seem to act differently" (p. 26). He finds an analogy to a hermeneutical approach of moderate suspicion paired with remembrance, imagination, and transformation in Luke 15:8–10 as the woman with the lost coin actively and diligently struggles to seek and find that which is of value.

In chapters 3–8 Spencer takes up the Lukan accounts of Mary of Nazareth (Luke 1–2), Joanna (8:1–3; 24:10), Martha and Mary of Bethany (10:38–42), three foreign women (4:25–26; 11:31; 17:32), and the feisty widow (18:1–8). Against the traditional portrait of a compliant and passive Mary, Spencer sees her characterized as a "spirited agent and actor" (p. 21). She demonstrates a woman's right to choose, although she "chooses what God chooses for her" (p. 58) after freely deliberating and actively engaging the angel Gabriel and the message he brings to her. Throughout Luke 1–2, Mary is a "voluntary cooperative agent" who partners with God in the plan of salvation, and she is a "model disciple" (p. 74) in Luke's Gospel.

Spencer's search for the historical Joanna finds that she was one of several women disciples who, having been healed by Jesus, showed their gratitude by serving Jesus, while also journeying with him. Spencer affirms various valid expressions of discipleship; some women may have been permanent companions, but he finds no evidence that the call to discipleship required all women (or men) to leave family and home permanently to follow Jesus. Thus, a married woman like Joanna likely traveled with Jesus intermittently and for short periods of time. The service rendered (*diēkonoun*) by Joanna and other female clients most likely came in the form of material resources and valuable domestic service and hospitality rather than a ministry of proclamation. Yet, while there is insufficient evidence in Luke to conclude that Joanna or the other female disciples were involved in the public proclamation of the gospel during Jesus' lifetime or that they held any formal positions of authority, Spencer finds this to be true also of the male disciples. Jesus himself is

the sole figure of authority, whose teaching and actions demonstrate the sort of mutual service that he expects from all of his followers.

Literary analysis dominates the interaction with the Martha and Mary pericope. Placing the narrative against a general type-scene of female household rivalry that is adjudicated by a male authority, Spencer presents lengthy summaries of the accounts of Sarai and Hagar, Leah and Rachel, Hannah and Peninnah, Bathsheba and Abishag, Naomi and Ruth, and Elizabeth and Mary. In the Martha and Mary narrative, Spencer prefers the reading of *ten agathēn merida* (10:42) as "the good part" rather than "the better part" resulting in Jesus' refusal to elevate the choice of one woman over the other. He proclaims the text as specifically affirming "both the individual integrity and the mutual solidarity of the sisters' choices and actions" (p. 172) and more broadly calling for disciples regardless of gender to engage in both "serving and listening; hosting and heeding; ministering (*diakonia*) in deed and word, at table and pulpit, *to one another*" (p. 172; emphasis original).

On various occasions the Lukan Jesus uses the example of a foreign woman in his teaching with references to the widow of Zarephath (4:25–26), the queen of the South (11:31), and the wife of Lot (17:32). As a framework for analyzing the layering of ethnic and gender otherness found in these examples, Spencer explores the characterization of Aseneth in Hellenistic-Jewish literature, and he considers a biblical pattern of "strange" women (Jael, Jezebel, and Ruth), which suggests that "warning, judgment, and danger ever crouch at the door in Israel's dealings with 'other' peoples, especially when women are involved" (p. 207). Spencer further focuses on matters of setting and status and finds complex portraits of these women. Common connections between them include a forensic purpose in the Lukan narrative, warning others not to defy God but to recognize his movement toward ethnic, geographic, and gender inclusivity.

Spencer approaches the figure of the feisty widow primarily with a hermeneutics of proclamation. She models the sort of faith and action that God seeks in all disciples, and she demonstrates agency and strategy in her relentless commitment to seek justice. The theological point of the parable affirms God's promise to act suddenly (*en tachei*) and decisively, if not necessarily quickly, and it allows Spencer to value the "*formative* contributions that God's people make" (p. 310; emphasis original) in the struggle towards justice while still acknowledging the necessity of divine intervention to arrive at ultimate justice on earth.

In his final analysis, Spencer places his findings alongside of the capabilities list developed by feminist political philosopher Martha Nussbaum as he compares and contrasts the performance of the Lukan ladies with that of migrant Muslim women living in the modern slums of Istanbul as documented by Pinar Uyan-Semerci. He concludes that "while they are not fully 'liberated' in the way modern feminists would advocate (Luke retains many kyriarchal attitudes of his milieu), they still prove themselves to be remarkably 'capable women of purpose and persistence'" (p. 318).

Overall, Spencer's skill as a clever wordsmith makes for a lively writing style and an enjoyable read. He takes the time to pursue deeply the historical and literary background that might lead to a greater understanding of the Lukan texts. His will-

ingness to turn a hermeneutics of suspicion inward is also to be commended, as is his refusal to go beyond where his evidence can take him in his discussion about the historical Joanna and his excursus regarding Luke's omission of the Syrophoenician woman pericope (pp. 209–15). On the other hand, a few finer points were less than convincingly argued. For instance, the bulk of Spencer's conclusions about Luke 10:38–42 hang on rendering *agathēn* as "good," but he offers insufficient evidence for why this translation is better in this context. The identification of connections to food and sex in all three foreign women texts is a stretch (p. 261). In addition, Spencer fails to take into full account that the feisty widow is merely a literary creation within a parable leading him to create too much of a back story for her when no additional details beyond those provided are needed in order to understand the point of the parable. Despite these weaknesses, readers looking for how a hermeneutics of suspicion moderated by a posture of faith—a rare combination in explicitly feminist work—plays out with a handful of specific texts will find a fine example in this text, although I find it unlikely to convert others to the same hermeneutical position.

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The Gospel of John: A Commentary. By Frederick Dale Bruner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xxx + 1281 pp., $75.00.

In the history of commentary writing, the question of what makes for a good commentary has been answered in different ways. In 1539 John Calvin, in a letter to his friend Simon Grynaeus, suggested two criteria for good commentary writing: *perspicua brevitas* and *mens scriptoris*. In other words, a good commentator balances two major concerns: first he is brief and clear in his writing, and second, he lays open the mind of the original writer.

In more recent years, however, the criteria for what makes for a good commentary have shifted. While brevity and interpretation are still important, a third criterion has been added: engagement with the most recent scholarship. In the case of a commentary on Romans or Galatians, for example, we may turn to the treatment of any number of "diagnostic passages" to determine the commentary's take on the new perspective on Paul or on the justification debate.

We as a scholarly community may debate the merits of adding this third criterion, given that it may actually be at odds with both of Calvin's two criteria (certainly Calvin's criterion of brevity!) and perhaps ultimately a hindrance to busy pastors wading through the forest of a commentary's scholarly engagement while attempting to uncover the original writer's message for a sermon on Sunday morning. Nevertheless, we have grown to accept this third criterion. If engagement with the most recent scholarship is an essential criterion for evaluating a new commentary, Frederick Dale Bruner's *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* falls short. This does not mean, however, that Bruner's commentary is unhelpful for reasons that will be mentioned.

Bruner's commentary is nontraditional in at least two ways. First, and foremost, there is no section on introductory issues at the beginning of the commentary, where issues related to authorship, genre, theological themes, and historical setting would ordinarily be handled. Instead, the author seeks to integrate those issues into the commentary itself. This reality is a difficult one, since it results in some ambiguity for the reader. For example, one must do some significant digging into the commentary in order to uncover what Bruner's take is on the structure of the Fourth Gospel or what Bruner thinks the historical situation was for the writer of John's Gospel, etc. Helpful author and subject indices at the end of the commentary make such digging possible, but not easy.

Second, the organization of Bruner's actual commentary on the text of the Fourth Gospel is somewhat novel, when contrasted with the other major commentaries that have been published in the last decade. For each section of material, there are four parts to Bruner's commentary. First, Bruner offers his own translation of the text. Second, he introduces each passage by presenting one or two quotations from significant past commentators on the Gospel of John as a way to capture the main idea of the passage. Third, Bruner offers his own interpretation of the passage, complete with valuable homiletical observations for the busy pastor. Fourth, Bruner wraps up his discussion with a summary of the history of interpretation of the passage, including interaction with a limited number of past commentators on John's Gospel but at the same time commentators across the temporal spectrum. For example, it is not unusual for Bruner to survey interpretations of a passage from commentators like Augustine of Hippo from the early Western tradition and John Chrysostom from the early Eastern tradition, Thomas Aquinas from the Medieval period, Reformation thinkers such as John Calvin and Martin Luther, and more recent Johannine scholars like C. K. Barrett, Raymond Brown, and Rudolf Bultmann. As Bruner writes, "I want to place my own interpretation within the circle and counsel of the two-millennia historical-theological tradition and, as far as I can with good conscience, within the modern consensus, in order to be sensitive to the Spirit's guidance of the whole Church through the centuries" (p. xv). Few of the major commentaries on the Gospel of John published in the last twenty years have interacted with such a temporally broad array of commentators, with intentionality, than Bruner. This feature of the commentary is to be commended, since many evangelicals and particularly those of us in the Reformed evangelical camp are guilty of thinking as though biblical interpretation only began during the period of the Protestant Reformation.

By way of criticism, Bruner's commentary falls short with regard to the newer criterion of engagement with the most recent scholarship. This occurs particularly in the area of the historical setting for the Gospel of John and demonstrates itself glaringly in Bruner's treatment of the healing of the blind man in John 9. On pages 586–87, in a section titled "The Historical Question," Bruner reflects on the issue of expulsion from the synagogue in light of the historical reconstructions done by J. Louis Martyn and Raymond Brown. Martyn famously argued that the story of the blind man who suffered expulsion from the synagogue due to his faith in Jesus was created much later than the time of Jesus and was presented as a way to encourage

faithfulness to Jesus for late first-century Jewish Christians facing synagogue expulsion. In addition, Raymond Brown proposed that a Johannine community, in existence sometime after the time of Jesus, was largely responsible for the production of the Gospel of John. The Martyn-Brown influence in Johannine scholarship in the area of the historical setting for the writing of the Gospel of John was massive in the latter part of the twentieth century, and Bruner rightly recognizes this. Bruner writes, "Had the desynagoguing process against confessors of Christ, as reported here, begun as early as Jesus' public ministry? Most scholars doubt it and see John's retrojection of his writing time into Jesus' ministry time in order to encourage John's contemporaries, now faced with confessional situations much like that of the parents here" (p. 586). Bruner, then, seems to reject the Martyn-Brown view later in the paragraph when he instead affirms that even at the time of Jesus there might have been "isolated disciplinary actions" in places like Jerusalem (the setting for John 9). The difficulty at this point in the commentary, however, is that Bruner's discussion of where things currently stand with the Martyn-Brown reading of John 9 is somewhat undocumented in terms of recent scholarship.

