

BOOK REVIEWS

Dictionary of Daily Life in Biblical & Post-Biblical Antiquity, vol. 1: *A–Da*. Edited by Edwin M. Yamauchi and Marvin R. Wilson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2014, xxxvi + 400 pp., \$24.95 paper.

Edwin Yamauchi serves as Professor Emeritus of History at Miami University. He authored *Persia and the Bible* (Baker, 1990) and *Greece and Babylon: Early Contacts between the Aegean and the Near East* (Baker, 1967). Marvin Wilson is the Harold J. Ockenga Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies at Gordon College. He wrote *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Eerdmans, 1989) and its sequel, *Exploring Our Hebraic Heritage: A Christian Theology of Roots and Renewal* (Eerdmans, 2014).

Thirty-three scholars contribute to the dictionary. Following the list of Abbreviations, the authors provide an overview of the pertinent “Periods, Ages, and Dates” and an Introduction to the series. Volume 1, the first of a projected three-volume set, contains thirty-nine articles ranging from “Abortion” to “Dance.” The entries address subjects seldom included in Bible encyclopedias and dictionaries—subjects such as domestic life, laws, cultic practices, and technology. Each entry, approximately five to twenty pages in length, develops the topic according to six subheadings: the OT, the NT, the Near Eastern world, the Greco-Roman world, the Jewish world, and the Christian world. The articles conclude with a bibliography of topic-specific resources. More general resources appear in the back of the volume in the seven-page Select Bibliography comprised exclusively of books. The back matter also displays seven Figures (photos or sketches) that depict various aspects of ancient culture. Unfortunately, the lack of indexes diminishes the dictionary’s value as a stand-alone reference work.

The contributors often draw attention to background information that illumines the Scriptures. For instance, Paul’s shipwreck in Acts 27:14–44 transpired in October, a dangerous time to sail on the eastern Mediterranean (p. 191). The essay on “Clothing” elucidates the charge of 1 Peter 1:13 to “gird up loins of your mind” (p. 325). The discussion of “Ceramics and Pottery” expounds the onomatopoeic term *קַקַק* (Jer 19:1, 10), a “jar” that produced a gurgling noise when liquid was poured out of it (p. 273).

An assortment of fascinating facts lures the reader from one entry to the next. For example, men in antiquity lived only forty years on average, and mothers only thirty years, according to the entry on “Childbirth & Children” (p. 280). Moreover, a “Roman delicacy was fattened rodents known as dormice,” and sometimes they were “glazed with honey and covered with poppy seed” (p. 232). The “Aqueducts & Water Supply” essay reports that “The earliest aqueduct in the Near East was the 35-mile canal built by Menua (809–786 BC) at Urtu in eastern Turkey, which is still in use today” (p. 68). By reading the treatise on “Baths and Bathing,” one

learns that “A temple of Sahure (5th Dyn.) at Saqqara had a drainage system using copper pipes which extended 400 m. into a valley” (p. 148).

At times the writers espouse debatable interpretations. Some contributors imply a minimum age of the earth. Yamauchi, developing the work of the late R. K. Harrison, dates a red dot in the El Castillo Cave to 40,000 BC (p. 91). Wilson assigns the Late Paleolithic Era to 40,000–10,000 BC (p. 199). Keith Schoville dates a cave painting to 50,000 BC in his entry on “Dance” (p. 374). Furthermore, Yamauchi and Harrison contend that the “three days’ journey” of Jonah 3:3 functions as “a literary expression for a large city” (p. 291).

On occasion, the contributors conceal their own view when discussing a debated topic. In the tractate on “Census,” Yamauchi and Harrison fail to take a position on the issue of large numbers of the HB (p. 263). In addition, their entry on “Clothing” does not resolve the question of whether Joseph’s garment was multi-colored (p. 323). The article on “Astrology” by Lester Ness never specifies the identity of the Christmas star in Matthew 2:2–10 (p. 101).

This work is more up to date than the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols., Doubleday, 1992) and broader in scope than the books by Victor Matthews (*The Cultural Word of the Bible: An Illustrated Guide to Manners and Customs*, 4th ed., Baker Academic, 2015) and Philip King and Lawrence Stager (*Life in Biblical Israel*, Westminster John Knox, 2001). Scholars and ministers can garner useful information from this dictionary for Bible study and sermon preparation.

Mark A. Hassler

The Master’s Seminary, Sun Valley, CA

Reading and Understanding the Bible. By Ben Witherington III. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 278 pp., \$29.95 paper.

In the field of books on scriptural interpretation, Ben Witherington III has recently added his contribution. His previous works have been recognized for their scholarly work and he is well recognized in the field of NT studies for his efforts. Yet, what makes this book a somewhat unique contribution to its field is the fact that it is targeted at helping new readers of the Bible to begin reading it properly (p. 3) Or, to put it another way, it is to be used as a “GPS” to help the reader navigate the difficulties of the Bible. (p. xxii)

Witherington seeks to do this by splitting his book into two separate parts that can roughly be seen as theory and practice. He has chosen to break them into the imagery of surveying the map and unearthing the treasure. One of the unique features of this book is that it begins by seeking to provide an overarching picture of what the Scriptures say, calling the student to seek to read the Scriptures analytically. He argues that beginning with theory and working toward the text appears to be backwards and it would be most helpful if one allows the text to decide the subject matter (p. 6). He then moves the reader through genre-related subjects such as literary features, historical matters, and theological issues to finish out the first part of the work.

The initial section of the work has much to commend it. Calling students to analytical reading is a rare but positive and direct incentive for students to take the Scriptures seriously in an age where many students enter theological programs with what may be a superficial reading. His distinction between history and biography are helpful for dealing with questions in regard to what is included in the historical texts of Scripture and why certain matters are left out (e.g. the childhood of Jesus). In the section on wisdom literature, Witherington rightly suggests that reading such literature takes patience and time in order to properly interpret it. Also, his explanations of prophecy and figurative language appear to bring the material within the reach of novice students yet still provide consideration and explanation that come from years of experience in the field.

In the second part of the book, Witherington works to show the student how one might put the considerations of the first section into practice. He begins with a basic chapter on hermeneutics and works through Historical Narrative, the Psalms, Isaiah, Prophecies and Parables of Jesus, and Paul's work. Finally, he ends the section by providing students with ideas on how to move forward in their study of Scripture after they have finished with the book, and he closes the book with articles on the formation of the canon and the history of the English Bible.

Noteworthy in this section is Witherington's chapter on the basic rules of hermeneutics. Arguing the importance of the context and for Scripture as its own interpreter is helpful for new students. Furthermore, his advice to students on what kind of commentary they should use, based on their current knowledge, is a useful tool that seems to be missing from many books of this nature. His sections regarding the formation of the canon and the English Bible were both well written and useful for students and pastors alike who might have people under their care who are curious about such matters. Finally, the layout of every chapter makes the point of the chapter plain and the goals specific, as well as providing the reader with further resources for future research.

While this work has much to commend it, there are a few areas of concern. When Witherington provides the core metanarrative, he spends a lot of space on the creation account, suggesting primarily that it is not a literal history, and that patriarchy is the result of the curse. Moreover, while much time is spent on this material, when it comes to the OT and the metanarrative, nothing is said of the covenants. While this might not seem too alarming to some, Witherington spends three pages on how the creation account is not a history and that the "worst consequence of original sin" was the loss of egalitarianism, yet he only spends two paragraphs on the rest of the OT. Perhaps more notable in this is that in Witherington's account of the fall, within the metanarrative, the *euangelion* is not mentioned. While a lack of proportion is often a shallow argument, the primary issue here is what appears to be the neglect of core issues to the study of the OT for the beginning student.

A second issue is that while the second part of the text is designed to show the student how to apply rules of hermeneutics, Witherington tends to stick to grammatical exegesis of the biblical languages from his own knowledge. While much of the exegesis is commendable and helpful, it may not provide guidance to

the student as to the use of resources and methodologies. It would seem helpful to provide exegesis from the perspective of a student who seeks to utilize the rules and methods suggested in the book. Noteworthy among these is the unsourced suggestion that Elisha was abusing God's power when calling the she-bears to destroy the mocking children (p. 116). What seems missing in his exegesis is the context of an honor/shame society. That being said, it must be noted that Witherington recognized the issue partway through and acknowledges it at the end of his exegesis of the Psalms (pp. 145–46). Moreover, his suggestion of the importance of knowing the biblical languages is commendable.

Finally, there are a few items that seem out of place in a beginner's treatment on understanding Scripture. There are a few occasions that Witherington speaks negatively of covenant theology, a debate about which a new reader to the text is likely ignorant (pp. 99–100). There is also an assumption of Q as a source document with no apparent explanation (p. 44). In his chapter on Isaiah, he addresses questions of authorship and suggests a two-author approach and promises an explanation that never appears (p. 149), which is likely to confuse a new student. However, this might be an editing issue. There are also a few places where footnotes or further explanation would be helpful, such as the suggestion that Tyndale coined the word "Jehovah" (p. 237) and the use of the term "exegesis" with no note pointing the reader to the glossary where it is defined (p. 112).

While there are some issues that might give some professors and pastors pause, Witherington's book has many positive attributes that make it a worthwhile text for starting conversations on the issue of understanding the Bible. Its suggestions on reading analytically and asking the right questions of the text are helpful in shaping the student's thought processes in regards to approaching the text. The book also provides the reader with many valuable resources for future study. This book will surely be a useful tool for many introductory courses in scriptural interpretation.

Kenny Edward Hilliard III
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
New Horizon Baptist Fellowship, Marion, NC

This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the OT and Its Oddities. By Matthew Richard Schlimm. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015, 250 pp., \$22.99 paper.

Matthew Richard Schlimm, assistant professor of OT at University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, addresses problems that have been treated many times before by many different people, and often offers well-known advice regarding those problems, but he makes a significant contribution to the area of study in two ways: (1) he offers new insights on a number of the problem areas; and (2) he builds his arguments on the idea of the OT as a friend in faith. In fact, he asserts that the idea lies at the heart of the book (p. 6).

The book contains expected traditional components of Contents, Figures, Preface and Acknowledgments, Abbreviations, Works Cited, Author Index, Scrip-

ture Index, and Subject Index, along with a more unexpected Appendix—"A Literal Translation of Genesis 2:4b–4:16," which includes annotations and notes, included in particular support for the content of chapter 2 (and reflecting his more extensive published work on Genesis). The substance of the book is divided into twelve chapters, with the first introducing the basic problem of the OT, along with Schlimm's suggestion about how to approach it as friend in faith, and the last summarizing and concluding. In the intervening chapters, Schlimm sets forth different areas of challenge and suggestions toward solution. The topics include well-worn issues such as questions about beginnings, or Genesis and creation (chaps. 2–3); violence (chap. 5); the content and character of biblical law (chaps. 7–8); the anger people express toward God (chap. 10); and the anger God expresses toward people (chap. 11). In addition, Schlimm addresses topics not typically in the forefront of apologetic work: how to derive positive moral principles from material that reflects morally questionable actions and characters (chap. 4) and the issue of gender (chap. 6).

I am usually somewhat skeptical when I begin to read a book that addresses the challenges or difficulties of the OT, since quite often those addressing the topic end up demeaning the OT, that is, they display a perspective that at least casts suspicion on the idea that the OT is Scripture in the historic, traditional sense. However, the author quickly won me over. He stated his commitment in the beginning: "to affirm the sacred status of the Old Testament, as the church has done for centuries," while also acknowledging and struggling with its difficulties (p. xi). And he sticks to that commitment throughout.

Schlimm begins the volume by summarily introducing the OT as problem, briefly noting many of the topics he will address in succeeding chapters. Options for reacting to the problem include seeing the OT as enemy ("Marcion and His Children," p. 3), seeing the OT as stranger ("The Church Today," p. 4), or seeing the OT as "Friend in Faith" (p. 5). Schlimm sees precedent for the latter idea in "literary friendships," an idea that is quite ancient. He was also influenced along these lines in more modern times by his mentor, Ellen F. Davis, who has also written on the topic.

Schlimm then references Aristotle and gives reasons for the value of friendship, and along the way suggests how the OT functions as friend in each way. He then adds his own formulations to the concept: "The Old Testament ... gives us new ways of being and acting—ways of life we never would have considered otherwise." He adds that good friends truly know us and can help us to avoid self-deception, and so the OT, like a good friend, "reminds us of the dangers of sin, as well as how we are made in the very image of God. ... [It] reminds us of all that really matters" (p. 8).

And if we see the OT as friend in faith, we have to accept the challenge of being a good friend to the OT. That friendship will not develop if we approach it with suspicion or bias, or with an assumption that we have nothing to learn (p. 8).

Schlimm characterizes the OT as a "quirky friend" that will require extra work, due to its differences from us in culture, geography, time, and space. The friendship will require a "peaceful persistence," which works out as reading, reading,

and reading, along with lots of reflection. Good friends deal constructively with unanticipated challenges and different perspectives with humility and openness. Friendship persists through upsetting statements, times of misunderstanding, questions, and challenges, obviously including unexpected turns along the way (pp. 9–10).

The chapter entitled “Truth Is Many Sided” offers one example of how Schlimm works out this concept in practice. Engaging the OT is like a vigorous dialogue with a good friend. As we read and study, we are confronted with the important issues of life, and we struggle with how to think about them and how to act in response to them, but we do not necessarily get full information from our friend, and at times, we are left with ideas in tension, with no final resolution, and we are reminded that truth, particularly truth about God, can be complex (p. 141).

By way of critique, I note two minor items. First, the format includes placing related quotations inside boxes on various pages throughout each chapter, offering interesting and helpful information, but their placement is odd. Sometimes they appear on the page where they are referenced, as one would expect, but sometimes they appear on a page prior to reference and sometimes on a page after reference, which at the least is a bit aggravating.

Also a few comments may give readers pause. For example, consider the phrase, “Abraham and Sarah—founders of three of the world’s great religions” (p. 58). The statement is not really accurate—three world religions may look to them as father and mother of their faith, but that is quite another matter.

Walter E. Brown
New Orleans, LA

The Blessing and the Curse: Trajectories in the Theology of the OT. By Jeff S. Anderson. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014, xii + 403 pp., \$46.00 paper.

OT theologies abound, and each one has its own perspective on what should be considered the OT’s theological center or core set of themes. Worthy as a voice in this continuing dialogue is Jeff S. Anderson’s *The Blessing and the Curse: Trajectories in the Theology of the OT*, an insightful presentation of how the Hebrew Bible can be understood in terms of blessing and curse.

The two introductory chapters lay the methodological framework for the remainder of the book. Anderson argues that it is impossible to find a single theological center but that it is possible to trace key themes through the OT. He argues that one of those key themes is that of blessing and curse, contending that “the theological tension between blessings and curses is both substantive and pervasive in many of the dominant texts of the Old Testament” (p. 20). Next he examines key Hebrew terminology regarding both blessing (בָּרַךְ and אֲשֶׁר) and curse (אָרַךְ, קָלַל, and אָלַה) and surveys how scholars have understood these lexemes in light of various paradigms. Anderson ultimately adopts a theological paradigm informed by speech-act theory in which blessings and curses “produce effects because of the societal understanding of speech acts, not because of some magical power of the

spoken word alone” (p. 51). Blessing and curse are directly linked to divine providence and divine election in that God both enhances (i.e. blesses) and opposes (i.e. curses) a life of fullness as he so chooses.