What I find fascinating is that within Johannine scholarship over the last decade, no issue has been more sharply debated than the issue of the historical setting of the Gospel of John, with the result being an overthrow of the widely held Martyn-Brown position. Robert Kysar, a one-time advocate for the Martyn-Brown understanding of the setting for the Gospel of John, has gone on record as saying that he not only now rejects the view but regrets ever having advocated for it (cf. Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospels and Letters* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009] 52). Important scholars have participated in the debate that has overthrown the Martyn-Brown position, and a move is now underway to establish a new scholarly consensus. Unfortunately, Bruner has not included these scholars in his commentary. For example, Köstenberger, an important Johannine scholar in the evangelical camp, has written much, not only to point out the problems related to the old Martyn-Brown view, but also to propose a new consensus closely linked with the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. In the collection of essays titled *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* (WUNT 2/219; ed. John Lierman; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), one can find an important essay by Köstenberger titled "The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Composition of the Fourth Gospel." Likewise, Paul Hoskins has argued exegetically, from a redemptive-historical perspective, that one of the main themes in John's Gospel is the temple fulfillment theme (*Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* [Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006]).

Might there be room for a new widely held position that displaces the Martyn-Brown view, which is a synthesis between Köstenberger's historical analysis and Hoskins's exegetical analysis? Might there be room for saying that the Gospel of John was written some ten to fifteen years after the destruction of the temple as a way to make the argument to first-century Jews, who were distressed that the temple may not be rebuilt anytime too soon, that Jesus is the fulfillment of the temple and therefore the fulfillment of all the hopes and dreams of a devastated first-century Judaism? After all, the "temple" (i.e. Jesus) had been destroyed and

built up in three days. Unfortunately, neither Köstenberger nor Hoskins appear in Bruner's commentary.

At the end of the day, Bruner's commentary has many positive features that make it worthwhile for the busy pastor: helpful reflections of a homiletical and practical nature, a wide spectrum of representatives from historical theology, and an engaging writing style. Yet, if one is interested in a commentary that updates the scholarly conversation on the Gospel of John, this commentary falls just a bit short.

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Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours. Edited by Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012, 253 pp., $22.00 paper.

This book was prompted, in part, by the centennial anniversary of the publication of Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* The editors of the present work state its primary goal is to assess the contributions made by Allen's work and to determine if his work is still relevant today.

The book is divided into two sections. Part 1 comprises seven articles and addresses Paul in the NT, focusing primarily on his message. In the first article, "Paul's Religious and Historical Milieu," Michael Bird briefly describes the primary features of Paul's world that led to the success of his mission. After reviewing several of the well-known facets of Paul's world in its geographical, Greco-Roman, and Jewish contexts, Bird concludes that Allen "was correct that contemporary mission methods need to get more in line with the model laid down by Paul" (p. 27). Paul's methods become the basic model, appropriately applied, that should undergird present missiological models.

Eckhard Schnabel ("Paul the Missionary") next argues that the primary experience that motivated Paul's missionary endeavors was his Damascus experience with Jesus. Schnabel surfaces seven convictions from 1 Cor 3:5–15 that drove Paul's missionary task, and seven fundamental elements that characterized his mission work from 1 Cor 9:19–23. After surveying sixteen "phases" of missionary activity, he concludes that, while Paul moved geographically to different areas, he primarily focused on major population centers proclaiming the gospel to anyone willing to listen with the desire to win as many as possible to faith in Christ.

Referring back to Allen's assertion that one of the main principles undergirding Paul's ministry was his focus on the gospel, Robert Plummer ("Paul's Gospel") exegetes eight principles from 1 Cor 15:1–8. Plummer's analysis reveals a multifaceted understanding of the gospel. The gospel contains both propositional statements of God's actions and an expression of his power. Plummer states that "the gospel must be both proclaimed and received for its saving benefits to be applied" (p. 47). His argument could be strengthened by an assessment of why the expression of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15 is conspicuously absent from the evangelistic sermons recorded in Acts.

Following Allen's lead, Benjamin Merkle, in his essay "Paul's Ecclesiology," asserts that Christianity is a principle of life rather than an institution. This is the essence behind Paul's strategy of planting churches (better, congregations) that practice both the Lord's Supper and baptism. In dealing with membership, Merkle identifies a key requirement as one who believes in the risen Christ. However, he does not address how non-believers fit within this congregational context. Merkle also contends that godly leadership is the key to healthy congregations and that being Christ-centered is an absolute.

Christoph Stenschke ("Paul's Mission as the Mission of the Church") extends Allen's belief that each church should embed itself with Paul's mission. This includes supporting missionaries, engaging in local evangelism, and becoming self-propagating. Part of the mission also includes overcoming challenges in culture similar to the first century AD, including responding well to resistance and persecution, sacrificing on behalf of others, and providing spiritual refreshment for missionaries.

Following Allen's dictum that a distinctive mark of Paul's mission was his willingness to prove his commitment through suffering, Don Howell Jr. ("Paul's Theology of Suffering") argues that the Pauline corpus is replete with the language of hardship. For Paul, suffering edifies the body of Christ, certifies the church's identification with Jesus as the suffering servant, and authenticates the true servant. Thus, in the context of suffering, a person's character is shaped in the areas of humility before others, vulnerability when faced with sin, dependence on God's power, and magnanimity toward others in their weakness. Understanding Paul's theology of suffering is necessary for the church as it moves to influence followers of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

In a well-balanced article, "Paul and Spiritual Warfare," Craig Keener navigates through the variety of discussions on spiritual warfare. Drawing on biblical concepts, he correctly notes that missions and the Christian life involve spiritual warfare. Focusing on the image of spiritual warfare in Paul's letters and Paul's confrontations with the demonic in evangelistic settings, he demonstrates that Paul often portrays the Christian life in terms of spiritual conflict. Relying heavily on Ephesians, he argues that spiritual warfare is the assumed normal state of the believer and that Paul's teaching on the subject is practical. Whatever one thinks of this topic, Keener finds agreement when he concludes that the war is best fought in dependence on God.

Part 2 comprises six articles and addresses Paul's influence on missions, focusing primarily on his missiology. In an incisive article, "Paul's Missions Strategy," David Hesselgrave assesses Allen's approach to integrating Paul within his own context. Following Leslie Newbigin, he reduces Allen's methods to a single process—"Generational Resubmission"—by which he means the resubmission of traditions with each generation to the Word of God. Allen was convinced that missionaries were utilizing methods of colonialization, rather than the way of Paul. Hesselgrave effectively identifies key strengths and weaknesses of Allen's approach and identifies key issues facing missions today including, among others, evangelicals and Catholics together, new perspectives on Paul, and the Emergent Church.

Agreeing with Hesselgrave, Michael Pocock ("Paul's Strategy: Determinative for Today?") concludes that Paul did not advocate a "strategy." While noting that Pauline methodology began to be seriously considered early in the 20th century, he raises the concern that many current strategies, especially among local churches, have focused more on theology than on understanding the missiological significance of Paul's approach. He presents two key areas argued by Allen, including submission to and dependence on the Holy Spirit and the growth of a church movement in proportion to diminished foreign control. Following Paul, Allen charged missions with paternalism because they refused to trust the Holy Spirit and relinquish control.

In "Paul and Indigenous Missions," John Mark Terry argues that missionary efforts that focus on planting indigenous churches are following Paul's approach. Paul's *modus operandi* included traveling itinerantly, focusing on cities in order to permeate the surrounding regions, utilizing a concentration strategy, producing self-supporting churches, appointing leaders, trusting the Holy Spirit to lead, using a team to plant churches, preaching to responsive people, maintaining close contact with a home church, and demonstrating flexibility. Terry differentiates between contextualization and indigenization and argues that good contextualization leads to indigenization.

Ed Stetzer and Lizette Beard ("Paul and Church Planting") raise the important question of how Allen's principles carry forward today when preparing future church planters. A key principle is the ability to explain succinctly the basics of the gospel message. Planters must understand as well as live out the gospel. Second, the focus must be on planting indigenous churches and not just winning converts. Third, rapid reproduction requires that churches and planters be agile and focused on cultural issues rather than organizational issues such as buildings, budgets, etc. Finally, planters should maintain their passion for the nations as the end goal.

David Sills ("Paul and Contextualization") intriguingly states that "while contextualization does not change the gospel message, the failure to contextualize actually does" (p. 197). Following many others, and the example of Christ, he argues that contextualization is essential for communicating the gospel. As each culture understands some aspect of biblical truth, the corporate understanding will continue to grow. He concludes that the missionary's task is not complete until the gospel is understood and practiced in culturally appropriate ways within each culture.

Chuck Lawless ("Paul and Leadership Development") astutely observes that at the core of most church failures is a failure in leadership; namely, that the leadership has not prepared other leaders to follow in their footsteps. Paul's methodology for leadership development included training new converts in the fundamentals, continuing leadership training with the congregations, rather than focusing on a few, and developing leaders through intentional mentoring. Following Allen, he concludes that the church can only fulfill the Great Commission by continuing to develop a new generation of leaders.

In the postscript, "Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods* at One Hundred," J. D. Payne reflects back on Allen's impact in two ways. First is his missiology. Allen's

desire to see the spontaneous expansion of the church requires focusing on the apostolic paradigm in which the missionary focuses on evangelism and prepares to leave the day a church is planted, practicing a genuine faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, planting indigenous churches from the very start of their existence, and relinquishing control to allow for natural growth. Second, Payne surveys the past century since Allen originally wrote and concludes that Allen "ranks as one of the most influential missions theorists in the history of the Church" (p. 240).

This monograph is significant for several reasons. First, it is readable for those new to missions and missionary methods. Second, it reflects an intentional review of the historical impact following Allen's work, although not all of the articles address Allen's work. Third, it brings Paul and his methods to life in ways that are often absent in Pauline studies. The book is intended for all who are interested in missions, especially as impacted by Roland Allen. In this regard, the book has accomplished its purpose. It is recommended for scholars, pastors, students, and the untrained who are interested in this area and who desire a current scholarly, yet readable and understandable, approach that emphasizes demonstrating the gospel in every situation. The book could be strengthened by the addition of a subject and author index.

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Paul as an Administrator of God in 1 Corinthians. By John K. Goodrich. SNTSMS 152. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, xiii + 248 pp., $99.00.

In *Paul as an Administrator of God in 1 Corinthians*, John K. Goodrich has written a clear and well-researched monograph that investigates the usage of the Pauline metaphor of *oikonomos* ("administrator") as it appears in 1 Cor 4:1–5 and 9:16–23 in comparison to the semantic domain of the term in ancient antecedent and contemporary literature. The book begins with an introductory chapter on apostolic authority in 1 Corinthians before launching into the primary two-fold movement of the work, with part 1 focusing on *oikonomoi* in Graeco-Roman antiquity and part 2 applying these findings to an exegetical study of its metaphorical usage by Paul in 1 Corinthians.

Goodrich has written an exemplary, robust, and extremely balanced historical and exegetical piece of scholarly work that will be drawn upon by commentators and exegetes of Paul and the NT (and Graeco-Roman studies) from here on out. The historical overview in part 1 interacts with a wide and representative variety of primary and secondary sources. As a piece of literature, the historical section of the monograph is, in fact, strong enough to be, and could function as a serious, weighty, stand-alone contribution to the study of the *oikonomos* term in antiquity, even apart from its relevance to a contextually-informed exegesis of the Pauline texts in which it occurs as a metaphor. What we have here is not an obligatory "background" section, simply providing some guiding principles and ancient fac-

toids as an appetizer before the real "meal" of NT exegesis, but rather an example of the ancient sources being taken seriously as important texts *in and of themselves*. On account of this, within the scope of 75 pages (pp. 27–102), Goodrich provides a history of the three major semantic fields and contexts of this term in the ancient world. The section is both deep and yet brief. This is a mark of truly mature scholarship, and yet something that many scholars experience difficulty in effectively carrying out.

Along the same lines, Goodrich's presentation of the history of research of the topic (pp. 14–22) is helpful, concise, and well footnoted. The reader is led through the scholarly hypotheses on the topic of *oikonomoi* beginning with the earliest modern thoughts of Reumann to the more recent theories of Malherbe, Byron, Galloway, and perhaps, the most well-known of the modern *oikonomoi* theses, that of Dale Martin. Goodrich notes that Martin's thesis proposes that on the one hand the *oikonomos* term would have evoked disdain from those within the higher social classes, while on the other hand it would have been perceived as a position of honor by those of lower social standing, such as free men and slaves. Later in the monograph, Goodrich offers his own critique of Martin's dual reception idea in which a dual emphasis remains but is reconfigured. In Goodrich's interpretation the dual emphasis is not on *two perceptions* of Paul as *oikonomos* from two distinct social groups (as it is in Martin's thesis), but rather it centers on a *dual function* of the metaphor, in which Paul emphasizes *two simultaneously existing realities*, namely both "the servility and authority of apostles," which serves to accomplish two corresponding goals: "to eliminate partisanship and to defend himself against critics" (p. 202).

Goodrich's methodology is outstanding and exemplary for those working with lexical studies and historical reconstruction. Specifically, I find his awareness and avoidance of parallelomania, his employment and explanation of the work of L. Michael White and John Fitzgerald on the consideration of semantic fields rather than on mere individual key words, and his desire (following Meggit) to form his reconstructions with care, basing them on surveys of the ancient sources that seek to uncover the world of the non-elite and popular culture, to be admirable and consistent. Goodrich argues, and I concur: "One cannot simply assume that most or even many of the numerous extant literary works from antiquity characterise the thoughts, attitudes, practices, and beliefs of the early believers just because they are contemporary, correspond geographically, and relate thematically with Paul's letters" (p. 22). His inclusion of a variety of categories of source material in his study, including a mix of ancient literature, inscriptions, and papyri helps him to accomplish his task.

Noting first that across the semantic fields there is much overlap in the actual role and status of *oikonomoi*, Goodrich argues that the differences are important enough that they must be categorized into separate fields and "conceptually distinguished" (p. 26). In the regal context (chap. 2), Goodrich shows that *oikonomoi* dealt with mostly financial matters, such as matters concerning royal land and revenue. Regal *oikonomoi* were considered high-ranking administrators and thus "would have possessed significant social status and structural authority" (p. 46). They were sub-

ordinate officials, one or two steps removed from the top of the administrative hierarchy.

Chapter 3 marks a move into a study of *oikonomoi* in the realm of civic administration. The chapter is laid out in an easy-to-follow manner, in which Goodrich focuses on civic administrative *oikonomoi* in three specific areas: Greek cities during the Hellenistic period, Greek cities from the Roman period, and Roman colonies and municipia. In all of these categories Goodrich demonstrates that the term refers to civic magistrates with various levels of societal stature. Although, he notes, *oikonomoi* could also refer to those with the status of public slave in some sources from the Roman period.

In the domain of private administration, Goodrich shows that the term refers primarily to managers of "privately owned businesses and estates" (p. 71) in the context of an agrarian culture. In this context, *oikonomoi* were, unlike the *oikonomoi* in regal and civic contexts, primarily slaves and free persons. When Goodrich switches gears and applies the results of his historical study to the Pauline text he concludes that, of the various types of *oikonomoi* in antiquity, Paul in 1 Corinthians is working from this last semantic field, that is, the domain of the private administrator. I agree and find convincing the further claim that both the geographical context of 1 Corinthians as a city of international and commercial activity, and Paul's commercial usage of the term in which the mystery of God is the "commodity" of which he is an administrator, make this conclusion particularly strong and likely.

Goodrich argues that the term is used in 1 Cor 4:1–5 to convey both the subordinate role of apostles to God and the authoritative/representative function of the apostles in regard to other subordinate leaders in the church. I am sufficiently convinced that this dual emphasis of subordination and authoritative representation is present and intended in Paul's use of the metaphor. However, I am less certain that this leads to Goodrich's conclusions that in 1 Corinthians there were "up to five layers in the early ecclesiological hierarchy," namely: "(i) God/Christ; (ii) Paul/apostles; (iii) apostolic delegates; (iv) local leaders; (v) believers" (p. 146). Perhaps a broader study on the topic in concert with other Pauline texts will serve to strengthen this element of Goodrich's argument. I find his further hypothesis, however, to be a keen insight, exegetically clever, and convincing, namely, that in 1 Cor 4:1–5 the *oikonomos* metaphor allows Paul to diffuse the judgment of the Corinthians by virtue of the fact that as an *oikonomos* under God, Paul is to be judged only by God, and therefore not on the basis of his rhetorical or oratory skill, but only on his faithfulness as an administrator of God, by God.

Goodrich's interpretation of the metaphor in 1 Cor 9:16–23 also yields new and significant insights. Paul did indeed, argues Goodrich, preach involuntarily as a slave administrator. However, this did not therefore remove his right for compensation. For, payment of privileged slave administrators is well attested in the ancient world. Thus, in this chapter, Goodrich's earlier historical work provides the key to an interpretation that would otherwise be impossible to grasp fully. It is not that Paul is *not* entitled to a wage on account of being a slave administrator, but that *despite the fact that he is entitled to a wage*, nevertheless, he relinquishes this right in or-

der to accommodate himself to the churches that he is serving, so that he might make "even more profits/converts for his master" (p. 194).

Paul as an Administrator of God in 1 Corinthians is a concise and convincing work that makes significant new contributions to our understanding concerning several Pauline texts in 1 Corinthians, and specifically concerning Paul's view of the nature of apostolic authority in the early NT church and his use of the *oikonomos* metaphor. It is a work that exceeded my expectations and deserves a careful read by NT scholars, Pauline scholars, and scholars from various sub-fields of the study of Graeco-Roman history.

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Colossians and Philemon. By David W. Pao. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012, 462 pp., $36.99.

The Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series has been published at a rapid pace since its first volume was released in 2008. A newer addition is that of David Pao on the letters to the Colossians and to Philemon. The commentary is easy to use, well laid out, and reasonable in length—all features that will benefit busy pastors and Bible teachers. Each major unit is discussed by considering the "Literary Context," the "Main Idea," and the "Structure." Particularly helpful for teachers and preachers is the section discussing the main idea of the passage, generally in about two short sentences. There is also a "Translation" section that lucidly portrays the various logical relationships between clauses within the passage alongside the author's translation of the verses in question. This will prove quite useful for readers struggling to understand how the arguments of a long, difficult passage hang together. In this section primary clauses are indicated with bold font and secondary, dependent clauses appear indented in normal typeface. The bulk of the commentary consists of exegetical comments, titled "Explanation of the Text." Following the commentary proper there is a section called "Theology in Application" that reflects more closely on issues of theological significance for contemporary readers. There are also several "In Depth" sections (e.g. "The Colossian Hymn" [pp. 89–93], "Vice and Virtue Lists" [pp. 216–18], "Household Code" [pp. 263–66]) that provide more focused discussion of key issues without disrupting the flow of the commentary proper.

Pao assumes Pauline authorship for both letters—a proposal hardly controversial with regard to Philemon but one that is widely considered "disputed" with respect to Colossians. Pao's discussion of the Pauline authorship of Colossians (pp. 20–23), in my view, does not give sufficient attention to the arguments of his detractors. This is not to question his conclusion; it is merely to suggest that the section would have been strengthened by engaging more thoroughly the reasons why scholars doubt Pauline authorship (see esp. p. 20). In other words, the full weight of the problems and complexities of assigning Colossians to Paul is not felt when

reading this commentary. The brief discussion of the eschatology of Colossians is, perhaps, the section that merits the most additional attention in this regard (p. 21).