The rest of the book examines the themes of blessing and curse according to canonical division and genre. Beginning with the Pentateuch, Anderson investigates blessing and curse as they appear in J, E, D, and P while emphasizing the importance of reading the Pentateuch as a literary unity. The Primeval History begins with God’s blessing of creation but is quickly overcome by curse, which sets the stage for God’s offer of blessing through Abraham and his descendants. Years later, during the wilderness wanderings, the tabernacle provides a means of experiencing God’s presence and thereby his blessing. God unconditionally extends his blessing to the Israelites, but they reject it and turn it into a curse through rebellion and idolatry (e.g. by worshipping the golden calf [Exod 32:1–35] and Baal of Peor [Num 25:1–9]).

In the next several chapters, Anderson examines Deuteronomy’s theology of blessing and curse and how that theology plays out in the Deuteronomistic History and Prophets. Deuteronomy sets before Israel a choice between obedience and disobedience, presenting a theological framework for divine initiative and human response in terms of blessing and curse. Israel’s first three kings experience both blessing and curse: Saul is reckoned among the prophets, a sign of God’s blessing, but subsequently loses his kingship because of a failure to obey; the prophet Nathan announces God’s blessing through the Davidic covenant as well as God’s curse on David’s household due to adultery with Bathsheba; Solomon prospers and builds the temple in his early years but later falls into idolatry. During the time of the divided monarchy, the prophets base their messages on Deuteronomy’s promise of blessing and curse, prophesying destruction for disobedience but also speaking of future restoration.

Anderson subsequently analyzes the motifs of blessing and curse in Israel’s cult, wisdom, and apocalyptic literature. Regarding Israel’s cult, he contends that Psalms is structured so that blessing takes prominence in that each of its five books ends with a blessing whereas curses are scattered throughout with little or no structural significance, although curses do play an important role in the imprecatory psalms. Regarding wisdom literature, Anderson argues that the frame narrative of Job highlights blessing whereas the poetic sections emphasize curse, and he also draws attention to Proverb’s Deuteronomic choice between blessing and curse. Finally, concerning apocalyptic literature, Anderson asserts that the so-called Little Apocalypse (Isaiah 24–27), the book of Daniel, and Zechariah 14 all describe blessing and curse in universal terms, focusing on God’s eschatological judgment and restoration of the nations and Israel.

Anderson brings his book to an end with a brief examination of how these theological trajectories relate to the NT. He limits his discussion to the NT’s explicit citation of the OT regarding blessing and curse, noting Jesus’ bringing of blessing to both Jew and Gentile (Rom 4:1–25; 10:1–13; Gal 3:6–14) as well as the reversal of the curse in the new heavens and earth (Rev 22:1–21).

Anderson compellingly demonstrates that blessing and curse function as important OT motifs. Furthermore, *The Blessing and the Curse* possesses several distinctives that set it apart from previous discussions of blessing and curse in the Hebrew Bible. Anderson approaches the concepts of blessing and curse from the perspective of speech-act theory, rightly recognizing the power that blessings and curses have in the OT without describing them as magical as some have done (e.g. Johannes Hempel). Anderson also does not shy away from the topic of curse in that he does not separate it from the motif of blessing as others have done (e.g. Claus Westermann), but instead acknowledges that both blessing and curse are important ways in which God relates to humanity.

However, *The Blessing and the Curse* has two weaknesses. One weakness is the same weakness that many OT theologies share, namely the way in which it selectively focuses on the portions of the OT relevant to its thesis. Anderson does a fair job discussing passages that relate to blessing and curse, but his overall synthesis of those passages—in connection with each other as well as in relationship to the rest of the Hebrew Bible—occasionally leaves something to be desired. A second weakness is that, although Anderson clearly defines the terms “blessing” and “curse,” he presents no clear methodology for identifying in the biblical text the motifs represented by these terms. This especially becomes an issue when the Hebrew terminology for blessing and curse is not explicitly used in a biblical passage. Accordingly, it would have been helpful for Anderson to outline specific criteria for determining when the biblical text intends to communicate well-being stemming from divine favor (blessing) and expressions of misfortune, calamity, and evil (curse).

Despite these drawbacks, Anderson’s *The Blessing and the Curse* represents a noteworthy contribution to the field of OT theology, which—on the whole—has given insufficient attention to blessing and curse at the expense of other theological themes. Those interested in the theology of the Hebrew Bible will profit from reading it.

Benjamin J. Noonan
Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

The Verb and the Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew: A Cognitive-Linguistic Approach. By Elizabeth Robar. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 78. Leiden: Brill, 2015, xii + 220 pp., \$142.00.

Elizabeth Robar has provided a balanced and insightful contribution to the linguistic study of biblical Hebrew. The volume is a published Ph.D. dissertation completed recently at the University of Cambridge under the supervision of Geoffrey Khan.

Robar’s goal is to explain how Hebrew uses combinations of verbal forms and other devices to construct coherent paragraphs. Her primary concern is at a higher level of discourse beyond the sentence, so cognitive linguistics provides the foundation for her analysis.

The first chapter lays this foundation with a detailed primer on those aspects of cognitive linguistics most relevant for analyzing paragraphs. “Coherence” is defined with reference to Gestalt psychology, which emphasizes the human tendency to seek for organization and closure. The grammar of a language tends to make the discovery of this organization as easy as possible, yet it always must reckon with the limitations of human consciousness. The active consciousness can focus on very little, so language must allow for additional cues to draw new topics from memory, and language also must provide ways of “chunking” information into manageable portions. A paragraph is one such “chunk,” and the “schema” of a paragraph is its internal organization. Robar’s goal is to show how Hebrew organizes subunits (or “schematic steps,” e.g. a series of events in a story) into paragraphs to expound a given theme.

After additional prolegomena about how paragraphs flow (e.g. from topic to focus, delimiting units and marking prominence), the second chapter utilizes this framework to describe the paragraph in biblical Hebrew specifically. This chapter is the core of the dissertation (87 pp.), and begins by surveying ways in which past scholarship has gone about this task, with special attention to “foreground” and “background,” and Longacre’s idea of “text types.” Robar strikes a new direction, using cognitive linguistic categories.

The author begins by listing four possibilities for new pieces of information in a schema: the new information can (1) be *incorporated* into the previous step, forming one unit; (2) be *coordinated* as a new step on the same level as the previous one; (3) *resume* a previous sequence that was interrupted; and (4) start a new step at a lower hierarchical level, thus creating a new, *subordinated* unit. Of these, the second is particularly important as an expression of schematic continuity; in coordination, the paragraph continues by a series of steps on the same level.

Robar then discusses three key verbal forms, *wayyiqtol*, *wəqatal*, and *wəyiqtol*, and how they relate to schematic continuity. Here we find some of her most distinctive contributions to the discipline, particularly her understanding of *wayyiqtol*. She acknowledges that *wayyiqtol* often occurs with temporal succession in the foreground. However, that correlation does not entail that *wayyiqtol* *marks* succession or foregrounding, nor does Robar understand *wayyiqtol* to be a preterite. Instead, Robar argues that *wayyiqtol* marks schematic continuity, whatever the level of hierarchy one may be at in the paragraph. In other words, *wayyiqtol* continues the paragraph with the same verbal semantics and hierarchical level of the previous step.

Robar argues her case from a wide sampling of *wayyiqtol* usages, showing how many non-foregrounded, non-successive uses of *wayyiqtol* make good sense if *wayyiqtol* is simply marking continuity within the paragraph. Likewise, against the idea that *wayyiqtol* is a preterite, *wayyiqtol* does not embed a reference time, and, given an appropriate leading verb, it can mark continuity in the future and non-indicative modalities. (Interestingly, Robar believes that *wayyiqtol* at one point was restricted semantically as a narrative *present*, but because of extensive use for schematic continuity it became grammaticalized for that purpose.)

For *wəqatal*, Robar samples a wide variety of uses and concludes that it has two main functions: as a contingent modal (e.g. protasis, apodosis, purpose, or

result), and second as an ordinary *qatal* (past perfective) with a simple *waw* conjunction prefixing it.

In the main, *wəyiqtol* continues a schematic sequence initiated with volitives. In addition to continuing these volitional verbal semantics, it also can express purpose or result modality. Robar observes that biblical Hebrew uses these three *waw*-prefixed conjugations as alternating constructions, where a chain of one kind can be interrupted by one of the other forms to achieve a new genre, aspect, or schematic level.

The third chapter then discusses schematic discontinuity. Robar articulates discontinuity in terms of theme—schematic discontinuity occurs when the topic or theme currently under discussion shifts to a new one. Hebrew does not always mark discontinuity, but when it does, it employs two main strategies: (1) regular forms used in unexpected ways (e.g. when *wə+qatal* appears in a narrative sequence); and (2) irregular verb forms (e.g. paragogic *be* or *nun*; long forms of *wayyiqtol*). According to Robar, any time these scenarios occur, the unexpected forms *suggest* (but do not mandate) discontinuity; a new theme may be in view.

Robar then concludes with a discussion of 1 Sam 1:1–7 to illustrate the usefulness of her approach. (In an earlier example she ventures into poetry, discussing Psalm 18!)

Robar is to be commended not only for her excellent command of scholarship but also her willingness to blaze a new path. Her argument concerning *wayyiqtol* as marking schematic continuity is particularly convincing (even if one disagrees that it is technically a narrative present), and allows for the wide breadth of usage for this form in the HB.

Some aspects of the author's work were less convincing: the cognitive linguistics section in chapter 1, helpful as it was as a primer, seemed too often to reduce human cognition to computer-like thinness. Surely human consciousness is not so mechanical as her discussion suggests. Nevertheless, the nuanced discussions in the following chapters show that this methodological thinness does not hamper her work.

The suggestion that paragogics or long *wayyiqtol* imply new topics seemed very subtle, and not strongly supported by the evidence. Why does Robar not treat fronted constructions like *waw+x+qatal* or *waw+x+yiqtol*, given that they are repeatedly used to establish schematic discontinuity?

On an organizational note, Robar waits until deep into her book (chap. 2, p. 61) to set up the key question her book is trying to answer, which is also where she summarizes the previous discussion on that question. This makes it difficult for the reader to process the relevance of the primer in chapter 1.

However, one outstanding virtue of Robar's work is her acknowledgement of the limitations of attending to grammatical markers—there is only a *partial* correlation between verbal forms and the underlying organization of a discourse unit. Hence she does not claim too much for her findings, nor does she absolutize them with sayings all too common in the literature, such as “*wayyiqtol* *always* means such-and-such.” Robar helps us to see how verbal forms provide cues to the reader for understanding discourse structure, but “the full theme and structure can only be

discerned with the aid of all the other tools of literary studies” (p. 78). One hopes her fine work will be integrated into a full-orbed literary approach so as to deepen our understanding of Hebrew texts.

Matthew H. Patton

Bethel Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Wheaton, IL

Abraham: The Story of a Life. By Joseph Blenkinsopp. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015, xv + 240 pp., \$29.00 paper.

Joseph Blenkinsopp contributes a critical commentary on the Abraham saga of Genesis 11–25. Blenkinsopp serves as the John A. O’Brien Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Recently he published *David Remembered: Kingship and National Identity in Ancient Israel* (Eerdmans, 2013).

The book’s introduction situates the figure Abraham within the biblical and extrabiblical context. The author argues that the tenfold *toledot* structure of Genesis divides nicely into two groups of five, and both groups emphasize their middle segment: the Noah story of 6:9–9:29, and the Isaac story of 25:19–35:29 (pp. 15–17). Thereafter, the volume’s ten chapters provide a flowing, discursive explanation of the Abraham sequence. Each chapter, with the exception of chapter 7, concludes with a section titled “Filling the Gaps,” which explores the ancient opinions of Abraham by Islamic, Jewish, and Christian sources. The back matter includes a ten-page epilogue (“Descent from Abraham in Early Christianity and What It Might Mean for the Christian Today”) and a full set of indexes. The book does not discuss the timing of Abraham’s spiritual conversion.

The commentator discerns that “a strong sense of providence ... pervades the Abraham cycle from beginning to end” (p. 187). On point, he recognizes that the story of Abraham “moves toward its terminus by way of the successive removal of obstacles to the fulfillment of commitments made to Abraham in Harran” (p. 64).

The author holds a form of the documentary hypothesis. He maintains that “the story of Abraham reached its final form by a process of incremental expansion and updating covering a significant period of time” (p. 56). Often he deems a textual unit of Genesis as a “composite” (p. 53), a “later addition” (p. 74), a “work of bricolage” (p. 49), or the like. The patriarchs did not know the name Yahweh (p. 83 n. 8). In 16:13 and 21:33, Hagar and Abraham spoke to (or called upon) a “local numen” rather than Yahweh himself (pp. 83–4). Furthermore, the long lifespans of the ancients, such as Abraham’s age of 175, represent “impossibly high figures. At the time in which the story is set, average life expectancy would have been less than, not more than, it is today. These are schematic ages” (p. 37). Later temple scribes invented the Pentateuch’s chronological scheme, he says (p. 176). In addition, how could God command Abraham to sacrifice his son? Whatever the answer, Blenkinsopp assures readers that “what we have before us is not some directly transmitted information about the nature of God” (p. 159).

Myth and legend factor significantly in the author's approach to Scripture at the expense of the text's historicity. According to Blenkinsopp, "The genealogy of Shem, first of Noah's three sons, to Terah, father of Abraham, is the bridge over which we pass from the world of myth to the world of history" (p. 27). He refers to the great flood as "the near extinction of all life on earth, a mythic image of the fifth and last extinction at the end of the Cretaceous period 65 million years ago" (p. 18; cf. p. 106). He speaks of "the folktale prologue of Job 1–2" and believes that "Job is without a doubt a figure from the legendary past" (p. 2). And "the War of the Nine Kings is already manifestly legendary" (p. 62). The writer explains, "Like ethnic myths and legends of origins all over the world, the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is ethnogenesis designed to sustain the identity and destiny of the ethnic group within which it came into existence. And as with the myths and legends of origins of other peoples, questions of historical accuracy are of secondary importance" (p. 166).

Blenkinsopp accepts contradictions in the Bible. For him, the four hundred years and the four hundred thirty years of slavery "both contradict what we are told about the chronology of the life of Moses" (p. 74). Moreover, the circumcision story of Genesis 34 retains multiple "incongruities" (p. 103), and "the biblical sources do not agree on the numbers deported by the Babylonians" (p. 22). Such skepticism asperses the *prima facie* evidence of the biblical witness.

Some sample interpretations catch the eye. Genesis 17, the covenant of circumcision, functions as "the axis or fulcrum of the Abraham cycle" (p. 96; cf. p. 166). Abraham's affinity for Ishmael strikes Blenkinsopp as "one of the most impressive features of the Abraham story" (p. 92). Sarah and Iscah are the same person (pp. 17, 28–9, 43). Pharaoh married Sarah, which strongly suggests that they had sexual relations (p. 48). "Lot disqualifies himself as Abraham's heir by choosing to live in Sodom ... outside of Canaan" (p. 44). Lot's wife did not turn into a column of salt (p. 134). Lot's daughters did nothing wrong when they got their father drunk and had sexual relations with him (p. 136). After the binding of Isaac at Moriah, Abraham and his attendants returned to Beersheba without Isaac (pp. 159, 161). The commentator suggests that the deliverance of Hagar and Ishmael in Genesis 21 and the binding of Isaac in chapter 22 both took place at the same site (pp. 164–65). Abraham died while his servant was away searching for a wife for Isaac (pp. 186, 189). Blenkinsopp locates Bethel at the traditional site of Beitin (pp. 37, 51) rather than el-Bireh, the site proposed by the late archaeologist David Livingston in his multiple articles on the subject.