Pao places the writing of Colossians and Philemon within a Pauline imprisonment at Rome (c. AD 60–62). He follows the work of Clinton Arnold (*The Colossian Syncretism* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995]) in arguing that the "philosophy" that is misleading believers at Colossae is a pagan syncretism with Jewish elements (p. 31). Much of the weight of this interpretation is built upon the reference to "the worship of angels" in Col 2:18, which may be understood as either "the worship that angels [perform]" (subjective genitive) or "the worship of angels [by people]" (objective genitive). Pao opts for the latter view (p. 189), adducing contextual, lexical, and socio-religious evidence.

Following the commentary proper, there is a summary reflection titled "The Theology of Colossians" (pp. 329–40). This section—which might more appropriately bear the title "The Christology of Colossians"—explores the ideas of divine Christology, resurrection and exaltation, (the realm of, responses to, and mediation of) Christ's Lordship, and the final consummation. Throughout this section, the "Christ Hymn" (i.e. Col 1:15–20) features prominently, and it is creatively connected with other parts of the letter. Particularly interesting is Pao's emphasis on the connection between agency in creation and claims of power (p. 332).

Turning to the letter to Philemon, Pao takes the view that Onesimus was sent to Paul by Philemon in order to provide assistance to him while he was imprisoned. On this reading, Onesimus's major offence against his owner is that he overstayed with Paul. While this reading has been advocated by others before Pao (e.g. Sara Winter), it leaves a few details from the letter painfully out of sorts. Why was Onesimus considered "useless" prior to his visit to Paul? Why does Paul feel the need to advocate so forcefully on Onesimus's behalf if he was mainly guilty of staying with Paul for too long? Indeed, Paul's rhetorical strategy in vv. 18–25 suggests that Paul is calling in some kind of debt to balance out the ledger. In addition, if Philemon had sent Onesimus to assist Paul in prison, why does Paul not provide any mention of "thanks" for this (cf. Colossians 4)? Pao answers the first objection by suggesting that "useless" is a play on Onesimus's name and may refer more broadly to the perception of Phrygian slaves or, alternatively, to Onesimus's past as an unbeliever (p. 388). While the designation may indeed be a pun on the name (as many interpreters acknowledge), what would be the purpose of punning if it were not relevant to the situation at hand? Moreover, is Paul's other pun in the letter to be considered as a similar rhetorical flourish (cf. Phlm 20)? In my view, the traditional reading of v. 11—Paul's "useless" and "useful" contrast referring to Onesimus directly—remains the stronger one and seriously weakens the argument that Onesimus was sent to Paul by Philemon (rather than being a runaway slave or seeking intercession from Paul).

In the "Theology in Application" sections within Philemon, Pao states that Paul focuses on the kingdom of God by insisting on "a rhetoric of weakness that looks beyond the individual freedom" (p. 401; cf. 399). Such weakness, Pao argues, points to the reality of the cross and the participation of Paul (and the believer) in that weakness and has implications for Western individualism and other self-

autonomous perspectives. Pao also rightly draws attention to the theological and Christological import of the letter to Philemon by suggesting that there is "an underlying theological substructure" (p. 413). This substructure, Pao suggests, is not unlike the theological story of Phil 2:7–8, which portrays the humility and meditorial function of Christ. Pao concludes (very soundly, in my opinion) that "[i]nstead of seeking an immediate application behind every verse, Paul's own model as demonstrated throughout this letter reminds us of the prior act of God through Christ that allows Paul to act the way he does" (p. 414).

One significant strength of the commentary is that Pao acknowledges when matters are uncertain or difficult to determine. This is the case with his discussion of the problem Paul is engaging when he writes to Colossae (p. 27). Additionally, Pao states that Paul's letter to Philemon provides an insufficient amount of information to draw firm conclusions about the situation behind the letter (p. 347). This models scholarly restraint and interpretive humility for the reader. One can do the work that historians do, but conclusions must be appropriately qualified by the confidence one can have in the data itself.

A curious absence in the bibliography is any reference to the work of John Byron, who has written several recent articles/essays and two books on slavery in antiquity as it relates to the NT. Additionally, N. T. Wright's important essay, "Χριστὸς as 'Messiah' in Paul: Philemon 6" (in *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993] 41–55) is absent from the discussion of "the most obscure verse in this letter" (p. 369). However, the bibliography is generally well balanced with important works in both English and German and representing a good balance of older and more recent scholarship.

This commentary, true to the intentions of the ZECNT series, will be useful to those who are interested in teaching or preaching from the text of both Colossians and Philemon. The commentary is sometimes technical, but not overly so. Engagement with the Greek text is common, but even readers with deficient Greek proficiency can profit from using the commentary. Throughout the work Pao appropriately calls for caution when interpretive issues are complex or unknowable. Perhaps most importantly for any book of this nature, Pao writes lucidly and helpfully with the end user in mind.

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1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. By Robert W. Wall with Richard B. Steele. Two Horizons New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, xvi + 416 pp., $24.00 paper.

The Pastoral Epistles are often treated as canonical delinquents, forced to sit silently in the corner. The authors of this commentary seek to remedy this problem by providing students, pastors, and other Christian leaders with a reading of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus that allows each letter's theological voice to be heard. The Two Horizons Commentary series aims to reintegrate biblical exegesis with contempo-

rary theology in the service of the church. A number of commentary series have become exegetically meticulous and methodologically complex, and many individual volumes are so exhaustive that they are accessible only to the specialists. This series is written for the church—both the laity and the clergy—with the two-fold purpose of: (1) helping the reader understand individual books theologically in their ancient context; and (2) helping the reader interpret the biblical books competently into the theological contexts of the twenty-first century. Each commentary aims to address the question: how are these words the Word of God for us, the church of Jesus Christ in this place?

The volume on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus is stylistically similar to other volumes in this series. Robert Wall, Paul T. Walls Professor of Scripture and Wesleyan Studies at Seattle Pacific University, offers a paragraph-by-paragraph engagement with the text that is deliberately theological in focus. Most of the exegetical work (e.g. textual issues, word studies, grammatical questions, etc.) is done behind the scenes. The Greek text is only occasionally referenced and always transliterated and translated. Footnotes are helpful but not encyclopedic. Scholarly nomenclature is scarce. Pastors with little or no formal theological training and students in the early stages of their studies will find this commentary accessible.

Wall's interpretive strategy sets this work apart from other commentaries on the Pastorals. Wall is a well-known advocate of the canonical approach. For him, Scripture is "a canon of sacred texts whose history of formation and literary form intend to guide how a faith community uses its instruction in search of theological understanding" (p. xi). Where many commentaries on the Pastorals include a hefty introductory section on composition, Wall opts to focus on the point of canonization. He writes, "the canonical approach drills down on a *second* point of origin that follows the postbiblical history of an authored text, written for a particular audience, to the church's recognition and reception of it as canonical for all subsequent Christians" (p. 15; emphasis original). Additionally, Wall employs the Rule of Faith as a guide for his reading of the Pastorals. Using Tertullian's articulation of the apostolic Rule, Wall focuses on five core beliefs: the Creator God, Christ Jesus the Lord, the community of the Spirit, Christian existence and discipleship, and consummation in a new creation. Following his paragraph-by-paragraph commentary, Wall demonstrates how these core beliefs surface in each chapter of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. Convinced that the Pastorals are full members of the canon and constrained by the Rule of Faith, Wall enables his readers to perceive and appreciate the rich theology of these letters.

Richard Steele, professor of moral and historical theology and associate dean of graduate studies in the School of Theology at Seattle Pacific University, constructs a case study to conclude the commentary and Rule of Faith reading of each letter. In his first case study, Steele offers an overview of the ecclesial structures that John Wesley developed. He then discusses a number of ways in which early Methodist doctrine, practice, and experience embodied the key ideas embedded in 1 Timothy 1. Since Wall argues that 2 Timothy is a succession letter, the second case study focuses on John Fletcher, who was designated as Wesley's successor. The study examines through the lens of 2 Timothy why Fletcher was so designated.

In the final case study, Steele provides a sketch of Phoebe Palmer's life and thought, giving special attention to her experience of sanctification. He then seeks to show how Palmer's life illustrates what Paul says in Titus about the Holy Spirit's role in the transformation of the believer. The case study is an innovative and particularly welcomed addition to the commentary genre. Each of Steele's studies achieves the goal of helping readers "'earth' the Pastoral Epistles into the life of other Christian communities in our own day and for their own world" (p. 44).

Though I object to the way Wall interprets certain passages (this is not the place to discuss the minutiae), by and large I find this to be an excellent work that will be of great value to the church. There are, however, a few larger matters that need to be highlighted. My first critique is not as much of the authors as it is of the format of the commentary series. In my judgment, there is much for students and pastors alike to benefit from *watching* a commentator faithfully exegete a passage of Scripture. Though I am grateful for the enterprise of theological commentaries, one of the disadvantages of commentary series like Two Horizons is that, since textual issues, word studies, grammatical questions, etc., are largely handled behind the scenes, the reader is often left without an exegetical escort. In the case of this commentary, the reader revels in the theological goods that Wall has retrieved, but it is not always clear to the reader how these goods have come *from the text*. This is perhaps an inevitable weakness of commentaries that seek to display the larger theological perspective of a letter. Though I applaud Two Horizon's emphasis on theological reflection, I am not yet convinced that in the writing of commentaries we must choose *either* theological wood *or* exegetical trees.

Second, I remain unconvinced by Wall's treatment of the authorship question. Wall is certainly right to treat the Pastorals as letters with full canonical status, but he does so while claiming that speculations of who is responsible for the NT letters are "largely irrelevant considerations when deciding a text's canonicity" (p. 6). Stanley Porter has rightly pointed out that what is missing here is a recognition of how the church's canon came to be (see the exchange between Porter and Wall in *BBR* vols. 5–6). Canonical formation was a complex process involving various issues, but one of these issues appears to have been authorship, since some works were excluded because they were exposed as pseudonymous. As I understand the process, the early church's recognition of the Pastorals as divinely inspired due to their performance in the faith community was predicated upon their first being accepted and read as authentic Pauline letters. We cannot, then, treat the authorship question as an irrelevant one. The Pastorals are not anonymous documents; they are ascribed to the apostle Paul. Either they are authentic Pauline writings or they are pseudonymous documents that the early church failed to detect. If the latter, then this raises some serious questions, I think, about the place of the Pastorals in the life of the church today.

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Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith: Jesus' Faith as the Climax of Israel's History in the Epistle to the Hebrews. By Christopher A. Richardson. WUNT 2/338. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012, ix + 280 pp., €69.00 paper.

While the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate has captured the attention of Pauline scholars, interpreters have neglected the important topic of Jesus' own faith in the epistle to the Hebrews. Christopher Richardson fills this void through a comprehensive examination of the faith of Jesus in Hebrews. *Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith* is a slight revision of Richardson's doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Francis Watson at the University of Aberdeen. Richardson's study investigates all of the textual evidence for Jesus' faith in Hebrews and the literary, formal, and typological components of Hebrews 11.

In chapter 1 Richardson introduces the purpose and direction of his investigation. He observes that scholars have not only neglected the theme of Jesus' faith(fulness) but also that many prominent Hebrews scholars reject the notion that Hebrews presents Christ as a believer (p. 3). Richardson demonstrates that the author of Hebrews "does not present him [Christ] as a 'mere believer,' but rather as the ideal believer whom God's people must consider and imitate (3:1; 12:3)" (p. 5). In order to advance this argument, Richardson asks "what is the relation between Jesus' perfect faith and the exemplars of faith in Hebrews 11?" (p. 6). The relationship, according to Richardson, must be understood typologically. The exemplars of Hebrews 11 imperfectly anticipate the faith of Christ, who is presented as the climactic illustration of faithfulness in Heb 12:1–3 (p. 7). According to Richardson interpreters can discern the typological nature of Hebrews 11 on two fronts: (1) the immediate literary context; and (2) the resemblance of Heb 11:1–12:3 to the Greco-Roman literary form of an encomium (p. 10). Thus, Richardson demonstrates that the "author's agenda is to magnify the person, work, *and* faith of Christ, and that typology and, especially, encomiastic rhetoric assist him in this task" (p. 13).

Chapter 2 is the longest in the book. Richardson analyzes all of the textual evidence for Jesus' faith in Hebrews, namely 2:13, 17; 3:1–6; 4:15; 5:7–8; 10:5–7; and 12:2. The chapter also includes a thought-provoking analysis of the well-known textual variant χωρὶς θεοῦ in Heb 2:9. Through a detailed exegesis of the relevant texts, Richardson argues that Hebrews presents Jesus as the superlative example of faithfulness to God. Richardson helpfully connects his exegesis of these passages to their corresponding exhortatory sections. By doing so he shows how Jesus' perfect expression of faith indicates that he is both the means by which salvation for God's people has been accomplished and the supreme model for Christians to imitate. Richardson argues that, as a whole, Hebrews primarily portrays Jesus' faith in the context of his suffering of death (p. 106). Jesus is thus not merely the perfect example of faith, but the perfect representative of faith whose unfailing obedience resulted in the removal of sins for the sake of God's people.

In chapter 3 Richardson examines the literary context and rhetorical form of Hebrews 11 arguing for a Christocentric interpretation of Hebrews 11 with 12:1–3 functioning as the rhetorical climax. Beginning with Heb 10:19–39 and ending with 12:1–29, Richardson demonstrates how the concepts of faith and perseverance are

central to the structure of this literary unit. The middle section, Hebrews 11, is "telescoping" the discussion of faith to praise and highlight the faith of Jesus described in the climactic discourse of 12:1–3. Thus, according to Richardson, the main purpose of chapter 11 is "not to praise famous men, but rather one man in particular" (p. 137).

Richardson seeks to strengthen his argument for a Christocentric interpretation of Hebrews 11 by arguing that the literary form of the chapter resembles ancient Greco-Roman encomiastic literature. The encomium was a form of epideictic discourse designed to praise a virtuous person (p. 145). The structural points of contact between an encomium and Heb 11:1–12:3 include the introduction (προοίμιον, 11:1–3), the genealogy (γένος, 11:3–38), the actions or achievements of the person (πράξεις, 12:2–3), comparison (σύνκρισις, 12:1–3), and recapitulation and conclusion (ἐπίλογος, 11:39–12:3; p. 160). While some scholars suggest that Heb 11:1–12:3 is an "encomium on faith," Richardson argues that, though true, the passage is ultimately an encomium on Jesus, designed to highlight and praise his supreme faith (12:1–3).

In chapter 4 Richardson argues that the exemplars of faith in Hebrews 11 typologically foreshadow Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith (p. 167). Through linguistic and thematic parallels, Richardson demonstrates that chapter 11 is intimately tied to the robust Christological theology of the epistle. One of the most stimulating observations in this chapter is the linguistic and thematic connections Richardson highlights between Heb 1:1–4 and 11:1–7 (pp. 183–87). He demonstrates that the themes of creation, sacrifice, exaltation, and inheritance are recapitulated in the introductory comment of 11:3 and the depiction of Abel, Enoch, and Noah in 11:4–7. The thematic unity between 1:1–4 and 11:1–7 unites the epistle's Christology to the OT saints described in Hebrews 11. The famous saints of old "are remembered, first and foremost, for a christological purpose; that is, they are presented as anticipations of Christ" (pp. 186–87). Their deeds performed "by faith" amplify Jesus' supreme and climactic expression of faith (p. 187). Chapter 5 summarizes Richardson's arguments and makes concluding observations on the relationship between the faith of Jesus and other major themes in Hebrews.

Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith is a carefully researched and well-written work that has much to commend it. Readers familiar with the exegetical debates surrounding many of the key texts in Hebrews will profit from Richardson's fresh and illuminating insights. Richardson does not shy away from swimming against the tide of majority opinion on at least a few hotly debated passages. For example, Richardson argues against the prevailing consensus of scholarship that views Heb 5:7–8 as Jesus' sufferings in Gethsemane. Instead he suggests that vv. 7–8 integrate the language of the Psalms to reconstruct the crucifixion event at Golgotha (pp. 74-89). Similarly, Richardson argues for a minority position concerning Heb 3:1–6. He suggests this text centers not on Jesus' role as high priest, but on his exemplary role as apostle (messenger) who faithfully mediated God's revelation. While not everyone will agree with all of Richardson's conclusions, every reader will have to consider his careful and thorough exegetical observations.

Richardson's literary analysis of Hebrews 11 is one of the book's greatest strengths. Richardson demonstrates how Hebrews 11—a chapter often interpreted in isolation from the rest of the epistle—fits into the literary structure of the epistle to depict Israel's faithful saints as typological anticipations of Christ. Richardson's Christocentric reading of Hebrews 11 is a helpful corrective to the interpretations that assign Hebrews 11 a purely ecclesiastical purpose. Hebrews 11, then, is meant not merely to inspire readers to persevere in faith like the saints of old, but to highlight and praise the supreme faith of Jesus himself. Richardson's comparison of Heb 11:1–12:3 to the ancient Greco-Roman rhetorical of encomium is also a significant contribution to the field of Hebrews scholarship. Richardson's analysis is careful and balanced as he wisely recognizes that the parallels between Heb 11:1–12:3 and encomiastic literature are not exact. Yet, there are enough similarities to recognize the "dominant" character of the text as an encomium (p. 160).

I have only a few minor criticisms of Richardson's book. His section of the nature of typology was surprisingly brief, receiving only four pages in the introduction (pp. 6–10). Since typological interpretation is essential to much of the book's argument, I would have expected a more robust treatment on the nature of NT typology. In fairness Richardson cites several works that treat typology in the NT, and I am convinced that his use of typological interpretation is accurate (p. 8). Yet I am not sure that he laid enough groundwork on this point to satisfy all of his critics. In addition, Richardson perhaps overstates the importance of his topic, suggesting that Jesus' own faith "is, arguably, the most important doctrine in the epistle" (p. 15). Nevertheless, he does make a compelling case that Jesus' faith is a dominant motif in the epistle's theology.

Even though *Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith* is an academic dissertation, I found Richardson's monograph not only intellectually stimulating but also personally enriching and warmly devotional. His portrayal of the exemplary faith of Jesus, who was obedient to God even in the most trying circumstances, accomplishes the same effect the author of Hebrews intended for his readers—a greater affection for Christ and a greater desire to remain faithful.

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Joshua Typology in the New Testament. By Richard Ounsworth. WUNT 2/328. Tübingen: Mohr Sibeck, 2012, xi + 214 pp., €54.00 paper.

Joshua is mentioned only once in the epistle to the Hebrews. However, Richard Ounsworth argues that this OT figure, who by "striking coincidence" just happens to share the same name as the primary subject of Hebrews, Jesus Christ, is more significant in the theology of Hebrews than scholars often realize. *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* is a "moderately revised" version of Ounsworth's doctoral dissertation completed at Oxford in 2010. Ounsworth's primary thesis is that "a greater sense of the unity of the Letter to the Hebrews can be achieved by inferring from the Letter a typological relationship between Joshua the son of Nun and Je-

sus" (p. 1). The genesis of this project grew out of the author's stumbling as an undergraduate over the apparent "impugning of the salvific efficacy of Jesus" in the Greek text of Heb 4:8. This jarring reference to the OT Ἰησοῦς, Joshua the son of Nun, was the initial provocation that led Ounsworth to believe that "there might be some deeper theological significance" to Joshua in Hebrews (p. 1).

Ounsworth's project has four primary objectives: "1. In the light of recent research and debate into the use of the Old Testament in the New, to consider what criteria might legitimise reading Hebrews in such a way; 2. To clarify what kind of typological relationship might be inferred from Hebrews between Jesus and Joshua; 3. To investigate, through detailed exegesis of particular passages, whether such an inference aids this exegesis; 4. To see whether this exegesis, being so illuminated, helps us to read Hebrews in a satisfyingly consistent way that offers valuable answers to some of the theological questions being posed to the Epistle in recent discussion" (p. 2).