Sloppiness mars the list of Abbreviations. Namely, the entry for *DDD* should signal the second edition. The editor of *IDBSup* should be "K. Crim" instead of "J. Crim." The entry for *TDOT* should read "15 vols" and "1976–" rather than "8 vols" and "1964–1976," which incidentally is the date range of *TDNT*. The publication date of *TLOT* should be 1997 rather than 1994, which happens to be the date of *TLNT*. Furthermore, no discernable pattern exists concerning the abbreviations of the first names of the editors.

Blenkinsopp writes for a learned audience as evidenced by the inclusion of untranslated French and German words (e.g. pp. 57–8). By reading this commentary, Bible interpreters can see how one critical scholar views the Abraham cycle.

Mark A. Hassler
The Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, CA

Bound for the Promised Land: The Land Promise in God's Redemptive Plan. By Oren R. Martin. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015, 208 pp., \$25.00 paper.

Oren Martin's *Bound for the Promised Land* is a monograph in D. A. Carson's New Studies in Biblical Theology series. The series seeks to address key issues in the field, simultaneously instructing and edifying (p. 9). This particular volume seeks a synthesis of OT and NT, allowing the reader to see the trajectory and larger picture of God's promise of land. Specifically, Martin intends to demonstrate that the land promised to Abraham finds its fulfillment in the new heaven and new earth won by Christ (p. 17). And it succeeds. This book is what it claims to be: a more comprehensive ("whole-Bible biblical theology"), non-spiritualizing, historical-redemptive approach to the land.

The strengths of this book are immediately obvious. First, it is uncluttered with technical jargon and therefore more than accessible to those just being introduced to biblical theology. Indeed, one might argue the best use of this book is for an introductory biblical theology class. Second, it is strongly confessional and evangelical in its presuppositions. Even the most conservative theologian will find little cause for concern. Third, its organization is simple and intuitive. Seven of the ten chapters contain a methodical walk through the different corpora of the Christian canon, and every chapter posits a covenantal, historical-redemptive approach that finds its climax in Jesus. Finally, it does not seek to enter modern practical land discussions; rather, it stays true to the biblical theological land trajectory and lets readers draw their own political or social conclusions.

If I were to summarize my frustrations with the book, they would be the antithesis of what I consider its strengths: it is lacking in technicality, it is too strongly evangelical, it deemphasizes alternative theological grids, and it fails to enter into the modern controversies of the Middle East. While it seems there is no way for Martin to satisfy my criticisms, I elaborate in order that others might get a fuller picture of the book.

First, while the book is uncluttered with technical jargon and therefore immensely more readable for beginners, it is often the more technical and nuanced ideas that keep some of us reading. This volume boasts no new ideas or significant advancements in the field and does little to excite the professional scholar. While exceptions can be found in the first and last chapters and the footnotes, these were few and far between. I feel I missed out on some important hermeneutical nuances that almost certainly appeared in his dissertation version. One example that does show up with some regularity is the distinction between the spiritual and literal sense. With Gentry and Wellum he says that the NT demonstrates both when and

how the OT is brought to fulfillment in Christ, though in a way that does not reinterpret, spiritualize, or contravene the earlier texts (p. 168). He insists he is not spiritualizing the text, but does say that the promises find their fulfillment in Jesus. For him, this is not spiritualizing; it is typology. I agree with his conclusions, but I wonder if it is a bit misleading to insist that typology fits so perfectly into his version of the literal sense. I would have preferred to see some historical nuancing, perhaps with a recognition that typology is indeed a form of spiritualizing while still fitting squarely into a *sensus literalis* of the past.

The lack of technicality or nuancing was a small concern, but I did leave the book feeling a strongly reformed evangelical bias. I was glad Martin did not follow Barr in a heavy critique of all other views, but more interaction especially with non-evangelicals would have been helpful. While obviously in the vein of von Rad, it was still odd to me that Beale, Dempster, and Schreiner were heralded and little to nothing was said about those advancing social-scientific (Gottwald, Mendenhall), anthropological (Douglas, Smith) or literary-critical (Newsom) approaches. I was disappointed with the footnote-only interaction with the new perspective and no comments at all on the apocalyptic readings of Paul. There was no interaction with minimalism or cultural memory studies, an almost flippant dismissal of source criticism, and perhaps an unwillingness to wrestle with how progressive evangelicals would see these same stories.

Finally, since the series seeks to instruct and edify, we all probably would have been much better served if Martin had included some words of application. Specifically, I wish for something on how this might apply to the Israel/Palestine tension. As an expert in the area of land theology, I would have been glad to hear how we as Christians might be part of a resolution in the Middle East, or at least how we can think about it.

I could say more about his critique of dispensationalism, his overall emphasis on the unity of the story without mentioning its multivocality, and the perceived assumption that historiography is history, but I will let those stand as stated.

My frustrations listed above are not intended to be a negative review. As I said, there was no way for Martin to satisfy me. If he had added what I desired, the book would have become laboriously long and would have no longer worked, given what it is intended to be. This book did what it intended. He had far more certainty than I regarding his hermeneutical methodology, but the book was compelling and made its case. The OT and NT are united in their Christotelic approach; Jesus was the literal fulfillment of the land. It should be required reading for all students of biblical theology.

Jace Broadhurst
Columbia Evangelical Seminary, Poolesville, MD

Memory and Covenant: The Role of Israel's and God's Memory in Sustaining the Deuteronomic and Priestly Covenants. By Barat Ellman. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013, 222 pp., \$49.00 paper.

Memory and Covenant by Barat Ellman, adjunct assistant professor at Jewish Theological Seminary, applies new insights to the priestly and Deuteronomic materials of the Pentateuch. She accepts the standard critical orthodoxy regarding the sources of the Pentateuch, against which I am convinced serious objections can be made not only from the perspective of the self-witness of the Scriptures but also from a form-literary perspective. Nevertheless, it is clear that Deuteronomy in particular has a special place among the books of the Pentateuch and bears a special emphasis. Ellman very convincingly makes clear that in Deuteronomy, memory is a means of keeping Israel faithful to YHWH and his commandments. Israel's duty to obey God is emphasized.

Ellman highlights that in the material characterized as priestly, the covenant depends on God's memory. It is not Israel but God who remembers his covenant. The tokens of the covenant remind him of his covenantal obligations. I would add that it is not only in the material that is characterized as priestly, but in all texts of the Pentateuch outside Deuteronomy, that God is the subject of memory when the verb זָכַר is used in religious contexts. This means that God is ultimately the agent guaranteeing the stability of the covenant. So the characteristic trait of Deuteronomy could have been emphasized even more than Ellman does. That trait is the responsibility and obligations of Israel towards YHWH.

I would add that although in Deuteronomy the emphasis falls on the obligations of the people, there is also a greater emphasis in it on the faithfulness of YHWH than Ellman indicates in her monograph, even though the words "covenant" and "remember" are not used in that context. I would point to Deuteronomy 30:6, where we find the promise: "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." We find the same element of the faithfulness of YHWH guaranteeing Israel's return from exile, although with different wording, not only in Leviticus 26 but also in Deuteronomy 30. When we overview all the material, therefore, it is clear that the uniform testimony of the text is that the role of YHWH and his faithfulness is ultimately all-decisive.

Ellman detects the Deuteronomic emphasis on the obligation of man and the punishment for his disobedience of God's command in the second creation account as well. The banishment of Adam and Eve from paradise is paralleled by the banishment of Israel from Canaan arising from its disobeying God's covenant. Ellman is aware that in the documentary hypothesis, the second creation account is not seen as Deuteronomic but is ascribed to the so-called Jahwist. Nevertheless, she thinks that Genesis 2–3 provides a conceptual introduction to Deuteronomy: the authors of Deuteronomy found in it a perspective on the reality of human life that corresponded with their own values. I agree that there is a correspondence between Genesis 2–3 and the perspective of Deuteronomy. At the same time, I would highlight that the word כִּתְּבָהּ found in Gen 3:21 is only used in the rest of

the Pentateuch, apart from the Joseph narrative, of the priestly garments. Thus, we would be just as justified in saying that Genesis 2–3 has priestly traits. I would also mention in this regard the parallels between the Garden of Eden and the tabernacle.

According to Ellman, the ritual practices and sacrifices must be seen in the context that an appeal is being made to God to remind him of his covenant with Israel. In saying that Israel's role is to provide such reminders through cultic activity, she is underestimating the fact that it was YHWH himself who gave Israel its rituals and service of sacrifices. On the other hand, as regards the tokens of circumcision and the Sabbath, the emphasis in the OT falls more on the obligation of men than on the promise of God; this is true of all OT textual material. Here too, then, the dividing line between the so-called Deuteronomic and priestly material with regard to the place of YHWH in the covenant (remembering his people) and that of Israel (obeying God) is not as straightforward as Ellman suggests.

Ellman divides the priestly tradition into a pre-exilic and an exilic tradition. According to her, the Holiness literature reflects a re-tooling of the priestly ideas in the absence of the temple. As such, it emphasizes the whole-community, rather than the priestly, obligation to issue reminders to God. This results in an elevated view of the significance of tokens such as circumcision and the Sabbath, against which I have several objections. Apart from the fact that we must reckon with the consideration that older material can be linguistically updated, as David M. Carr has shown in *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, it can be demonstrated that the language of the Holiness Code is older than the language of Ezekiel and is certainly pre-exilic. What is certain is that in the exile, obedience in the tokens of circumcision and the Sabbath became more conspicuous than when Israel had been in the land. This is not to say that texts highlighting the importance of circumcision and the Sabbath are of exilic origin. The fact that regulations are given in the Holiness Code for the use of sacred offerings and what constitute acceptable and unacceptable sacrifices points to its pre-exilic (and I believe Mosaic) origin as a law.

Although the work of Ellman has some serious deficiencies, we can learn from it that in the OT the words “remember” and “covenant” are both used to speak of what YHWH does and what Israel is to do.

Pieter de Vries
Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Holland

Did God Really Command Genocide? Coming to Terms with the Justice of God. By Paul Copan and Matthew Flannagan. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014, 352 pp., \$16.99 paper.

Many contemporary readers of the Bible are struck by the seeming divide between the God revealed in Jesus Christ and the God who commands the destruction of whole nations and the obliteration of Canaanites during Israel's conquest of the Promised Land. While many Christians simply do not think about the possible difficulties of a loving God commanding genocide, this has not stopped critics of Christianity such as the New Atheists from using portions of Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges as ammunition for their assaults on Christian faith. Truth be told, this

seeming contradiction between a God of love and God of wrath is not something new, for as early as the mid-second century a follower of Jesus named Marcion argued that the deities of the OT and NT were different entities. Clearly, there is much at stake in the answer to this question: did God really command genocide in the OT?

To posit an answer to this difficult query comes *Did God Really Command Genocide? Coming to Terms with the Justice of God* by Paul Copan and Matthew Flannagan. As the title makes clear, this book is dedicated to considering whether or not God really commanded the people of Israel to commit genocide during their conquest of the land of Canaan. After extensive examination, Copan and Flannagan argue that no, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus did not command the senseless slaughter of “everything that breathes” during the Israelite invasion of the Promised Land. Instead, they posit that a careful, contextually and theologically informed, and continually relevant interpretation of the OT reveals the loving justice of a holy God who remains the changeless law-giver of the cosmos.

Did God Really Command Genocide? is divided into four major sections. Part 1, “Genocide Texts and the Problem of Scriptural Authority,” examines the relationship between Scripture, context, history, and ethics. This section serves as a great primer to many of the foundational issues at stake when thinking about the possibility of God commanding genocide in the OT. Especially important is Copan and Flannagan’s emphasis on a contextually and historically informed reading of Scripture, as well as their reliance on a reasoned approach to discerning the divine and human elements of the Scriptures. This first section does a fine job setting the stage for the duration of the book as well as outlining the approach by which Copan and Flannagan think about the question of whether God commanded genocide.

Part 2, “Occasional Commands, Hyperbolic Texts, and Genocidal Massacres,” considers the specific ancient Near Eastern context of Israel’s conquest and its record in Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges. For biblical scholars and Christians interested in better understanding the OT, this section stands out as the *must-read* portion of the book. Copan and Flannagan walk readers through the ethics of occasional commands, the context of ancient warfare hyperbole, and a careful reading of biblical passages that might at first seem to condone genocide. Especially for those versed in Copan’s earlier work *Is God a Moral Monster?* this section is especially compelling, filled with a plethora of eye-opening contextualized explanations of Scripture.

Part 3, “Is It Always Wrong to Kill Innocent People?,” outlines Divine Command Theory and posits that it is possible, morally permissible, and intellectually cognizable to affirm that God can, in certain instances, command the killing of innocents for purposes of greater good. This portion of the book—especially chapters 15–18—are some of the hardest to work through and intellectually affirm. While Copan and Flannagan’s presentation remains solid and generally compelling, some of the early portions of their argument seem to be motivated by a Divine Command Theory of utility, where God’s love for humanity can be superseded by the utility of a particular situation. By the end of this section, however, careful readers will realize that Copan and Flannagan’s arguments are plausible, offering a

way to come to terms with both Divine Command Theory and the judgment of God. In a contemporary context where the idea of divine judgment almost never carries any positive connotations, the authors do an admirable job suggesting that the theological context of Israel's entry into the Promised Land must include consideration of God's judgment upon the Canaanites. While it may have been suitable to draw additional connections to the first two sections of this book, the third section of *Did God Really Command Genocide?* is ultimately a thought-provoking read.

Part 4, "Religion and Violence," addresses claims concerning the inherent violence of monotheistic religion and comparisons between militant Islam and the OT. This section offers some strong and relevant follow-up material, providing readers with some good extensions of earlier material for thinking about pressing cultural issues. While Islamic scholars might press Copan and Flannagan for more nuanced language at points, the general point of this section—that monotheistic religions are not necessarily inherently violent and that the post-Enlightenment study of "religion" is in need of serious reevaluation—should be agreeable to Muslim and Christian alike. While a more encompassing conclusion section would have added to this section, the broad scope of this book and the topical manner in which the fourth section ends make this portion of the book a fitting end.

As a general note, it should be noted that although *Did God Really Command Genocide?* remains accessible to interested parties of many different perspectives, this work primarily addresses the claims of the New Atheist movement concerning the violence of Christianity and the Bible. This being the case, the authors' arguments often take on a repetitive or one-sided approach to a given topic. In particular, much of the first half of the book uses atheist philosopher Raymond Bradley's presentation of the "Crucial Moral Principle" as its launching point. This is not to say that Copan's and Flannagan's arguments are faulty or even that they are limited to a "New Atheist" audience, only to note that the authors clearly write from a perspective of informed apologetics.

All in all, *Did God Really Command Genocide?* covers an astonishing range of topics. In reality, there are almost four different books contained within this one volume. Though broad in scope, Copan and Flannagan do an excellent job connecting all of their subjects. Especially helpful were the end-of-chapter summaries, which encapsulate the salient points of each chapter and keep readers connected to the broader argument of the book. Though portions of this book will be difficult for those without at least some philosophy or apologetics background, *Did God Really Command Genocide?* comes highly recommended for apologists, graduate-level biblical scholars, and Christians of all sorts interested in seriously thinking through whether or not God commanded genocide in the OT.

Jacob J. Prahlow
Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, MO

2 Samuel. By Robert Barron. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2015, xx + 209 pp., \$29.99.

The Brazos commentary series fills a niche in the crowded field of biblical commentaries and the latest addition by Robert Barron continues the unique approach admirably. The series does not attempt to be an exhaustive exegetical or critical analysis of the text, but rather utilizes the groundwork laid by others in these important areas while emphasizing the Nicene tradition of interpreters through the ages. The blend of modern methods and historical theological insights produces a refreshing approach to 2 Samuel.