Ounsworth accomplishes each of these objectives in five incisive chapters that are rich in exegetical and theological reflection. Chapter 1 provides a helpful overview of the argument of the book and also briefly examines Joshua typology in Christian literature written after the Epistle to the Hebrews. Interestingly, Ounsworth demonstrates not only that early Christian literature identified a typological relationship between Joshua and Jesus but also that, in many instances, this typological identification appears to have been influenced by Hebrews.

In chapter 2 Ounsworth describes his hermeneutical method. The author explains that his argument rests on two pillars. The first pillar is that "'authorial intention' is not the most helpful locus of meaning" (p. 3). This is particularly applicable to reading Hebrews since we know nothing of the author's biography or historical circumstances (pp. 26–27). Ounsworth posits that he can still maintain historical objectivity and "avoid exegetical free-for-all" by focusing on the "plausible first audience" (p. 3). Thus reconstructing the "plausibility of inferences that might have been made by the historical audience of Hebrews" provides a "better criterion for interpretive legitimacy" than authorial intent (p. 19). The second pillar of Ounsoworth's method is that the plausible audience of Hebrews would rightly infer from the epistle a typological relationship between Jesus and Joshua.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide the exegetical backbone of Ounsworth's argument. Chapter 3 examines Hebrews 3–4. The author argues that Hebrews's use of Psalm 95 in Heb 3:7–4:11 evokes the events of Numbers 14. This evocation highlights the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb in contrast to the faithless wilderness generation and likewise sets up the typological relationship between Joshua and Jesus. However, this relationship is one of both similarities and differences. Ounsworth explains that "this combination of similarity and difference is analogous to the relationship between the entry into the Land of Canaan and entry into the true rest of God which was *not* achieved by Joshua, but which Hebrews is holding out to its audience as something they are presently engaged in" (p. 78; emphasis original).

In chapter 4 Ounsworth argues that the absence of Joshua from Hebrews 11 is of "profound significance" (p. 98). This "Joshua-shaped gap" in Israel's history—which includes the events of the wilderness wandering and the crossing of the

Jordan—has the rhetorical effect of locating the audience of Hebrews in an analogous situation to the people of Israel on the plains of Moab. "The audience is the last of the wilderness generation and the first to attain to the promise, bringing with them all the rest who, *whether geographically they were in the Promised Land or not,* remained wanderers and sojourners upon the earth" (p. 129; emphasis original).

Chapter 5 explores how Hebrews 3, 4, and 11 integrate with Hebrews 5–10 and its focus on the High Priesthood of Christ. This chapter provides a detailed exegesis of Heb 6:19–20, 9:1–4, and 10:19–23. According to Ounsworth, the Joshua narrative and *Yom Kippur* share the same conceptual link of entry into eschatological reality. The Joshua narrative, *Yom Kippur,* and the work of Christ all share the same features, "that a man representing and leading God's holy people passes through what has hitherto been an impenetrable ritual barrier into a place that has, under divinely-specified conditions, now been made accessible" (p. 176). Ounsworth further argues that the Joshua typology complements the cultic Christological picture by clarifying how God's people participate in Christ's access to the heavenly sanctuary. The final chapter reviews and summarizes the previous chapters and concludes with reflections on the theological prospects of a Joshua Christology.

Overall, Ounsworth's *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* is illuminating and compelling. I appreciated several aspects of the book. Most notably, Ounsworth provides page after page of sound exegesis. Each of his arguments is rigorously textual, and he never shortchanges his readers with unsatisfying answers to difficult exegetical questions. Readers will find Ounsworth's exegetical labors in Hebrews 3 and 4 particularly incisive. Ounsworth's treatment of Hebrews 11 is likewise illuminating.

Furthermore, whereas many doctoral dissertations regularly overstate their own importance, Ounsworth refreshingly submits that his proposal is not "'the key' to unlocking the mystery of Hebrews" (p. 2) but that his thesis will supplement our current understanding of the theology of Hebrews and resolve some knotty exegetical problems. Ounsworth succeeds on both accounts. In fact, my suspicion is that many readers will find Ounsworth's claims more modest than they perhaps ought to be. *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* foregrounds a regretfully neglected theme in Hebrews that illuminates not only Hebrews 3, 4, and 11 but many other portions of the epistle as well.

Finally, I also appreciated Ounsworth's sober discussion of the nature of typology. He rightly reminds his readers that typology is not merely a literary relationship between two texts. Later biblical authors do not merely create typological relationships through rhetorical flourish. Rather "authors … *highlight* similarities or analogies between different persons, places, events and so on in the life and history of Israel" (p. 19; emphasis original). The relationship therefore between type and antitype is not merely literary but ontological. In other words, "analogies are not created by the authors' literary skill but are brought about under divine providence" (p. 19).

Joshua Typology in the New Testament is an excellent treatment of Hebrews. However, I did have one major concern with the book's hermeneutical methodolo-

gy. While Ounsworth wants to distance himself from a hermeneutic that places priority on authorial intent, he seems, at times, simply unable to do so. For example, he states, "I am not claiming to demonstrate that the author of Hebrews intended to invoke a Joshua typology, only that the Epistle invites its audience to infer one" (p. 2). Of course, how the epistle can "invite" the audience to infer something without the author similarly being involved in the "invitation" is never explained. On many occasions, as in the sentence above, it appears that Ounsworth avoids speaking about authorial intent by simply replacing the author with an impersonal subject such as "the epistle." Also throughout the work Ounsworth regularly uses passive verbs to describe how the audience "is invited" to think or infer some point, though he never explains who exactly is the agent doing the inviting. My contention is that the unnamed agent is the author of Hebrews. Ounsworth, against his methodological convictions, is making claims about the intentions of the author while at the same time finding ways to talk about these intentions divorced from the one actually doing the intending. Ounsworth could clarify this ambiguity by simply adopting a more holistic methodology—one that makes room for authorial intent and first audience reception.

There has been a recent flourish of excellent academic works on Hebrews in the past few years. Ounsworth's work is certainly among that number. *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* is a brilliant treatment not only of Hebrews's use of the conquest narrative but also of the theology of Hebrews in general.

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The Life and Witness of Peter. By Larry R. Helyer. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012, 329 pp., $26.00 paper.

Despite his prominence in the NT story, the apostle Peter has been conspicuously absent from the center of Christian theological reflection. He is a theological "Lost Boy," orphaned by turns in ecclesiastical history, the pen of critics, and popular portrayals. We were separated from Peter by Luther who discovered the true gospel in the writings of Paul. In his comments on Gal 1:1, Luther ground on papal authority and doctrine by appealing to Paul's confrontation with Peter: "Against these boasting, false apostles, Paul boldly defends his apostolic authority and ministry. Humble man that he was, he will not now take a back seat. He reminds them of the time when he opposed Peter to his face and reproved the chief of the apostles." In recounting the biblical narrative, Luther had his eye on Rome. The Reformation put Paul in Protestant hands, leaving Peter with the papacy.

Peter also became a "Lost Boy" through the pen of scholars. From the mid-18th century, developing historical-critical methodologies brought into question the credibility of the biblical witness to the life and teachings of Peter, paralleling the rising debates surrounding the person and teaching of Jesus. The testimony from Papias quoted in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15) that Peter was the source behind the Gospel of Mark did not fare well in this storm either. The majority of contempo-

rary scholars have questioned the credibility of this tradition. In the same vein, the speeches in Acts brought us no closer to Peter, since these were deemed the creative theological compositions of the author of Luke-Acts. The commonality of themes in the sermons of Peter and Paul stood as evidence that their point of view was that of the author and not the apostles. As for the letters that carry Peter's name, many concluded that these are pseudonymous writings disconnected from the historical Simon Bar Jonah.

Alongside these critical assessments that have absented Peter from us was the perspective emerging from F. C. Baur and the Tübingen School in the 19th century. Baur and his followers taught us that, although Acts presents a unified portrait of the primitive church, the church was, in fact, divided between two missions and two approaches to faith, one Jewish and Petrine and one Gentile and Pauline. Peter does not fare well in these accounts of the history. While Tübingen's construction of early Christian history is not common currency today, the German legacy lives on among those who focus on the conflict between Paul and Peter in Galatians 2 and place Peter as a secondary player in the development of Christian theology.

Peter has become an orphaned "Lost Boy" in the popular pulpit portrayals as well. On Sunday morning he is the impetuous disciple who walks on water and confesses the Messiah. Yet he becomes the failed disciple who sinks into the deep and denies the Messiah three times. Jesus rebukes him for his rejection of the theology of the suffering Messiah. Later, Paul lays into him publicly for not living according to the social or community entailments of the doctrine of justification by faith (Galatians 2). Despite the failures, we warm to him since the failed disciple is restored by Jesus in John 21. We recognize ourselves in his story.

F. F. Bruce once said, "A Paulinist (and I myself must be so described) is under constant temptation to underestimate Peter" (F. F. Bruce, *Peter, Stephen, James, and John: Studies in Early Non-Pauline Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], p. 42). Many factors contributed to the neglect of the person and theology of Peter, but we are currently witnessing a rise in interest in the apostle's life and legacy. For many years Oscar Cullman's *Peter: Disciple—Apostle—Martyr* (2d ed.; London: SCM, 1962) stood almost alone as our critical source for understanding the Rock. However, recently we have seen a number of publications about the apostle Peter. The most notable of these is Martin Hengel's final work, *Saint Peter: The Underestimated Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). Marcus Bockmuehl has also busied himself with the study of Peter and has produced *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012) as well as his earlier work, *The Remembered Peter in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). In July 2013, the faculty of divinity at the University of Edinburgh hosted a conference on "Peter in earliest Christianity." The volume by Larry R. Helyer entitled *The Life and Witness of Peter* adds to this small but growing collection of works on the apostle's life and teaching.

The reconstructions of Peter's life and teaching that have appeared in recent years are far from uniform in their approach. A minimalist position holds that the witnesses within the NT are too unreliable to present a coherent picture of the apostle. The image of Peter within the NT and later Christian literature shows us

how the "Peter of faith" developed in the various Christian communities, but this image need not be connected to the "Simon of history." Others, however, hold a maximalist position that affirms all the NT sources *prima facie*, and they therefore paint a fulsome picture of the apostle and his thought. Indeed, from some of these writings one would hardly be aware that there ever existed questions regarding the reliability of the sources for Peter's teaching. They synthesize the witnesses regarding Peter's life and teaching without paying much attention to the question of how the early church may have filtered and modified the witness about him. Between the minimalist and maximalist approaches, a number of scholars raise questions about the reliability of the NT witness regarding Peter but still find enough historical threads to weave a picture—sometimes robust, sometimes skeletal—of the life and teaching of the apostle.