Three interpretive threads guide Barron's reading of 2 Samuel. The first is biblical theology. Throughout the commentary King David's rule is cast to reflect the account of Adam and project toward Christ as the new and perfect Adam. For instance, David's killing of Goliath is understood as the proper response to the enemy of God as opposed to Adam who succumbed to the serpent rather than crushing his head. On the other hand, David listens to the wiles of the serpent and tastes of the forbidden fruit with Bathsheba. As the book progresses, Barron leans on G. K. Beale and others who write in this vein. From the turning point of 2 Samuel 11, the link with Adam predictably parallels the consequences and curse of sin upon humanity and the ultimate victory the second Adam will provide.

The second interpretive thread is narrative criticism. While the commentary is not dominated by narrative critical observations, the influence of Alter and Polzin among others provides keen insights into the story of David. From the introductory note that David is perhaps the most fully developed character in the Bible, being "characterized with such thoroughness and psychological perceptiveness" (p. xix), it is clear Barron will depend heavily on this interpretive method. The narrative analysis of David advances the first thread of biblical theology as insights are consistently used to characterize David as a new Adam. Early in David's reign, his severe treatment of the Amalekite messenger reporting on Saul's doom is considered an example of what Adam should have done to the serpent in the garden. This approach may make some readers uncomfortable when Barron compares Bathsheba to both Eve and the forbidden fruit. He comes dangerously close to linking her with the serpent as well characterizing her as "far from a merely passive object of manipulation" (p. 99). The link is implied again when Bathsheba is compared to Absalom who is explicitly said to play the "role of the serpent in the garden—a source of evil" (p. 137).

The third interpretive thread is the history of the church. Most chapters cite a notable church father or influential theologian but not simply to support an interpretive tradition. This method is applied intentionally to the difficult themes of the story to access perspectives that are often overlooked in modern critical commentaries. For example, when recounting David's dance before the Ark of the Covenant, Barron asks why David would dance in celebration before the law. A discussion of the important philosophical shift that took place in the late medieval days of the English Franciscan William of Occam allows an insightful discussion (pp.

59–61) that challenges common notions of law and freedom today. Another example is the recurring theological theme of the noncompetitive transcendence of God.

A few issues may detract from the overall effectiveness of this commentary. Most notably, while the threads listed above produce interesting and helpful insights, Barron may overplay his favorite themes as well as roam into topics that may be more important to him than to the biblical story of 2 Samuel. Far less important is the sparse bibliography that functions more like a “Works Most Mentioned” or “Recommended” than an exhaustive “Works Cited” that would be more useful for reference. Also, the Scripture index is listed in alphabetic rather than canonical order.

These minor critiques aside, Robert Barron’s *2 Samuel* is a refreshing read with both scholarly and devotional insights throughout. It serves as a supplement to the technical commentaries already available and is more spiritually satisfying than most.

Dean M. Erickson
Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN

The Flow of the Psalms: Discovering Their Structure and Theology. By O. Palmer Robertson. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015, xxiii + 302 pp., \$21.99 paper.

While many have approached the book of Psalms as a random collection of individual poems on a variety of topics, O. Palmer Robertson’s *The Flow of the Psalms: Discovering Their Structure and Theology* is an evangelical contribution to the canonical approach, which views the Psalms as a book with a total message, specific emphases, and flow to its structure and theology from beginning to end (p. 1). A study of the Psalms from this perspective is said to have the potential of uncovering internal connections among various psalms, and also to provide additional light to each individual psalm on the basis of this internal structuring (p. 3), since the book of Psalms evinces editorial intentionality in its final shape (pp. 4–7).

Unlike many theological introductions to the book of Psalms, Robertson’s is inductive (biblical-theological) rather than topical (systematic) in nature. Before he begins to walk through the book of Psalms in this manner, he devotes chapter 2 to an overview of some basic structural elements in Psalms, including the five-book structure, groupings by reference in titles to specific individuals, Psalms 1 and 2 as “poetic pillars” that introduce the book of Psalms as a whole (contra Wilson et al.), three Torah psalms coupled with three messianic (royal) psalms (cf. Grant *et al.*). Then in chapter 3, Robertson’s discussion of the redemptive-historical framework of the Psalms amounts to a summary of his views on the biblical covenants, which are said to reach their apex when the thrones of David and God merged, after which time the remainder of redemptive history in the OT was lived out under God’s covenant with David (p. 24). Further to this is the principle that “*as it fares with the messianic king, so it fares with each member of the messianic kingdom*” (p. 63, italics Robertson’s).

This all sets the stage for the heart of the book, in which Robertson offers a thematic title and detailed walk through the structure, flow, and theology of each of

the Psalter's five books in turn. Book I (Psalms 1–41) is said to evince a theme of *confrontation* with the nations, especially as the book's themes are established in the introductory Psalms 1–2 and their emphasis on the nations raging against the anointed of Yahweh (pp. 54–55), and also in light of the frequent references to the psalmist's enemies throughout the rest of the book (p. 65). For book II (Psalms 42–72), the dominant theme of direct *communication* with the nations is said to explain the shift from the prominence of the covenant name *YHWH* in Psalms 1–41 (and then again in Psalms 84–150), to the more generic *Elohim* in this section. In book III (Psalms 73–89) the focus is said to shift from the person of David to the corporate community and its *devastation* by international forces as they are defeated by their enemies, especially as the book closes with the throne and crown of the Davidic king cast into the dust (Ps. 89:38–39, 44; pp. 122ff.). However, and contrary to the views of Wilson, the Davidic covenant has not failed for Robertson, as the concluding Psalm 89 “repeatedly recites the focal provisions of the Davidic covenant in anticipation of the coming King-Messiah, descendant of David” (p. 146). Finally, for books IV (Psalms 90–106) and V (Psalms 107–150), the respective themes are said to be the *maturation* of God's people who have experienced exile, and then the *consummation* of God's work. For Robertson, the theme of the reign of YHWH is emphasized in book IV, particularly in the “YHWH reigns” psalms, but simultaneously the intent is to “foster a resurgence of hope in the kingdom of the Davidic Messiah” (p. 147, contra Wilson). Finally, the return of royal and Davidic psalms in book V, particularly the two clusters with Davidic superscriptions near the beginning and end, as well as the messianically significant Psalms 110, 118, and 132, all evince a return of a Davidic Messiah figure in this final book.

Although many proponents of the canonical approach to the book of Psalms advocate in varying degrees final form analysis in light of attention to the book's redaction history, Robertson's methodology is decidedly focused on the shape of the book of Psalms as it is presented in the Masoretic Text. Due to this, he only lightly interacts with the distinctive features of the LXX Psalter (mostly in the footnotes), and even more occasionally offers comparisons with the Dead Sea Scrolls Psalms texts. Although Robertson tends to assume an editor-compiler who may have chosen to alter, say, the divine name to suit his thematic purposes in book II (cf., e.g., Psalms 14 and 53), the vast majority of the time he assumes that the editor(s) did not add or subtract from the original compositions (e.g. p. 104), even as he also acknowledges that psalms were frequently recast into different settings suitable to later circumstances (cf. Childs, Waltke, et al.; p. 161), not chronologically, but with reference to their biblical-theological themes (p. 222). Finally, Robertson is certainly aware of the wider discussion in the secondary literature, as he interacts with all of the most prominent voices in the canonical discussion throughout the footnotes, where he very ably interacts critically with them.

Robertson clearly writes, then, from a conservative evangelical perspective on the Bible, and he is also explicit about a pastoral concern to lead the reader into worship and to build up the church, as well as an ultimate concern for the glory of God. For Robertson, the reliability of the Bible includes every portion, including psalm superscriptions; the 73 *ladavid* psalms are said to be historically reliable wit-

nesses to Davidic authorship. At the end of a section, he will often stop and marvel at the greatness of God's plan, or the specific theology that ought to lead the reader into worship (e.g. pp. 265–66). As he writes, Robertson is also concerned to help the reader make links to contemporary application. For example, as his chapter on book II concludes, he reflects on the ongoing significance of David's experiences, making use of the analogy between God's dealings with David and his dealings with believers in Jesus Christ today; of a redemptive-historical reflection on the merger of Messiah's throne with the throne of God that leads to the God-Messiah Jesus Christ and the participation of every believer in Jesus in the sonship of God; and finally, on the typology between the life of David and the person and work of Jesus Christ (pp. 120–21).

In the end, this book is well suited as a Bible college or seminary textbook and for pastors who are preparing to teach or preach through the book of Psalms. However, the interaction with the secondary source discussion on the shape of the Psalter in the footnotes, along with the unique proposals throughout the work, will mean that it will also appeal to scholars. I, for one, am grateful for this great book, and certainly plan to assign it as a textbook for any future courses I teach on the book of Psalms. Robertson's work is a much-needed contribution to the field.

Ian J. Vaillancourt
Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Recent Research on the Historical Jesus. By Benjamin I. Simpson. Recent Research in Biblical Studies 6. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2014, xv + 212 pp., \$95.00.

Recent Research on the Historical Jesus, by Ben Simpson, focuses specifically on the historiography and methodology of two of the Third Quest's most prominent Jesus scholars. Part 1 covers the historiography and methodology used by John P. Meier and James D. G. Dunn. Part 2 discusses how Meier and Dunn apply their principles to specific passages.

In chapter 1, Simpson briefly reviews the history of the historical quest for Jesus and critically analyzes the standard categorization of First Quest, No Quest, Second Quest, and Third Quest. Then, after discussing and comparing modern and postmodern historiography in relation to the Third Quest in general, Simpson focuses more specifically on the principles and methods used by Meier and Dunn. Simpson notes that Meier relies heavily on selected criteria of authenticity and is more atomistic and minimalist than Dunn in his approach. By contrast, Dunn argues that the oral tradition is more reliable than many previous studies have suggested.

Meier's goal is to investigate Jesus as objectively as possible. He admits, of course, that complete objectivity is impossible; so his solution is to admit one's own perspective, strive for objectivity, and submit the results for scholarly review. Meier famously proposes to imagine an "unpapal conclave" consisting of an agnostic, a Jew, a Protestant, and a Catholic who must all come to a consensus, admitting that such a consensus would be minimalist.

Meier's method is thoroughly undergirded by the form-critical assumption that there is a significant difference between the real Jesus and the Jesus of faith imagined by the later church. By contrast, Dunn's historiography assumes an interaction between faith and history. Contrary to the form critics, Dunn argues faith is inseparable from the Gospel accounts precisely because faith in Jesus began before Easter, and the Gospels are reflections of both pre- and post-Easter faith. While Meier's historiography continues in the legacy of modernism and form criticism, Dunn historiography relies on the philosophy of critical realism and on recent studies in oral tradition.

Simpson then discusses the role of eyewitness testimony in oral tradition focusing specifically on the work of Richard Bauckham, who argues that the evangelists received their information from the eyewitnesses. Dunn does not go quite that far, contending that the eyewitness information was mediated to the Gospel writers through the communities. Simpson points out that in either case the presence of eyewitness testimony would guard the transmission of the tradition. Meier, on the other hand, tends to deny any eyewitness role because of the variation in the Gospel accounts. Meier explains this variation as the result of editorial redaction, but Dunn sees the variation as a result of oral transmission.

Dunn and Meier have different approaches on the criteria of authenticity as well. Meier takes an "atomistic" approach, using criteria of authenticity to verify each piece of evidence. He then uses those pieces to construct a picture of Jesus. Dunn uses a "holistic" approach, arguing that the historian should first gain an overall picture of the characteristic Jesus and then use criteria to establish the details. Simpson provides a good discussion of the debate over the usefulness of such criteria in general, as well as a helpful critique of the criteria used specifically by Dunn and Meier.

In the remaining chapters—chapters 3, 4, and 5—Simpson demonstrates how Meier's and Dunn's historical methods apply to three specific events: (1) Jesus' baptism; (2) Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi; and (3) Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin. Chapter 3 focuses on Jesus' baptism by John. On the one hand, both Meier and Dunn agree with the authenticity of the baptism tradition. On the other hand, Dunn affirms but Meier questions the authenticity of the accompanying theophany. Simpson acknowledges that Meier's minimalist approach establishes a bare minimum of what can be affirmed about Jesus' baptism, but he argues that the evidence is sufficient to support the authenticity of the theophany as well. Simpson also points out that the rejection or acceptance of the theophany has significant implications for one's understanding of Jesus. For Dunn, the baptism and theophany provide insight into Jesus' own self-understanding. By contrast, under Meier's view, Jesus' baptism simply marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry but otherwise has no more significance than John's baptism had for any other Jew.

Chapter 4 focuses on Peter's confession at Caesarea. Both Meier and Dunn accept Peter's messianic confession as essentially authentic but both think it unlikely that Jesus himself accepted that role. Contrary to both Meier and Dunn, Simpson argues that Jesus' acceptance of Peter's confession makes the most sense in the historical context.

In chapter 5, Simpson focuses on Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin. Both Meier and Dunn conclude that the trial occurred but that the details have been lost. Although according to the Gospel of Mark, for example, Jesus accepts the role of Messiah, Dunn does not think Jesus himself actually accepted that role. Simpson expresses disagreement with both Meier and Dunn, siding instead with Bock, who argues that Jesus' response was not a qualified rejection (Dunn) but a qualified "yes."

My only objections to the book are relatively minor. For example, Simpson argues that Third Quest scholars have failed to reach consensus on Jesus because "first-century Judaism lacks homogeneity" and because they disagree over "Christian origins or how the early church transmitted Jesus traditions" (p. 46). I would suggest that the differences are better explained by such factors as: (1) presuppositions—such as whether the researcher is open to the possibility of divine intervention or not; (2) the degree of skepticism the scholar brings to the sources; and (3) the lack of any consensus regarding methodology. Simpson reviews two major contenders but Sanders, Crossan, Wright, and Allison, for example, also have different methods, leading to varying conclusions.

More significantly, Simpson repeatedly mentions Dunn's "core" elements (e.g. pp. 135, 186) and the stability of these elements (e.g. pp. 134, 136, 157, 186, 187), but I do not recall him ever explaining how Dunn arrives at those core elements—and that is one of the foundational aspects of Dunn's entire methodology. Dunn's method treats Gospel stories as a reflection of oral tradition in which the core of the story remains the same each time the story is told, while the peripheral elements may change from performance to performance. For Dunn, the core elements are those in the double or triple tradition that remain the same.

This is significantly different from the form-critical approach that would generally view stories in the triple tradition as being derived from Mark. So in form criticism (and in Meier) a story found in the triple tradition would be seen as coming ultimately from one source—Mark. Unless that story could be verified with other criteria of authenticity, it may be suspect. Under Dunn's method, the elements of a story in the triple tradition that are essentially the same would generally be regarded as core elements going back to the earliest remembrances of Jesus. A future edition of Simpson's book would be improved by explaining this more fully.

Otherwise, the book is excellent. Simpson provides a good summary of the quest for the historical Jesus, an excellent critique of form criticism, as well as the opposing oral tradition models of Bailey and Gerhardsson. Simpson not only summarizes Meier's and Dunn's historical methods, but he also helpfully interacts with and critiques both. The book should be a helpful resource for readers seeking a better understanding of some issues involved in the historical study of Jesus.

The significance of Simpson's study should not be underestimated. Simpson disagrees with both Meier and Dunn at times, but he clearly comes down more on Dunn's side. Although Simpson never made this point in the book, I would argue that if Dunn and Simpson are right in their assessment of form criticism, modernism, and the inadequacy of the old literary model in comparison to Dunn's oral

model, then a significant part of Meier's entire four-volume work will have been shown to be built on a foundation of sand.

Dennis Ingolfsland
Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN

Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew. By Matthias Konradt. Translated by Kathleen Ess. Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014, xiii + 485 pp., \$79.95.

According to the editors of the Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity series, Wayne Coppins and Simon Gathercole, Matthias Konradt is “one of the most prominent scholars of early Christianity in Germany today” (p. ix). The book, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, represents for Konradt a career-long project. Konradt's study of the topic began in his student days with his “thesis paper” and has been a “steady companion” through his doctoral and post-doctoral work (p. xi). His research culminated in his 2007 monograph *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*. The excellent English translation by Kathleen Ess is not only a translation, but also represents an updated and revised version of the original German monograph.

Konradt concisely sums up the research problem and his thesis in the preface to the English edition:

This monograph focuses on what I consider to be one of the most central difficulties for understanding the theology of the Gospel of Matthew—namely, identifying the cause for the transition from the Israel-centered, pre-Easter ministry of Jesus and his disciples to the universal mission post-Easter and the relationship between the formation of the Church and Israel's role as God's chosen nation in Matthew's concept. Contrary to the traditional interpretation, which suggests that Matthew advocates the replacement of Israel by the Church and—in keeping with this—of the mission to Israel by the universal mission, my thesis is that the Israel-centered and the universal dimensions of salvation are positively interconnected in the narrative conception, in which Matthew develops Jesus' messianic identity as the Son of David and the Son of God (p. vii).

The book is essential reading for anyone working on Matthew's Gospel and should be numbered among the most important Matthean works of the last decade. This is for three reasons: (1) Konradt's detailed exegetical work; (2) his comprehensiveness in treating the whole of the Gospel; and (3) his constructive and fresh post-supersessionistic interpretation of Matthew's theology of Israel and the Church. In a manner not often achieved in one book, the work couples minute attention to detail with synthetic integration. There is little in the Gospel of Matthew that Konradt does not touch in one way or another. What's more, the topic of the monograph, Israel and the church and the universal pagan mission, is of fundamental importance to the interpretation of Matthew.

Konradt models a narratological method appropriate for interpreting Matthew's theological outlook. The introduction sets out the problem with the tradi-

tional solution to the relationship between the particularistic and universalistic elements of Matthew's narrative. The key interpretive question, according to Konradt, is: "whether the traditional theses of replacement ... in fact appropriately capture significant tendencies of the Matthean narrative and are able to integrate them meaningfully" (p. 10). Konradt brings his research focus to a point when he notes that "one must consider what both the formation of the ecclesia and the universal dimension of salvation at the end of the Gospel imply for the understanding of Israel [I]t must be shown how one gets from 10.5–6 to 28.19 if 28.19 is not motivated by Jesus' rejection in Israel" (pp. 13–14). This is his task in the five main chapters of the book (chaps. 2–6). For this review I will focus on one of the central arguments of the book, perhaps the most central. A fuller review article would be necessary to treat comprehensively the other significant elements of this important contribution.

Chapter 2, the first of three steps in the argument, deals with Matthew's focus on the pre-Easter ministry of Jesus and the disciples toward Israel, particularly on the Christological motifs that guide its depiction. Konradt's claim of a Christological correlation between the Son of David and the Son of God is of particular importance for the overall thesis of the monograph and appears in chapter 2 for the first time but will again be given a more detailed explanation in chapter 5. If I understand Konradt rightly, Jesus-Son of David is a *functional* identity (my term) of the more *essential* identity (again my term), Jesus-Son of God in Matthean Christology. "It is the divine sonship that constitutes the core of Jesus' messianic identity" (p. 286). The Christological contribution of Jesus' Davidic identity is only related to his vocation on behalf of Israel. Konradt writes, "Jesus' ministry depicted prior to 22.41–46—and thus, to a certain extent, framed by Matt 1 and 22.41–46—is centrally characterized by the idea that Jesus the Son of God turns to his people in his '*role*' as the Son of David" (p. 31, italics mine). Yet Jesus' identity as the Son of God is his more *basic* identity.

So while the Jesus-Son of David identity relates to Jesus' pre-Easter ministry focus on Israel, the Jesus-Son of God identity corresponds to the post-Easter ministry *beyond* Israel to the universal mission to pagans. These titles in Matthew's narrative theology represent complementary but distinct aspects of Jesus' ministry for Konradt. Therefore, he sees the narrative and Christological lines of development discerned in the story in parallel. "The christological and salvation-historical lines of the narrative correspond here: the two-tier concept of attention to Israel alone as a signature of Jesus' earthly ministry and the extension of that attention to the nations in the commission by the resurrected Christ is accompanied by the sophisticated unclinking of Jesus' identity in the narrative development of Matthean fulfillment Christology" (p. 287). This narrative theological insight represents one of the most substantial aspects of Konradt's work.

In assessing the argument, I am generally convinced by Konradt's analysis in sections 2.1.1, "The Son of God as the Son of David," and 5.2, "The Christological Foundation of the Universal Mission in Matt 28.18–20," wherein he concludes that the title "Son of God" is the more basic identity for Matthew. He bases this opinion on the Matthean "inversion" in Matthew chapter 1: "Jesus, the Son of God, is

thus integrated into the Davidic family line” (p. 28). Matthew does not diminish Jesus’ Davidic identity with the inversion, however, according to Konradt. Rather, Matthew has incorporated Jesus-Son of God into the earthly history of God’s promises to Israel outlined in Scripture. As the Son of David, Jesus-Son of God is rooted in Israel’s history to fulfill Israel’s promises. The two titles represent distinct aspects of Jesus’ profile, but they are “positively correlated” in Matthew. “One misses the point of Matthew’s conception,” Konradt says, “if the significance of Jesus’ divine sonship is pitted against that of his Davidic sonship” (p. 29). The demonstration of the correlation and unity of the two titles is indeed an important contribution.

I think Konradt missteps, however, in his notion of a *functional hierarchy*, or at the very least a functional distinction, between the titles. Here is how he puts it:

The emphasis here lies on the assertion that Jesus the Son of God is integrated into the history of God’s promises to Israel and *first* makes his appearance as the Son of David—that is, he *first has to fulfill the task that is assigned to him as the messianic Son of David*. On the one hand, we must remain mindful of the fact that both titles form one conceptual nexus: behind Jesus’ appearance as Son of David lies his dignity as the Son of God, and conversely, the earthly ministry of the Son of God is centrally defined by *the task* assigned to him as the Davidic Messiah (p. 29, italics mine).

On the one hand, I am not convinced that Matthew’s Christology limits the relevance of Jesus’ Davidic identity to *only* or primarily Israel as in Konradt’s interpretation. Jesus’ death contains both the themes of Son of God and Son of David, which Konradt acknowledges (pp. 299, 303). On the other hand, Matthew seems to be making the Christological claim that the Davidic messianic identity of Jesus *is* God’s identity. There is obviously a historical element: the Son of God has in time become the Son of David. Yet the messianic son of David (1:20–21) is “God with us” (1:23), the one who will be so even to the end of the age (28:20). Matthew implicitly equates the two concepts when he reports Jesus’ rhetorical question: “If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” The Son of God/Son of David identity is indeed *for* Israel. However, the new element in identity (i.e. Davidic), if we can really call it new—and I have a deep doubt about it—is *not* simply something for Israel and not simply on an earthly plane. This character is to bring into harmony heaven and earth (6:10; 28:18).

The particularistic and universal elements Konradt divides between the two Christological titles in order to explain Matthew’s narrative arch in fact coalesced already in the Jewish tradition in a way he has apparently not appreciated. The Davidic tradition, within which Matthew’s theology is framed, had a strong universal *Tendenz*. As evidence, I can only here make reference to (1) the nature of the Davidic/Solomonic kingdoms, which included pagans; and (2) the universal conceptions of the Davidic kingdom contained in the worship life of Israel exhibited in the book of Psalms and later Isaiah. For Konradt “the soteriological foundation that establishes the new salvation-historical period in which the ministry of salvation is extended to the Gentile world” is “the obedient Son of God’s salvific death

for the ‘many’” (p. 307). However, with a thoroughgoing understanding of the Davidic tradition’s universalism, the foundation for universal salvation extends further back into the Jewish tradition and includes Jesus’ identity as Son of David. Jesus the Son of God, Son of David is the universal savior of *both* Israel and the pagan nations. Matthew’s innovation within the tradition is to posit that the universalism already inherent is fully perfected in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, because he is not simply or primarily the Son of David, but he is also, and more essentially, the Son of God.

Chapter 5 continues to consider the universal dimension of the Matthean narrative with an emphasis on the “christological-soteriological justification for the universality of salvation” (p. 14). Since, as Konradt believes, the scheme of Israel’s rejection must be set aside as ultimately unpersuasive, the precise connection between the particularistic and universal emphases of Matthew’s Gospel is pursued. Konradt’s argument finds its apex here in chapter 5. He argues that the two missions in Matthew, one to Israel and one to the nations, correspond to the narrative development of Jesus’ identity as messiah—the one to which I have already referred above. Davidic sonship relates soteriologically to his mission to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel,” while his divine sonship links with the mission *beyond* Israel to the nations: “While the focus on Israel in Jesus’ earthly ministry correlates with the emphasis on his *Davidic* messiahship, the extension of salvation to the nations is connected with the salvific death, resurrection, and exultation of the *Son of God*” (p. 310 italics his).

Here again I pose the problem with his schema. It appears, as Konradt reads it, the Davidic identity of Matthew’s Jesus is virtually *supplanted* by his Son of God identity in the narrative development. Yet this does not seem to best account for Matthew’s presentation in the scenes of the death, resurrection, and commission at the end of the Gospel. More likely is the interpretation (e.g. France) that sees Jesus as *both* the Son of David and Son of God commissioning the disciples on mission to the pagan nations (28:19–20). There has been no supersession of Jesus’ Davidic identity after the resurrection or as a consequence of the death and resurrection. Matt 1:21 and 26:27 speak of forgiveness of sins wrought by the eschatological Davidic Son. So, at the end of the Gospel, when commissioning his disciples, Jesus is *still* the Davidic king, but indeed more than that. The saving nature of the concepts of Son of David and Son of God are integrated throughout the narrative and cannot, I contend, be disentangled and assigned different respective functions.

One more observation will have to suffice. It is interesting that in the mission discourse, Jesus’ teaching about the mission to Israel—which Konradt argues (and I agree) continues post-Easter—explicitly assumes Jesus’ Son of God identity (10:32–33). Thus, Jesus’ saving focus on Israel in the pre-Easter period rests as much on his identity as Son of God as it does on his identity as Son of David. The mission to Israel, as also the mission to pagans, integrates Christologically both the identity of Son of God and Son of David.

Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew is one of the most important monographs on Matthew published in the last decade. This seems to have been the collective view of the editors of the BMSEC as well given their commit-

ment to bring this to an English readership. I learned much from it and where Konradt's work intersected with my own, I found myself mostly sympathetic. It should be named among the growing number of post-supersessionistic interpretations of the NT.

Joel Willitts
North Park University, Chicago, IL

Mark. By Mark L. Strauss. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the NT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014, 784 pp., \$42.99.

Mark is the most recently published volume in the ZECNT series. It was announced as one of six finalists in the Bible reference category for a 2015 Christian Book Award by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, an award that eventually went to Karen Jobes's commentary on *1, 2, & 3 John* in the same series.

In his 39-page introduction (including bibliography), Mark Strauss offers an overview of the history of interpretation followed by discussions of genre, authorship, recipients, date and provenance, occasion and purpose, and literary features. As one might anticipate, Strauss underscores the neglect Mark's Gospel has suffered even from the early church, despite being "the most dramatic and fast-paced" of all the Gospels (p. 20). The first commentary on the Gospel appears in the sixth century by Victor of Antioch. Only four commentaries on Mark were written between 650 and 1000. However, the paucity of commentaries on Mark has been reversed, especially since narrative criticism emerged in the wake of form and redaction criticism in the last century. As part of this trend, Strauss has produced a welcome addition to the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary series designed for teachers and preachers or for anyone with a working knowledge of Greek.

After he provides an overview of the various approaches scholars have employed in their study of the Gospel, Strauss makes a brief case for his eclectic approach, which draws upon the best "insights from historical-critical, social-scientific, and narrative methodologies" (p. 25). Because he accepts Mark's priority, he emphasizes that this renders analysis of Mark's sources rather tentative. Strauss believes that John Mark authored the Gospel and that he likely sent it to believers in Rome. He counters Robert Gundry's contention that Mark's Gospel was designed as an apologetic for unbelievers.

The commentary portion reflects the format of the ZECNT series. The sixteen chapters of the Gospel are divided into 63 chapter units for comments with an additional segment devoted to the different endings of Mark. Consideration of the literary context begins each of these 63 segments, followed by Strauss's translation of the unit, which is graphically displayed in a way that offers a simple discourse analysis of the relationships among clauses. An exegetical outline is followed by an explanation of the text, which follows a verse-by-verse format. Each commentary unit ends with "Theology in Application," a section that summarizes the import of the unit's message for readers. As with other volumes in the series, throughout the commentary Strauss inserts several "In Depth" reflections highlighted with gray

background. Placement of these varies, with several embedded into the exegetical comments and others placed after the “Theology in Application” segments. As an example, the first of these is “The Kingdom of God in Jesus’ Preaching” (pp. 80–82). These “In Depth” segments provide information additional to the exegetical comments, a helpful and attractive feature that enhances the commentary.

Because he accepts the shorter ending, Strauss does not assign number 64 to the unit of six pages that he devotes to the various endings of the Gospel. Instead, he treats his discussion as an appendix where he summarizes the textual questions followed by comments on each of the verses of the longer ending. Following this, Strauss provides a 15-page essay discussion of Mark’s theology, featuring three elements: Jesus’ identity, his message and mission, and his call to discipleship.

Segmenting Mark’s Gospel into 63 commentary units provides manageable portions for readers, segments that in general fit natural breaks in the text. However, those who know the Gospel well may quibble that some divisions are counterintuitive, especially where some of Mark’s literary sandwiches occur. While some commentary units encompass the whole of a sandwich (e.g. unit 14 on 3:20–35, unit 19 on 5:21–43, and unit 44 on 11:12–25), some literary sandwiches spread over more than one commentary unit. For example, the crucial literary sandwich in 4:1–34, the parable discourse, spans commentary units 15 and 16. That Strauss does not regard this unit as an intercalation is evident (see p. 249). This will puzzle Mark scholars. Instead, Strauss identifies 6:6b–30(–44?) as Mark’s third intercalative unit (after 3:20–35; 5:21–43). On the intercalation of Mark 6 he notes that though “typically the episodes interpret, explain, or illustrate one another, the relationship between these is more uncertain” (p. 249). Others see a “new exodus” motif emerge in 6:6b–13 made more obvious in 30–44 with subtle but crucial connecting elements that identify Jesus with John and that contrast God’s reign with that of King Herod in the sandwiched portion (6:14–29). So, even though he acknowledges the literary sandwich, he proceeds as if the structure had no significance. Consequently, Strauss spreads the text over three commentary units: 21 (6:6b–13), 22 (6:14–29), and 23 (6:30–44). The result is that readers will lose sight of Mark’s intercalation and its significance.

Nevertheless, Strauss’s commentary is a treasure trove of insights on Mark’s text. For example, because he is sensitive to the Gospel’s subtleties, he does not pass over Mark’s statement in 9:15, “When the whole crowd saw him, they were greatly amazed and ran to greet him.” Strauss correctly observes that, even though the text does not explain the reason for the crowd’s amazement, a residual glow on Jesus’ visage after returning from his transfiguration is the most likely explanation (p. 396). Strauss rightly finds Morna Hooker and Robert Gundry convincing on this, unlike James Edwards.