Helyer's *Life and Witness of Peter* stands within the maximalist tradition with its firm commitment to the historical reliability of all the NT testimony about Peter. The discussion about Peter in the Gospels does not include an examination of critical approaches to the materials, and there is no substantive discussion regarding the Papias testimony regarding Peter's role in the composition of Mark. Helyer's concern in the first part of the book is to present a harmonized life of Peter from the Gospels and Acts without asking questions about how the various authors or communities might have shaped the testimony. He admits the omission, stating, "I am aware that some scholars who practice redaction and narrative criticism will be uncomfortable with my harmonistic approach to the Gospels. I appreciate the insights of both types of criticism but insist that a harmonistic approach, carefully employed, still has a place at the table and accords with basic methodology in historical studies generally" (p. 30, n. 36). Similarly, Helyer does not discuss the question of the faithfulness of the testimony regarding Peter in Acts nor does he spend much time on the defense of the authorship of 1 and 2 Peter (pp. 107–13, 207–15). Those wishing for a more robust discussion of the contemporary problems surrounding the NT witness regarding Peter will have to read elsewhere.

The strength of Helyer's tome lies in his close reading of the NT documents. Its weakness is the lack of critical engagement, the spotty bibliography on recent literature about Peter in the NT and the Petrine epistles, and the absence of discussion of some key issues surrounding the Petrine literature. The debate Elliott generated regarding the audience of 1 Peter, the questions Richards raised about whether or not Silvanus was Peter's amanuensis, and the argument that Baukham put forward that 2 Peter is a testament and therefore pseudepigraphic, all receive no mention (John H. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966]; E. Randolph Richards, "Silvanus Was Not Peter's Secretary: Theological Bias in Interpreting διὰ Σιλουανοῦ … ἔγραψα in 1 Peter 5:12," *JETS* 43 [2000] 417–32; Richard Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* [WBC; Waco: Word, 1983]).

Helyer does, however, seek to synthesize the Petrine witness through the various strata, highlighting parallels between the Gospels and the Petrine literature to

show the coherence of thought (see, e.g., pp. 38, 40, 43, 46, 51–52, 58, 60–61, 66–67, 72–73, 83–85, etc.). The analysis of the portrayal of Peter in the Gospels is stronger than Helyer's exposition of Peter's thought as represented in Acts. Helyer includes the Pauline testimony regarding Peter in Galatians and 1 Corinthians. While the focus of the analysis of the Gospels and Acts is the life of Peter, Helyer mines the Petrine epistles as he lays out the theology of the apostle. Helyer walks through 1 Peter's understanding of God, Christology, the Holy Spirit and the "spirits in prison" (3:18–22), suffering, and the people of God. Theological themes in 2 Peter discussed include the epistle's Christology, doctrine of God, soteriology, polemic against the false teachers, and eschatology. The strength of the book lies within his discussion of the theology of the epistles, especially 1 Peter. There are gaps in his argument, such as the lack of reference to Elliott's work on "royal priesthood" in 1 Pet 2:9 (see Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy*) and the absence of engagement with key contemporary literature on 2 Peter, such as the commentaries by Neyrey, Davids, and Green (Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude* [AB; New York: Doubleday, 1993]; Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* [PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006]; Gene L. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008]). Nonetheless, Helyer presents a helpful starting outline of the theology of these books that later serves as the foundation for his summary of Petrine teaching.

The final sections of the book take the reader through "The Rest of the Story," including the testimony of the "Postapostolic Fathers" and the apocryphal legends surrounding Peter. The material here presents a good introduction to the texts from the second century and beyond that discuss Peter without going into a detailed analysis of the reception history of the Petrine testimony. One of the most helpful sections of the book comes at the very end when Helyer bullet points an outline of "Peter and NT Theology" (pp. 305–6). In this brief section he summarizes what he regards as the "top ten contributions of the apostle Peter to NT theology." These include Peter's theology of the cross, his understanding of the new birth, a high Christology, a view of redemptive history rooted in the story of Israel, a theology of suffering, an understanding of the human condition, the grace of God as the source and sustenance of all Christian discipleship, the normative nature of apostolic teaching, his orientation toward culture, his understanding of eschatology, and the theology of hope. Helyer asks us to understand Peter not simply as a model disciple and leader in the early church but as a foundational voice in the early development of Christian theology. Peter, and not just Paul, was a significant contributor to the church's theology, and we are beneficiaries of his heritage.

Helyer's *Life and Witness of Peter* is not a difficult read and would be well suited for an undergraduate course on Peter if adequately supplemented when addressing key critical and interpretive issues. Indeed, it could even serve as a text for an adult education class in the church. Those preparing sermons on Peter's theology and who call the flock of God to an *imitatio Petri* will discover much that is helpful in his work. As a text for a graduate course it could be useful if read alongside those critical works that would orient students more fully to contemporary debates. However,

perhaps the primary significance of Helyer's work is the role it plays in the contemporary renewal of interest in the person and theology of Peter, the Rock.

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Revelation. By Paige Patterson. NAC. Nashville: B&H, 2012, 411 pp., $29.99.

Paige Patterson (Ph.D., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary) is President and Professor of Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, also occupying the L. R. Scarborough Chair of Evangelism at SWBTS. Patterson has published smaller, and more popularly written, commentaries on the Song of Songs, 1 Corinthians, Titus, and 1 Peter, as well as articles and book chapters in the field of theology.

The current commentary has been in preparation for over 20 years (a point the author strongly implies in his "Acknowledgements" [p. 9]). Apparently, the demands of Patterson's responsibilities at Southwestern, in the Southern Baptist Convention, with ministries and other activities worldwide, and in serving as a New Testament Consulting Editor for the New American Commentary series significantly slowed the completion of this volume. I recall rumors that its release was imminent as early as 2000–2001, and shortly thereafter I saw an online comment purported to be written by a recommender who had supposedly read a prepublication copy of the manuscript. Thinking the commentary would surely appear soon, I initially requested the opportunity to review it at that point in time. Obviously, that request proved to be quite a bit premature.

Among more recent commentaries on the Apocalypse, Patterson's NAC volume carves out something of a niche of its own. That is not easy to do with a biblical book on which numerous—at least broadly—evangelical commentaries have been released in the last two decades. For example, it is not as scholarly—or lengthy—as works like Beale's massive NIGTC volume or even Smalley's freestanding work. It is not as compact and readable as Michaels's contribution to the IVPNTC series or as practical as Keener's NIV Application Commentary work. In general "feel" (i.e. readability and length), it most reminds me of Mounce's 1997 revision of his NICNT volume.

In producing this distinctive volume, it is hard to tell whether Patterson felt somewhat restricted by the stated series design of the New American Commentary (see the "Editors' Preface" on pp. 7–8). Specifically, in the "Introduction," he focuses pages 45–48 on "Preaching the Apocalypse," a discussion that includes a number of helpful general preaching tips summarized from his article on that subject in *Faith and Mission* in 1994. However, Patterson does not follow up consistently on that implied desire to help pastors and teachers reading his work to expound the book of Revelation more effectively. To his credit, Patterson does intersperse seven excursuses—six of which are titled "Pastoral Excursus on …"—in what appears to be an attempt to make the commentary somewhat more practical for ministry. However, there is no clear rhyme or reason concerning why he chose the

topics for the excurses or the related passages. For example, there are no excursuses related to chapters 1–3, 5–9 or 19–22, areas of the book that contain a number of passages with potentially important pastoral/practical ramifications.

This commentary has several notable strengths to commend it. First, Patterson effectively brings to bear his lively personality, near-encyclopedic wider reading, and infectious communication style in the writing of this volume. Accordingly, it is nothing if not interesting to read. Second, given the NAC's series subtitle—"An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture"—Patterson takes his assignment seriously and accomplishes these twin aims quite well: there is much attention given to text-critical and close exegetical/grammatical issues, and many of his theological conclusions strongly reflect his theological commitments drawn from elsewhere in Scripture. Third, the "Introduction" section (pp. 17–51) leaves no reader in doubt as to where Patterson stands on the issues he chooses to treat. Fourth, there are several points at which Patterson helpfully critiques the NIV translation, which the NAC series employs as the written text before each section of the book, and offers his own rendering. Fifth, the commentary bibliography includes a wide variety of sources on the Apocalypse all the way from the ancient church to 2008, and Patterson actually does quote—often at great length—from a significant majority of them. Sixth, Patterson is to be commended for making it clear that it is quite possible to hold a pretribulational position without being a full-blown dispensationalist (e.g. p. 41). Seventh, his discussion that extends the identity of "Babylon the Great" back to the attitude exemplified by those who built the Tower of Babel is highly perceptive, not falling into the common and nearsighted "rebuilt Babylon" view of many pretribulationists. Eighth, Patterson is correct in his assertion that there will be "one people of God" in the New Jerusalem (see Rev 21:12, 14), though there will be no mistaking the continuing distinctiveness of Israel and the church (p. 370). In that passage, he admirably allows the implications of the text to speak for themselves.

There are, however, also a number of weaknesses to be noted, several of which are the "other side"—or downside—of the strengths listed above. First, some of Patterson's close attention to exegetical detail is near-sighted and not balanced with a sense of the "big picture" of the wider movement/structure of the book. Second—and relatedly—in an era in which the field of literary structural studies (including in relation to the Apocalypse) has exploded with a host of valuable insights for biblical exposition, Patterson limits himself to strongly asserting that 1:19 is the key to understanding Revelation's structure (pp. 32–34). He then offers the identical outline he prepared for the *Criswell Study Bible* in 1979 as the basis for his exposition (p. 48). Third, for a book as complex as Revelation, the "Introduction" section is brief: only 34 out of the 369 total pages of the commentary, or about 9 per cent. Fourth, it is not at all clear that many of Patterson's extended citations in his footnotes are that relevant beyond a sentence or two, or occasionally a short paragraph, but certainly not justifying the amount of material he chose to include … over and over. Fifth, the bibliography listing is limited almost exclusively to book-length treatments, essentially overlooking the great wealth of journal articles and other shorter sources produced over the past several decades.