Overall, it is an excellent commentary that reflects the author's evangelical faith and features a narrative emphasis. Strauss presents a readable commentary that pastors and teachers with some functional knowledge of Greek ought to secure and use liberally. Advanced undergraduates and seminarians would also benefit.

Ardel B. Caneday

University of Northwestern—St. Paul, St. Paul, MN

Character Studies and the Gospel of Mark. Edited by Christopher W. Skinner and Matthew Ryan Hauge. Library of NT Studies 483. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014, xxii + 268 pp., \$120.00.

Narrative critics will love *Character Studies and the Gospel of Mark*, because Christopher W. Skinner and Matthew Ryan Hauge (eds.) have assembled a stellar group of scholars who know (more narrowly) the field of Markan characterization and (more broadly) the field of narrative criticism and because they push forward these disciplines in creative ways. Skinner and Hauge divide the monograph into two parts: methodology (part 1) and character studies (part 2), though several essays in part 2 also make insightful methodological contributions.

Three chapters make up part 1 on methodology. Skinner's title of chapter 1 summarizes well his broader agenda: "The Study of Character(s) in the Gospel of Mark: A Survey of Research from Wrede to the Performance Critics (1901 to 2014)." More specifically, Skinner helpfully traces how scholarly interest in Mark's disciples began with William Wrede, waned with the form critics, and regained traction with the redaction critics. The redaction critics' interest in the disciples paved the way for today's narrative critics to explore other character studies. Aside from looking backward to Wrede, Skinner also looks forward in two appealing ways: he invites his European colleagues to the narrative-critical table, since they generally have methodologically dined elsewhere, and he asks performance critics also to contribute more to the conversation about characterization. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon in chapter 2 ("History, Theology, Story: Re-Contextualizing Mark's 'Messianic Secret' as Characterization") calls for a new method for exploring the messianic secret: recontextualization. Along with viewing the messianic secret historically (pace Wrede) and theologically (pace Leander Keck), Malbon suggests recontextualizing it within story. One particular payoff of recontextualizing the messianic secret is that it retains the intentional and strategic tension between a reticent Markan Jesus (who often conceals his own identity) and a bold Markan narrator (who overtly proclaims Jesus' identity), a tension that historical and theological scholars have often sought too quickly to resolve.

The final essay in part 1 is Hauge's "The Creation of Person in Ancient Narrative and the Gospel of Mark," wherein he offers a new method for exploring Gospel characterization. Mark, Hauge suggests, taps into an ancient Greco-Roman technique of mimesis in characterizing Jesus in Mark 11:1–11, in this case imitating the "taming of Bucephalus" in *The Alexander Romance*. Given Mark's strong predi-

lection toward mimicking Hebrew Bible characters (e.g. Jesus and David), Hauge's creative and novel argument will need much more testing beyond Mark 1:1–11. Also in need of further testing is Hauge's concomitant and bold argument that Mark is best generically classified as novel or romance.

Six chapters make up part 2 on character studies. Ira Brent Driggers's "God as Healer of Creation in the Gospel of Mark" (chap. 4) methodologically overlaps with, and contributes to, a theological and historical reading of Mark. Driggers explores the characterization of God and Jesus within the Markan theme of creation's healing. Driggers argues narratively for a high Markan Christology, an argument that historical scholars—those who suggest that such a high Christology emerged much later than Mark—will need to consider. Joel F. Williams's "The Characterization of Jesus as Lord in Mark's Gospel" (chap. 5) explores Mark's Christological title "Lord," asking what it means for Mark's Jesus to be Lord and how it affects his audience. In his exploration, Williams wisely avoids the inherent reductionism that often accompanies the exploring of Christological titles. He argues convincingly that Mark's Jesus is Lord; that is, he is both exemplary and exalted in his authority, even if some characters do not recognize it. This affects Mark's audience because, if Jesus is indeed Lord, then implicitly he must also be Lord for the reader. Williams's chapter complements well Driggers's essay in chapter 4 on Jesus' high Christology and, though set within a volume written for specialists, would serve nicely—because of its brevity and clarity—as required reading for graduate students who need an excellent summary and example of how characterization functions within a Gospel narrative.

Elizabeth Shively, in "Characterizing the Non-Human: Satan in the Gospel of Mark" (chap. 6), addresses the lacuna in Markan studies on the characterization of Satan. After successfully legitimizing the study of non-human characters in Mark, she (1) argues that Mark portrays Satan as "the lord of the household of the world"; (2) challenges the prevailing critical assumption that Satan's primary role in Mark resides at the beginning of Jesus' ministry and is not pervasively present throughout his whole ministry; and (3) demonstrates that Satan is not working at cross-purposes both to inspire and to prevent the events that lead to the cross; rather, Mark's character portrayal of Satan is consistent. Shively situates her exploration within Mieke Bal's "frame of reference," a method that asks how a particular character fits both within its intertextual and extra-textual contexts. I hope that subsequent narrative critics will expand on Shively at precisely this "extra-textual" juncture, specifically exploring more fully where the Hebrew Bible intersects Gospel characterization beyond Jesus. The Hebrew Bible, after all, shapes Gospel characterization more than any other literature. Perhaps the characters in the Gospels in more ways than have yet been discovered stand in the shadow of their Hebrew predecessors.

Continuing part 3, Paul Danove's chapter ("The Narrative Rhetoric of Mark's Characterization of Peter"; chap. 7), though stiltedly written relative to the other essays in this volume, cleverly explores Mark's rhetorical portrayal of Peter. Danove asks what were the real audience's pre-existing beliefs about Peter and then observes how Mark cultivates these beliefs—whether negatively or positively—via

verbal repetitions. Danove's conclusions about Peter are not surprising: Mark's readers have mostly positive beliefs about Peter. Danove's method, however, is intriguing and well worth applying more broadly in Gospel studies. Susan Miller in chapter 8 ("Women Characters in Mark's Gospel") contributes to a better narrative understanding of Mark's characterization of women by arguing that their distinctive feature in Mark is their willingness to break religious and social boundaries (e.g. the Syrophenician woman who ignores the barriers of gender and race by asking Jesus to heal her daughter). Miller concludes that Mark uses his female characters to pose theological dilemmas (e.g. Jesus' interaction with the Syrophenician woman raises questions about the relationship between Jews and Gentiles). Subsequent narrative critics can build on Miller by exploring similar trends in Matthew, Luke, and John.

Finally, Adam Winn, in "Their Great Ones Act as Tyrants over Them? Mark's Characterization of Roman Authorities from a Distinctly Roman Perspective" (chap. 9), applies a standard narrative-critical reading to Mark's Roman rulers (Herod Antipas and Pontius Pilate), which itself fills a gap in Markan studies. However, Winn goes a step further and opens a new methodological door for others to step through by specifically asking how Mark's *Roman* audience would understand these characters. Winn wisely hedges for those who might justifiably disagree with a Markan Roman provenance: "this essay can be read as a study of Mark's reception by its earliest Roman readers" (p. 196).

As with many multi-authored anthologies, no attempt is made in *Character Studies and the Gospel of Mark* to form continuity from one chapter to the next. In addition, like Mark's Gospel, the monograph ends rather abruptly; a brief conclusion would helpfully have clarified future research trajectories. These two critiques are trivial, however, because the contributors—all pacesetters in Markan narrative criticism—offer penetrating contributions to the field, contributions that NT narrative critics, who especially study characterization, will discuss for years to come. In essence, they accomplish what all researchers strive to accomplish; they advance their field, provide new methods for research, and open clear avenues for others to travel. What more could a monograph offer?

D. Keith Campbell
Global Scholars, Overland Park, KS

Jesus, the Temple, and the Coming of the Son of Man: A Commentary on Mark 13. By Robert H. Stein. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 160 pp., \$18.00 paper.

Among the discourses of Jesus recorded in Mark's Gospel, perhaps none is more daunting than the eschatological discourse of Mark 13. Thus, a book dedicated exclusively to this chapter by a seasoned Gospels scholar such as Robert Stein is certainly a valuable resource. In this work, Stein offers a detailed commentary and much-needed current treatment of this challenging text.

Stein launches his work with two introductory chapters that lay the groundwork for his approach. In chapter 1, he begins by presenting how the discourse has been treated from both historical and literary angles, including how it was ad-

dressed within the three quests of historical Jesus research. While acknowledging the contributions of source and literary criticism, Stein presents his own methodology as that of redaction criticism and asserts that he is seeking to determine the meaning of the text in its present form by applying “a traditional, author-oriented hermeneutic” (p. 38). In chapter 2, Stein lays out the key issues and questions pertinent to interpretation, which include an analysis of content, genre, and literary structure. In harmony with many scholars, Stein asserts that the content of the discourse focuses on two main issues: the destruction of the temple and the coming of the Son of Man. In regard to genre, he approaches the text not as an apocalypse or prophecy, but as “historical narrative” (p. 43). As for literary structure, Stein presents six different proposed outlines before offering his own, which involves an alternating “ABA’B’ pattern,” alternating, that is, between a focus on the temple’s destruction in AD 70 and the coming of the Son of Man (the parousia), which Stein sees as a future literal event (pp. 49, 122).

The following four chapters consist of commentary. In chapter 3, which covers 13:1–4, Stein argues that the disciples present a twofold question pertaining explicitly to the destruction of the temple (not the coming of the Son of Man) and its accompanying sign. He focuses especially on the phrases “these things” (*tauta*) and “all these things” (*tauta panta*) in verse 4, as these serve as a linchpin in his analysis. As he argues, throughout the discourse these expressions refer *exclusively* to the events surrounding the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in AD 70.

The next section of the discourse, 13:5–23, is covered in chapter 4. As Stein argues, this is Jesus’ direct response to the disciples’ twofold question and thus is focused on the events surrounding the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem (A of the outline). Affirming the singular nature of the requested “sign,” he calls the appearance of false messiahs, wars and natural disasters, and the mission and persecution of believers “non-signs,” with the first two simply being “natural events that must take place in a fallen world” (p. 73). The “sign” is singularly the “abomination of desolation” in verse 14, which Stein believes likely referred to the atrocities of the Zealots under John of Gischala and Eleazar, the son of Simon, including installing Phanni as high priest (AD 67–68). This would have served as a sign for believers to flee that they might be spared from Jerusalem’s impending destruction by the Romans.

Chapter 5 covers 13:24–27, which Stein asserts focuses on the coming of the Son of Man (B of the outline). Stein considers the “tribulation” here not the “great tribulation” which was to immediately precede the parousia, but the tribulation associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. In his view, this tribulation is separated temporally with what is said to come “after”—the coming of the Son of Man. In order to assert this, Stein tentatively suggests viewing the phrase “in those days” with a “prophetic perspective” that allows a temporal gap of uncertain length between the events of AD 70 and the coming of the Son of Man (pp. 106–7, 120). Regarding the cosmic phenomena, Stein suggests a figurative understanding of these as theophanic events that accompany the coming of the Son of Man, which he asserts is a literal future event, and not the events of AD 70.

In chapter 6, Stein addresses the parable of the fig tree in 13:28–31, which he argues is a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem (A' of the outline). Here, the mention of “this generation” which Stein sees as limited to Jesus’ contemporaries supports this understanding. Furthermore, he asserts that “these things” (*tauta*) in verse 29 does not refer to all that was spoken of in the preceding passage but refers back to the *tauta* in verse 4, which explicitly references the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, here, Jesus is responding exclusively to the disciples’ initial question regarding the temple’s demise.

Stein addresses 13:32–37 in chapter 7, which he understands as focusing on the coming of the Son of Man (B' in the outline). As he argues, the antecedent for “that day” in verse 32 is the coming of the Son of Man in verse 24. Thus, although Jesus can offer indications of the timing of the destruction of Jerusalem, only the Father knows the timing of the parousia. Stein concludes his work with an eighth chapter consisting solely of an interpretative translation of Mark 13 that includes several parenthetical comments throughout.

Overall, Stein’s work offers a helpful contribution to the ongoing study of this difficult discourse. He addresses several critical questions and presents his analysis in a clear, straightforward manner. Brief and readable, this resource would be helpful not only for scholars but also for biblically literate pastors and lay persons and could easily be utilized in courses on eschatology, Mark, or the Gospels. Among much useful content, his analysis on the abomination of desolation (chap. 4) and the figurative nature of the cosmic imagery (chap. 5) are especially helpful portions of his work.

My criticisms center mainly on the important things that Stein left unsettled within his analysis. First, he fails to give due attention to the significant ways Matthew’s account diverges from Mark’s. Since he is a professed evangelical scholar who practices a canonical approach, I would have expected him to address these problematic discrepancies more adequately, especially when he shows considerable concern to reconcile Pauline expectations of the parousia (in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and the Pastorals Epistles) with Mark’s. For example, as Stein points out, Matthew seems to understand the phrase “these things” in the initial question of the disciples to include *both* the destruction of the temple and the coming of the Son of Man. This, in itself, militates against Stein’s bedrock thesis that this phrase refers to the events of AD 70 alone. Another is Matthew’s use of the term “immediately” for the coming of the Son of Man (24:29), which seemingly prohibits the large temporal gap between the two events that Stein asserts. Contra Stein, Matthew apparently sees the events symbolized by the cosmic terminology (whatever they are) at least *beginning* immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, not allowing for a temporal gap. One might presume, of course, that the two evangelists had different understandings regarding the coming of the Son of Man or that several later emendations were made to Matthew’s text, but these are the kinds of things one would need to assert to accept Stein’s argument. The level to which one is comfortable with this reality will affect the level to which one is able to accept Stein’s interpretation.

On a related note, the temporal gap theory is the most problematic issue in his interpretation. Based on Mark's discourse alone, the phrase "in those days" in verse 24 for the timing of the events symbolized by cosmic imagery is difficult, for one would most naturally understand "those days" in reference to what was just discussed, the destruction of Jerusalem. Stein's offer of the "prophetic perspective" idea to resolve this issue is left undeveloped in his work and, thus, remains unconvincing. Furthermore, the notion of prophetic perspective would seem to require that the destruction of Jerusalem be at least included in "those days." Perhaps there is good reason Stein himself calls this solution "not thoroughly convincing" (p. 120).

Criticisms aside, Stein is to be commended for taking on such a daunting portion of Scripture with such extensive focus. Particular points of his analysis are well-reasoned and convincing. For anyone setting out to study the eschatological discourse, this is an indispensable resource.

Susan Rieske
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Torah Praxis after 70 CE: Reading Matthew and Luke-Acts as Jewish Texts. By Isaac W. Oliver. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/355. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013, xvi + 524 pp., €94.00 paper.

That the NT writings originated out of a Jewish context is no longer even remotely controversial, but Luke-Acts is frequently still assumed to be a representative of so-called "Gentile Christianity." This assumption almost certainly stems from the hegemonic influence of certain German Protestant interpretations of Lukan theology (Baur, Conzelmann, Haenchen, etc.) that take certain verses regarding the obsolescence of Torah observance (e.g. Acts 13:38–39 and 15:10) as "the hermeneutical key governing the interpretation of Luke's perspective on the law as a whole" (p. 445). This belief that the author of Luke-Acts is a Gentile Christian who is moderately familiar with Judaism is exactly what Oliver attempts to demolish in his published dissertation (completed under the supervision of Gabriele Boccacini).

Oliver compares Luke with Matthew on three significant Jewish identity markers: observance of the Sabbath, food laws, and circumcision. Given that few would contest the Jewishness of Matthew, Oliver is able to compare the two Gospels to show that Luke is no less Jewish than Matthew. Oliver concludes: "I have become increasingly impressed at the remarkable knowledge and affirmation of the Torah contained in these writings to the point of convincing me that Luke should not be viewed simply as a God-fearer ... or even a full convert (proselyte) to Judaism. I suggest, therefore, that both Matthew and Luke were born and raised Jewish. They both observed the Torah and were of Jewish parentage" (p. 448). While proving the ethnic identity and parentage of a historical figure may be a bit of an overreach, Oliver succeeds in showing that Luke's writings not only demonstrate continuity between Israel's Scripture and Jesus at the level of salvation history but also at

the level of Torah observance. One of the pleasures of Oliver's study is his willingness to accept Matthew and Luke as important witnesses to the diversity and contested nature of *Jewish* halakah (e.g. p. 122).

With respect to Sabbath observance, Oliver notes that there is nothing in Luke that suggests Jesus abrogated or discouraged its observance. Rather, what one finds in Luke is "proto-rabbinic ... halakic deliberation" (p. 137) that portrays Jesus and his opponents disagreeing on what to do when human need and Sabbath observance conflict. Both Luke and Matthew combine "eschatological-christological statements with halakic-ethical considerations in order to bolster Jesus' Sabbath praxis in ways that comply with the ethos of the Torah and imply its ongoing relevance for Jewish followers of Jesus" (p. 146).

Oliver finds little that would suggest the abrogation of food laws in the Gospel of Luke and questions interpretations of certain passages that would seem to argue against his thesis (esp. Luke 10:1–11). Most difficult, however, for his interpretation is the Cornelius incident where the voice from heaven asks Peter in a vision to kill and eat the defiled and unclean animals. Many have seen this as a straightforward abrogation of the food laws that would now make Jew and Gentile fellowship possible. However, Oliver notes that Peter never does eat and that the interpretation of the vision makes it clear that the mixed animals represent people and not food. As Peter himself voices: "God has shown me that I must not call *any persons* common or unclean" (Acts 10:28b). Oliver here argues, in part, from silence as he notes that the threefold repetition of the voice from heaven never *explicitly denies* kashrut (p. 325). The vision is not ultimately about food; rather, the vision is "about the purification and sanctification of Gentile believers" (p. 353). Luke is "simply stating that Gentile *followers of Jesus ...* are no longer to be avoided, for they have abandoned their sinful ways and now worship the God of Israel" (p. 353 italics his). Oliver emphasizes that Gentile Christians would have willingly respected kashrut when they shared meals with Jews. This strikes me as plausible, though it would be nice to see more explicit argumentation for this point. Oliver makes a strong argument for Leviticus 17–18 as the background for the apostolic decree and suggests that its purpose is to exhort Gentile Christians to observe a modicum of the Jewish food laws, so that Jewish and Gentile Christians can eat together. This makes good sense of three of the four stipulations (more difficult, however, is the restriction on "sexual immorality").

Regarding circumcision, Oliver argues that Luke holds to a moderate view that, on the one hand, upholds the necessity of circumcision for Jewish believers in Jesus but, on the other hand, rejects the imposition of the practice on Gentile Christians. Luke's depiction of the circumcisions of John the Baptist and Jesus suggest that he may have intended this to function as a model of how other Jewish followers of Jesus should behave with respect to Torah. Luke's emphasis on the necessity of circumcision as taking place on the eighth day (Luke 2:20–23; Acts 7:8) would rule out even the possibility of Gentile converts successfully fulfilling the law on this matter. Luke's knowledge of circumcision and its timing on the eighth day, naming practices, and the redemption of the firstborn show that Luke has intimate knowledge about Torah praxis. All of this provides evidence, Oliver suggests, that

Luke is correct in his *rejection* of the claim by some of the Diaspora Jews that Paul teaches the Jews in the Diaspora to abandon Moses and to stop circumcising their children (Acts 21:21).

Oliver successfully demonstrates that Luke is just as Jewish as Matthew with respect to matters of Jewish halakah. F. C. Baur's account of Christian origins and the role that Acts played within this account have exerted enormous influence on most Western interpreters. It has been frequently recognized, however, that Baur's historical reconstruction of Christian origins was a thoroughly racialized account of Christianity, as Baur saw it as breaking free from the stultifying particular rites and ordinances of Judaism into a higher form of religious consciousness. The history of scholarship on Acts is filled with judgments and strategies that frequently minimize the significance of Israel and Israel's election, fail to reckon with Paul's adamant and repeated claims to have never moved away from historic Judaism, and valorize the Hellenists for breaking away from a cramping Judaism that is too closely wed to Torah, land, and temple. Oliver's work provides a significant challenge to those who would view Luke-Acts as representative of a "Gentile Christianity" that is moving away from its narrow Jewish heritage. Oliver notes, for example, that if he is correct then scholars "will have to reconsider the nature and composition of the Jewish movement and early Judaism after 70" (p. 451). This will involve rethinking the so-called "parting of the ways" between Judaism and Christianity. The notion that Luke represents "Gentile Christianity" has become more difficult to maintain in light of recent research, and in my view Oliver's study represents an important vindication of the work of Jacob Jervell who emphasized the Jewish roots of Luke-Acts and whose work was often simply ignored by the dominant German interpreters of Luke-Acts. Oliver's work may also provide an impetus to re-open the question of the relationship between "the Paul of the epistles" and the "Paul of Acts" with respect to the Gentile problem and the role of Torah observance. One difficulty here for Oliver's argument are those places in Acts (e.g. Acts 13:38–39 and 15:10) where both Paul and Peter seem to engage in criticism of the Torah. One implication Oliver does not mention as a historian and exegete is that if Oliver's account of Luke and Torah praxis is accurate, then this is one small step that may enable interpreters to avoid reproducing disastrous supersessionist readings of NT texts—readings that have often bled into or supported forms of anti-theological Judaism.

Joshua W. Jipp

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Johannine Theology: The Gospel, the Epistles and the Apocalypse. By Paul A. Rainbow. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 496 pp., \$40.00.

Paul A. Rainbow, Professor of NT at Sioux Falls Seminary, undertakes an ambitious and novel project with his recent book *Johannine Theology: The Gospel, the Epistles and the Apocalypse*. He attempts to synthesize in one volume the main theological themes found in the Johannine corpus. This synthesis is challenging for a

number of reasons, not the least of which is the reality that the Johannine corpus is the only NT corpus to include such diverse genres as Gospel, epistle, and apocalypse, all produced in diverse and sometimes unclear historical settings. The result, even in the midst of those challenges, is a masterful and useful text that bears witness to Rainbow's depth of literacy with regard to the secondary literature and his rich fluency with regard to the actual text of the Johannine corpus.

The novelty of this project is highlighted in the preface of the book. Rainbow writes, "As far as I am aware, this volume is the only English-language textbook on John's theology that aims to be both critical and comprehensive" (p. 9). By the term "critical," Rainbow means that he explores the theological themes of the Johannine corpus in his book while at the same time interacting with critical scholarship that might be skeptical of his project. By the term "comprehensive," Rainbow means that his text is one of the few recent publications in Johannine studies to include an attempted synthesis of all five works that comprise the Johannine corpus.

With regard to Rainbow's awareness of critical scholarship, a cursory examination of the text's massive bibliography of 56 pages (pp. 421–77) shows that it includes references to virtually all of the major names in Johannine scholarship over the last 150 years. In the actual text of the book, including the footnotes, Rainbow masterfully navigates the scholarly conversation as he explores what he perceives to be the Johannine corpus's major theological themes.

With regard to the novelty of Rainbow's book, one needs only to survey the most recent major works on Johannine theology to see that his book attempts something new. For example, in Zondervan's important Biblical Theology of the NT Series, Andreas J. Köstenberger's contribution, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), as its title indicates, intentionally limits its scope to the Fourth Gospel and John's three epistles. Interestingly enough, a perusal of the index of Köstenberger's massive 652-page text reveals that, while his focus is on only those four works of the Johannine corpus, he does nonetheless interact with no less than 44 passages from John's Apocalypse. Could Köstenberger's interaction with Revelation, although limited, be a tacit acknowledgement that a true Johannine theology must include a synthesis of the Apocalypse, as Rainbow supposes? That would be an interesting conversation to encourage between these two scholars.

The body of this book contains nine chapters. The first chapter, titled "Introduction," gives an overview of the author's methodology and program. After briefly exploring the patristic evidence as well as the internal evidence from the Johannine literature itself, Rainbow articulates his own conclusion that the author of all five books of the Johannine corpus is none other than the apostle John. In addition, further amplifying his evangelical convictions, Rainbow points out the inadequacies of the views of historical critics like Bultmann, and he demonstrates skepticism about modern Johannine community authorship theories once espoused by Fortna and others.

Each of the subsequent chapters seeks to synthesize key theological themes found in the Johannine corpus. Chapter 2 explores the "Revelation of God (The Father)." Chapter 3 presents the important Johannine concept of "The World."

Chapters 4 and 5, respectively, explore “God’s Self-Revelation in Christ’s Person” and “God’s Self-Revelation in Christ’s Work.” Chapter 6, titled “The Revelation of the Father in the Son by the Spirit-Paraclete” analyzes the pneumatology of the Johannine corpus. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the individual believer’s relationship to God, in chapters titled “The Believer and the True God: Coming to Christ” and “The Believer and the True God: Abiding in Christ.” Chapter 9 synthesizes John’s ecclesiology in a chapter titled “Disciples of Christ in Community.” Last of all, chapter 10 explores the relationship between the people of God and the world in a chapter titled “The Community of Christ’s Disciples in the World.”

One of many interesting characteristics of this book is the way that the author navigates the sticky issue of God’s sovereignty on the one hand and human responsibility on the other. In his chapter on “The World,” Rainbow takes both the Calvinist tradition and the Arminian tradition to task. On the one hand, Rainbow takes on the Calvinist notion of reprobation, which is often provided as the reason why many characters in the Gospel of John do not respond to faith in Christ even in light of all the signs performed by Jesus. Rainbow summarizes his position when he states, “Nowhere does John trace human unbelief back to divine reprobation as its ultimate cause” (p. 142). On the other hand, not to leave the Arminian tradition off the hook, Rainbow writes, “Arminianism, however, by asserting the ability of the human will to thwart God’s call and by making divine election conditional upon the foreseen acquiescence of its objects ... leaves personal destiny in their hands rather than God’s” (p. 143). In the end, Rainbow argues that to read the Johannine literature faithfully is to allow for an irresolvable tension between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility. As Rainbow puts it, “How to fit these propositions together in the same system of thought ... these are the mysteries that John leaves unresolved” (p. 144).

While there is much about this book that is commendable, there are at least two points of critique that could be raised. First, the wording that Rainbow uses to present John’s understanding of justification is dangerously close to the two-stage view of justification that some have accused both N. T. Wright of adopting as well as those who hold to Federal Vision theology. Rainbow describes the believer’s experience of abiding in Christ as a “period of probation” (p. 322) that awaits the final judgment before the throne of God. Rainbow writes, “The last judgment will bring this period of probation to an end and bring out each person’s fundamental attitude toward God as demonstrated by deeds, on which God will pass sentence” (p. 322). On the same page, Rainbow elucidates saying, “But in the end each believer must undergo a scrutiny to find the correlation between what Christ did on behalf of, and what the Spirit has been doing in, that individual” (p. 322). Further, he states, “the last assize will proceed on the basis of people’s works” (p. 322). Could it be that Rainbow simply means to say that at the judgment seat of God, at the end of the age, the already declared righteous status of the Christian will be *vindicated* by God—a view that is closer to the traditional Protestant view of justification? Or, is Rainbow truly advocating a two-stage form of justification *a la* Wright and the Federal Visioners? Perhaps it is best to approach this question in a spirit of charity, with an opportunity to allow this fine scholar to clarify.

Second, while I am appreciative of Rainbow's attempt to synthesize all five works of the apostle John, the author's work is still quite dominated by the Gospel of John. It should be noted that data from the Apocalypse is integrated at key points in the book, but even that integration appears to be done sparingly. For example, in the previous paragraph we explored the possibility that Rainbow articulates a two-stage Johannine doctrine of justification. Might a two-stage view of justification be mitigated by drawing into the discussion the Apocalypse's imagery of the people of God dressed in pure white garments, imagery that is certainly a metaphor for Christ's righteousness that has been imputed to the people of God prior to the final judgment? In fairness to Rainbow, where he integrates the Apocalypse, a rich discussion often ensues—discussion that is quite insightful and profound. This is especially true in two chapters of the book: chapter 3 on “The World” and chapter 10 on “The Community of Christ's Disciples in the World.” The cosmic conflict imagery found in John's Revelation is drawn into these two chapters in helpful ways.

This book is indeed a novel text—one that may encourage other Johannine scholars to explore what a synthesis of all five writings of the Johannine corpus might look like. In this sense, Rainbow has laid down an important challenge to all those interested in the study of the beloved disciple's inspired works.

C. Scott Shidemantle
Geneva College, Beaver Falls, PA

Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography. By Douglas A. Campbell. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014, xxii + 468 pp., \$39.00 paper.

Douglas Campbell has a reputation for provocative theses about Paul, and this study is no exception. Campbell's new book is both a Pauline chronology and an examination of the authenticity of Paul's letters. It is his attempt to “frame” Paul's letters—that is to construct a framework that accounts for their interrelated circumstances. Distinctive to Campbell's account is his attempt to build a Pauline chronology on the basis of Paul's letters alone, without drawing on any information from the narrative of Acts. Also distinctive is his “innocent-until-proven-guilty” approach to the authenticity of Paul's letters. Throughout the book, one sees Campbell's search for a pure methodological starting point, free from the corrupting influence of external frameworks (e.g. Acts) or prior judgments (e.g. about the authenticity of Paul's letters).

The first chapter is an extended introduction on method, and subsequent chapters “locate” each of Paul's letters in a developing chronology. The “backbone” of this chronology is Romans and the Corinthian correspondence (chap. 2). Campbell argues for the integrity of all three letters. The well-known shift in tone between 2 Corinthians 9 and 10 is explained as a turn to a different group within the divided audience of the church in Corinth (pp. 111–16). These letters were all written within a year of each other as Paul traveled from Ephesus (1 Corinthians) to Macedonia (2 Corinthians) and then to Corinth (Romans; cf. 1 Cor 16:5–9).

His reconstruction of the complex and perplexing relationship of Paul's letters and visits to Corinth is refreshingly simple, with no visits and letters between 1 and 2 Corinthians. Surprisingly, 1 Corinthians itself is identified as the "letter of tears" mentioned in 2 Corinthians. Those who have read 1 Corinthians may be surprised that the letter could be identified as a "letter of tears," but Campbell suggests that Paul often "re-characterizes" his earlier letters. Unlike many scholars, Campbell does not place Paul's second visit to Corinth between the two letters but before 1 Corinthians. This simplifies Paul's itinerary because it means that he followed his plan laid out in the end of 1 Corinthians to visit Corinth only after passing through Macedonia (where he wrote 2 Corinthians; see 1 Cor 16:5). However, Campbell's reconstruction cannot account for Paul's defense in 2 Corinthians of his *change* in travel plans. Campbell must speculate that Paul is defending his change in plans *before* writing 1 Corinthians. Yet it is more likely that Campbell's reconstruction is too simple to account for all the evidence.

Campbell "augments the backbone" of Romans and the Corinthian correspondence in chapter 3, with the evidence of Philippians and Galatians. He argues that both of these letters were written from Corinth during Paul's "year of crisis" involving the Corinthian church and certain opponents. To Campbell, Philippians, Galatians, and Romans are all addressing the same opponents (here we see one of his earlier theses in *The Deliverance of God* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009] that Romans was written against "the Teacher"). One questionable line of reasoning for these conclusions comes from the theory of *Nebenadressat*, the idea that Paul's letters not only address the audience to which they were written but also the congregation *from which* they were written. Thus, for example, Campbell argues that the emphasis on unity in Philippians tells us something about where the letter was written, namely the disunited Corinthian congregation (pp. 148). The teaching about unity and sexual immorality in Gal 5:13–6:5 also addresses Corinthian problems. In fact, Gal 6:1 *directly* addresses the Corinthians (p. 170). In my view, this theory is one of the weakest points in the book. Why would Paul address the Corinthians' problems in a letter when he was living in Corinth? And why would he address them in a letter *to a different church*? Surely, this is unlikely.