Sixth, the otherwise helpful "Scripture Index" (pp. 407–11) inexplicably ends with Jude, containing no references to the book of Revelation (p. 411). Seventh, there are several errata worth noting (e.g. p. 39 states that Rev 20:1–10 mentions "1,000 years" five times, when it actually does so six times [20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]; p. 42 reads "all will confirm outwardly to the millennial reign of Christ" when it clearly should read "conform"; and p. 233 reads "The significance of this statement can scarcely be underestimated" when "overestimated" is obviously intended). Eighth, Revelation is virtually universally understood today as being saturated with echoes of and allusions to the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels—many of which are strikingly clear. Thus, to point out but two obvious examples, it is quite surprising that Patterson offers no discussion of: (1) the side-by-side citations of Dan 7:13 and Zech 12:10—not to mention Jesus' allusion to both passages in Matt 24:30—in his comments on Rev 1:7 (pp. 62–63); or (2) the parallelism between the unsealing of the scroll in Revelation 6 (pp. 175–89) and the "beginning of birth pains" portion of the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24.

In regard to a recommendation, it is my opinion that the question should be approached in two ways. First, without question, when Paige Patterson's *Revelation* is compared to the standards for the NAC series set forth in the "Editor's Preface" (pp. 7–8), it should be considered eminently successful. With that in mind, this volume can be strongly recommended to its intended audience: "the minister or Bible student who wants to understand and expound the Scriptures."

Second, for the purpose of learning from what has already been done to enhance future endeavors, I will close on a note of "what might have been." The NAC series editorial standards were set in the later 1980s (p. 8). The ensuing two and a half decades, however, have seen the bar raised considerably in the field of evangelical commentary writing, notably in areas such as more careful and detailed attention to literary structure, exegesis that is more closely connected to the wider contextual flow, intertextuality, and suggestiveness for application. Given Paige Patterson's considerable ability, and with more than 20 years invested in focused study of the Apocalypse just for this 1980s-style commentary, I firmly believe that he was capable of a treatment of Revelation that was stronger—exegetically, theologically, and homiletically/practically. Had Dr. Patterson chosen to draw upon the abundant fruit available from such helpful emerging trends in biblical studies and commentary writing, I am convinced that I might be reviewing not just—as it is—a very helpful exposition, but one that rivaled—if not surpassed—Robert Thomas's two-volume work as the standard pretribulational commentary of at least the past 25 years on Revelation.

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Saving God's Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame. By Jackson Wu. Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press, 2013, xii + 356 pp. $25.00 paper, $11.99 Kindle.

Missiology is a derivative discipline; it derives from God's missional calling upon his people and theological reflection upon the Christian Bible. In addition, missiology integrates insights from the social sciences that facilitate cross-cultural communication. While missiological research closely engages fields such as anthropology and sociology, theory and practice must always stand upon sound theology. Jackson Wu's study reflects this theologically-centered conception of missiology; thus, it is a serious work of applied theology.

Wu's provocative central idea is that existing methods of theological contextualization truncate the gospel under the influence of Western cultural themes, presenting a message at variance with the full witness of Scripture. In response, Wu advocates a more deliberately cross-cultural interpretive framework in order to counter culture-bound tendencies that impede the development, proclamation, and reception of biblically faithful theology.

Wu's argument unfolds in six chapters. An introductory chapter previews following material and intimates that following Wu's ensuing discussion will require thinking in exegetical, theological, and sociological categories. Framing his interdisciplinary approach is an assertion that first appears here and echoes throughout the book: the Bible is "ultimately authoritative in theological and missiological questions. Truth exists apart from any particular culture" (pp. 2–3).

The second chapter evaluates "Theological Contextualization in Practice." Wu examines the uncritical assumption of a particular understanding of the gospel message that has matured through the centuries in the West and permeates its cultural meta-narratives: a view that predominantly employs legal metaphors and centers upon an atomistic view of humanity as individuals. Wu notes that, on occasion, the Bible indeed explains the responsibility of individuals to a holy God with legal terminology, and that Western Christianity is not mistaken in articulating this concept in its theology. However, he also asserts that legal metaphors are but one thematic strand intertwined with others in the grand narrative of Scripture. Gospel proclamation that solely employs individual-focused, legal language is theologically reductionistic. Screened and adapted for a Western cultural mindset, this abridged gospel at times faces difficulty communicating to non-Western cultures. In order to counter reductionism in theological contextualization, Wu advocates that acts of interpretation precede communication and application. Specifically, the interpretive grid of a given non-Western culture's worldview (rather than that of Western culture) provides the proper starting point for contextualization within that cultural context. Then the articulation of biblical theology, grounded in grammatical-historical exegesis, initiates a process of questioning and replacing elements of the prevailing worldview according to scriptural norms.

Wu's own work in China leads him to critique past and present methods of "Theologizing for a Chinese Culture" in the third chapter. Confucian values such as considerations of "face" in all social interactions, ancestor veneration, and group

identity permeate Chinese society. Important theological concepts such as sin, righteousness, and law carry meanings that vary significantly from Western Christian expectations. Foundational differences such as these can seriously undercut theological contextualization that remains insensitive to the Chinese context. Thus, on one hand, Wu critiques familiar strategies bound closely to the West. On the other hand, he faults "Sino-theology" for its ethnocentrism and overt employment of Chinese cultural mores as norms for Scripture interpretation. While respecting helpful insights that issue from practitioners of several reviewed contextualization strategies, the third chapter delineates what Wu's proposals in the following chapters do *not* entail.

Wu's fourth chapter orients the reader to "Honor and Shame in Context," for which the twin contexts of concern are contemporary cultures and Scripture. "Face" is social capital, a measure of one's honor. Generally speaking, "face" manifests itself in the West in the prestige one accrues individually through achievements; therefore, the thought process of most Western evangelism consists in countering works-based righteousness. In contrast, in day-to-day life Chinese ascribe "face" in the context of maintaining social standing instead of amassing personal accomplishments, so the notion of striving to do good works in order to merit approval from God is essentially alien to Chinese cultural thinking. Wu then surveys honor and shame concepts in Scripture in order to suggest that honor and shame are much more prominent categories of biblical theology than most presentations grounded in Western cultures would suggest.

The fifth chapter, "A Soteriology of Honor and Shame," treats these two concepts as integral components of a biblical theology of salvation. First, Wu addresses two preliminary and related questions: "What does the atonement do for God?" and "What does Jesus accomplish for people?" Next, he draws upon both the traditional understanding and "New Perspective" on Paul to flesh out an honor-shame view of justification. He notes that the traditional interpretation stresses justification as a matter of "achieved" righteousness (brought about through Christ's sinless sacrifice, accomplishing what sinful humans cannot do—an *ethical* concern), and the New Perspective predominantly views justification as "ascribed" righteousness (membership within God's covenant people—an *ethnic* concern). Wu asserts that thinking in terms of honor and shame correlates ethically and ethnically related teaching in Paul's letters, and he demonstrates this assertion through a survey of Romans. Lastly, Wu presents a synthesized honor and shame-focused soteriology, showing that God vindicates his own honor and glory through justification. A sixth chapter recapitulates Wu's arguments and advances his conclusions.

By any measure, *Saving God's Face* is a challenging read. Unfortunately, the publisher has altered the book very little from its dissertation format, printing it on 8½ x 11 paper with left justification and occasionally allowing minor word processing issues to detract from the reading experience. Issues likely familiar only to missions specialists at times appear in the text without explanations that a broader audience requires. Even so, Wu has added a Scripture index not present in his original dissertation, facilitating use of the book as a reference work. Availability in

Kindle format increases the book's accessibility, particularly for Wu's fellow field theologians who value portability and security.

Other challenges facing the reader are much more significant, including identifying the relationship between Wu's book and the existing body of works on theological contextualization. For example, this is not another "what the Bible really says" book that advances sensationalist claims of novel insights on Scripture, refuting traditional understandings. Further, despite Wu's assertion that viewing the Bible through the lens of a Chinese cultural worldview can lead to helpful interpretive insights, he has expressly not written in advocacy of ethnocentric, reader-response *eisegesis*. Perhaps most importantly, Wu has refrained from a tendency familiar to readers and writers of dissertations: promotion of a sweeping "theory of everything" that discounts contrary data and is uncharitable to scholarly positions against which it offers an alternative. In contrast, Wu actually critiques the hegemony of a reigning viewpoint in theology: the Western individual-focused, legal metaphor-dominated worldview. Indeed, the social location of much of Wu's readership within Western culture calls for openness to self-critique, which presents yet another challenge for readers.

Wu's opposition to "either-or" thinking—that is, the classical Western perspective is right, and differing viewpoints from other cultures are wrong—does not employ the flawed kinds of "both-and" thinking that eschew the critical sifting of ideas. Instead, noting that no theology is free of cultural "baggage," he advocates Scripture-driven, critical rethinking of theological contextualization that values complementary insights derived from communication across cultures. Developing sufficient cultural awareness to communicate within and to a host culture's vantage point requires significant investment of effort and time. Furthermore, conducting grammatical-historical exegesis in order to form theology for cross-cultural contextualization is also an energy- and time-intensive task. Thus the fruits of Wu's work call into question mission strategies that primarily emphasize rapid advance, discourage long-term personal investment, and shun in-depth interaction with the whole canon of Scripture.

Wu's work is weighty. Upon turning the final page, the reader may sense the need to review antecedent arguments or even read the book a second time. Those with vested interests in specialized fields will undoubtedly register points of dissent with Wu or raise questions of method; such is the nature of reception of cross-disciplinary studies. Yet what if Wu is essentially right? What if a fundamental way of conceptualizing life that is native to billions of people has lain underappreciated in the text of the Bible itself, in the formation of theology, and in the communication of the message of Scripture through contextualization? Implications for the practice of missions and biblical theology are fraught with consequence; thus, Wu's work merits careful consideration of a broad readership.

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