The next three chapters address the letters whose authorship is disputed by Pauline scholars. Campbell argues that ten of Paul's thirteen letters are authentic (everything except the Pastorals). The Thessalonian letters were written before Paul's first visit the Corinth. Regarding 2 Thessalonians, which is often disputed, Campbell argues (contra B. Ehrman) that stylometrics actually supports the letter's authenticity (p. 214) and that the eschatology of 1 and 2 Thessalonians is compatible (p. 235). Regarding Philemon, Campbell suggests that it was written before the Ephesian mission from an imprisonment in the Asian city of Apamea, just east of Colossae (p. 276). Campbell argues that Paul's letter to the "Ephesians" is actually the lost letter to the Laodiceans (p. 312). Laodiceans is so similar to Colossians because Paul began writing it before Colossians, but its composition was interrupted by the composition of Colossians. Regarding the Pastoral letters, Campbell argues that 1 Timothy does not fit his letter frame and that it is stylistically ruled out as an authentic letter of Paul (p. 349). Moreover, 1 Tim 5:18 makes it certain that

the letter is pseudepigraphal because the verse refers to Luke 10:7 as “Scripture,” placing the composition of the letter beyond Paul’s lifetime (pp. 359–60, 367). Titus and 2 Timothy do not have a “smoking gun” like 1 Tim 5:18 but are likely pseudepigraphal as well. Campbell appeals to Marcion on the ten-letter collection, and he argues that the Pastorals were written to combat Marcion (p. 390).

Two points of contact with the external sources give Campbell absolute dates to anchor the relative chronology he finds Paul’s letters. First and most important is what Campbell calls “the Aretas Datum,” that is, the date of Paul’s escape from the ethnarch of Damascus, who Paul says was appointed by King Aretas (Aretas IV of Nabataea; 2 Cor 11:32–33). Campbell, relying on several military accounts in book 18 of Josephus’s *Antiquities*, argues that Paul’s escape must have taken place in 36 CE (pp. 182–86). This date gives him an anchor for Paul’s chronological information in Gal 1:11–24 (he sees the escape happening after Paul’s return to Damascus, Gal 1:17). Second, Campbell argues strongly that 1 and 2 Thessalonians had to be composed during the Gaian crisis, when the emperor attempted to install a statue of himself in the Jerusalem temple. This dates these letters sometimes after late 39 CE. Overall, Campbell’s dating pushes Paul’s chronology a little earlier than the usual reconstructions (e.g. Romans is dated to 52 CE, while it is typically dated somewhere between 55–58 CE).

Has Campbell succeeded in his study? There are so many lines of argument in this book that it is unlikely Campbell will convince most readers on every point he makes (or even on the majority of his points). However, the book made me think in a new way about Paul’s letters. It is deeply researched, and it contains innovative approaches like the consistent use of ORBIS, a computer program that maps travel in the ancient world. Refreshingly, Campbell is willing to question points of orthodoxy in the critical consensus like the inauthenticity of 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, and Colossians. Further, he is willing to question himself. On several points he has changed his mind. For example, although he previously had concluded that 2 Thessalonians was written before 1 Thessalonians, he now has changed his mind on this position (pp. 241, 243). In addition, he had previously considered papyrus 46 to be good evidence that the Pastorals were pseudepigraphal (this is the earliest copy of Paul’s letters, and it does not contain the Pastorals). Yet now, *even though it would support his position*, he does not find this piece of evidence to be conclusive (p. 390 n. 49).

I do have a few points of critique. First, the book could use some editing: It begins as if it will build on the provocative chronological theses of John Knox, but after chapter 2 Knox fades away from view. Also, the table of contents needs to be expanded to help readers follow the argument of such a large book.

Second, Campbell holds to a few strange suggestions rather strongly. One I have already critiqued—the idea that Paul was writing to the audience from which his letter was sent alongside the audience directly addressed in the letter (*Nebendressat*). This idea seems unlikely to me. Campbell also suggests that Phil 3:2–4:3 is actually a quotation from a previous letter to the Philippians (pp. 131–33). His theory rests on the rhetorical shift in Philippians 3 and his interpretation of “to write the same things” in 3:1 as a reference to a previous letter to the Philippians. Yet

even if 3:1 does refer to a previous letter to the Philippians, does it follow that Paul is quoting a major passage of that letter? If so, this would be the only place Paul does so in his letters, which makes it strange that Campbell would hold the position so strongly. I also find it hard to believe that Ephesians is actually the letter to the Laodiceans with so little evidence.

Third, and perhaps most important, Campbell is not consistent in his use of external evidence. One of the most important sources of external evidence in this book is Marcion. However, should we really use Marcion as a guide to determine which of Paul's letters is authentic? In addition, if Campbell is willing to use Marcion to establish a Pauline letter frame (not to mention Josephus, Philo, and others), then why not use the evidence of Acts? I can understand why one would set aside the evidence of Acts for a Pauline *theology*, because this discipline attempts to explain what Paul himself taught. Yet for a Pauline *chronology*, Acts is one of the most important pieces of evidence, even for those who do not hold to the doctrine of inerrancy, because it gives a chronological account of Paul's mission. Whether this account is correct or not will need to be determined, but the evidence should at least be considered. At the end of the day, Campbell's search for methodological purity leads him to ignore some of the most important evidence and thus leaves readers with only a truncated Pauline chronology. We will have to wait for Campbell's future work on Acts to get the full picture. Until then, the careful work of Eckhard Schnabel might be a better resource on the chronology of Paul's mission and letters.

Kevin W. McFadden
Cairn University, Langhorne, PA

Paul and the Trinity: Persons, Relations, and the Pauline Letters. By Wesley Hill. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015, xiv + 210 pp., \$20.00 paper.

This revision of the author's University of Durham dissertation has been endorsed by numerous Pauline scholars as nothing short of game-changing. Hill cogently argues a straightforward thesis: trinitarian categories can and should be brought to bear on the exegesis of the NT, from which they have so long been ostracized. Hill takes aim at a cadre of scholars who have built their careers on NT Christology—James D. G. Dunn, Maurice Casey, Larry Hurtado, Richard Bauckham. Hill argues that such scholars have long focused on the question of where Christ fits on a vertical spectrum from “low” (human agent) to “high” (fully God), with respect to the Jewish monotheistic background out of which the Christian movement emerged. This way of framing the question, according to Hill, reflects a post-Enlightenment bias that sees Nicene trinitarian categories as anachronistic if brought into historical-critical work on the NT.

In response, Hill attempts a reverse “retrieval,” whereby he attempts to bring insights from later patristic/medieval/Reformational/modern trinitarian theology to the undisputed Pauline letters as “hermeneutical resources” that can illumine Paul (pp. 43–47). Using such dogmatic theologians as Robert Jenson, Wolfhart

Pannenberg, Kevin Vanhoozer, and a few Orthodox theologians, Hill employs two trinitarian frameworks in particular. The first is “persons-in-relation”: showing how for Paul the identities—how one picks them “out of the crowd” (p. 137)—of God and Christ and Spirit are mutually defining or reciprocally implicating. That is, God’s identity is defined in/through/by his relationship to Christ/Son, and vice versa. Christ is not, in other words, added to Paul’s monotheism, but rather Paul is trinitarian through-and-through, even understanding God in the OT as God-in-relation-to-Christ. The second framework is “redoublement” or describing the same thing twice from different perspectives—namely, that of unity of essence and that of diversity of personal distinctions (roughly: ontological and economic). When Paul seems to posit a tension between an exalted view of Christ and a subordinationist one, Hill uses redoublement to resolve this tension, showing how those statements are working in parallel to describe two different aspects of the Godhead.

Hill makes a generally persuasive use of these two frameworks to shed light on a few thorny passages in Paul that have long generated debate. By doing so, Hill aims to replace the linear, low-high Christological spectrum (used by Dunn et al. and basically anyone doing NT Christology) with a more thoroughly trinitarian one, whereby identities are defined as multi-directional streets or a network/matrix/mesh/skein (Hill’s preferred metaphors) of relations among the three persons of the one God. The upshot is a strong case for how exegesis and theology/dogmatics should mutually inform one another, and for that Hill is justly applauded.

Chapter 1 points to Trinitarian theologies as a resource for Pauline interpretation. Unlike most who position themselves against Dunn/Casey and with Hurtado/Bauckham, Hill takes aim at all four (plus others) and charges them with asking the wrong question about Christology—the “low”/“high” question—and excluding trinitarianism from their discussions. He then provides a condensed summary of trinitarian scholarship from the Cappadocian fathers through Aquinas to Jenson. Acknowledging much disagreement among modern trinitarian scholars, Hill argues that they are united (against Dunn et al.) in how they ask fundamentally different (and more correct, per Hill) questions about how the persons of the Trinity are identified with respect to their mutually-defining relations, yielding a 3-D mesh of spectrums rather than the low-high spectrum. He frames his task not as reading such trinitarian ideas *out of* Paul but more modestly as demonstrating how such trinitarian categories can offer a “more coherent and compelling account of the data” in Paul (p. 46).

In chapter 2, Hill applies the persons-in-relation framework to Rom 4:24, 8:11a–b, and Gal 1:1 to argue how, for Paul, God’s identity is defined not simply on Jewish monotheistic grounds (as if the Christ-event left Paul’s view of God unchanged) but on thoroughly trinitarian grounds, by reference to the fact that he is “the one who raised Jesus from the dead.” This insight works not just downstream of the resurrection but upstream as well: Paul sees the God of Abraham in the OT as the God-who-will-raise-Christ. This chapter offers helpful criticisms of the enterprise that argues itself in circles regarding the nature of Paul’s monotheism by

showing how, at least in these texts, Paul's God is and always was configured with reference to Christ.

In chapters 3–4, Hill looks at three passages to argue that, not only is God defined with reference to his relationship to Christ, but the reverse also holds: Christ is who he is by virtue of his relationship to the Father. For Phil 2:6–11, Hill applies redoublement to ease the tension long felt between the divine equality language in 2:6 and 11a and the purportedly subordinationist language of 2:11b. Hill argues that Paul is describing a relationship of “mutual asymmetry,” whereby Christ and God mutually define one another and are equal in essence, but their personal distinctions indicate a certain “ordered”-ness or “asymmetry” (pp. 99–110). This is not a contradiction, but rather a normal trinitarian way of describing the God-Christ unity and distinctions on different planes. He uses redoublement as well to resolve similar tensions in 1 Cor 8:6 and 15:20–28.

In what may be his strongest chapter, chapter 5, Hill brings the Holy Spirit into the conversation, showing how 1 Cor 12:1–3, Gal 4:4, Rom 1:3–4, and Rom 8:11 reveal that Paul sees the Spirit's identity as defined by how the Father and Christ have sent him, and likewise the identities of the Father and Christ are “in part” (p. 163) determined by the Spirit.

By way of evaluation, Hill is to be applauded for taking on the task of bringing trinitarian categories back to the table of standard historical-critical exegesis. He shows a solid understanding of finely nuanced trinitarian debates that are foreign to most NT scholars. His strongest contribution is in dislodging “Jewish monotheism” as the default background for understanding Paul; rather, the post-Damascus road Paul is thoroughly trinitarian.

In the end, Hill's thesis positions itself as a frontal attack on the entire Christology industry, which he seems to suggest is invalid if the trinitarian concern for persons-in-relation—of *all three* persons—is not front-and-center at every turn. Positioning his contribution this way leads to two issues. First, and less importantly, while Hill rightly attacks Dunn's sub-orthodox and unpersuasive views of Christology and pneumatology, his tendency to throw Hurtado and Bauckham under the bus with him is perhaps unwarranted. While both are guilty-as-charged of bracketing out post-Nicene categories and over-playing the monotheism hand, nevertheless both Bauckham's work on divine identity and Hurtado's work on how Jesus' followers came to worship him contribute indirectly, if not directly, to the question of whether the NT indeed speaks about God, Christ, and Spirit in a way that implies trinitarian relations. Though Hill makes a case that trinitarian hermeneutics can help illumine some (nine) pericopes in Paul, it simply does not follow that it is therefore invalid to study other texts from a Christological perspective. Not every text in Paul (nor even in Hill's small sample set) explicitly engages trinitarian reciprocal relations, even if such thinking lies in Paul's presuppositions.

This leads to a second and more important issue. In chapters 2–4, Hill relies heavily on the trinitarian framework that the Father's identity is constituted by or defined with reference to his relationship to the Son, particularly raising him from the dead, and vice versa. However, it is unclear whether this use of the asymmetric persons-in-relation category proves the trinitarianism he wants to prove. Based on

how Hill has defined this framework, is not the same kind of persons-in-relation dynamic present between, say, God and Israel? Are not the OT and NT emphatic about how God *is* the God-of-Israel: that his identity, relative to other “so-called” gods, is uniquely constituted by, for example, his delivering them and making covenant with them? Is not Israel’s identity uniquely defined by God’s election, promise, and so forth? Are not the God-of-Israel and Israel reciprocally identifying? Or what of Abraham? Are not the OT and NT clear that God is who he is by virtue of being specifically the “God of Abraham”? Is not Abraham identified as Abraham by virtue of his relationship as the chosen one of God? On the terms Hill uses, it seems the same kind of persons-in-relation dynamic holds, but that implies nothing trinitarian about Israel or Abraham.

There must, therefore, be some unavoidably *Christological* factors that transform the bi-directional relationship between God-the-Father-of-Christ and Christ-the-Son-of-God from a lower level persons-in-relation to a trinitarian one. On Nicene terms, these factors include Christ’s heavenly preexistence, agency in creation, exaltation, lordship over the cosmos, and lordship over the Spirit. However, it is precisely these distinctives of Christ that form the very core of the low-high Christological debate that Hill wants to take off the table. One still must ask whether, for instance, Paul sees Christ as preexistent or not, for that qualifies in a major way the whole issue of “identity descriptors” and relations. If the identities of God and Spirit are defined in part by how both are active in resurrecting Christ, but Christ himself is not preexistent and cosmic lord and all the rest (read: “high”), then there is still no classical trinitarianism. In the end, it seems that the persons-in-relation framework borrowed from trinitarian theology—whereby the identities of God, Christ, and Spirit are mutually defining—is a necessary condition for working out trinitarian readings of Paul, but not, strictly speaking, the sufficient condition. Christology proper, while chastened by Hill’s critiques, remains an important (though not the only) input.

Gregory R. Lanier
University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

The Hermeneutics of Christological Psalmody in Paul: An Intertextual Enquiry. By Matthew Scott. Society for NT Studies Monograph Series 158. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, xvii + 221 pp., \$95.00.

Matthew Scott’s *Hermeneutics of Christological Psalmody in Paul* is a revised version of a doctoral dissertation completed at Durham University (UK) under the supervision of John Barclay. As implied by the title, the book concerns a particular subset of Psalm quotations in Paul’s letters “where Christ might be installed as speaker of a quotation from the psalms” (p. 8). Far from a conventional OT in the NT project, Scott’s study is an in-depth engagement with recent intertextual methodology—especially Richard Hays’s *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989)—played out in the domain of Paul’s Christological psalmody. Along the way Scott provides significant methodological discussions (e.g.

concerning metalepsis), a treatment of David as a speaking subject in Romans (chap. 2), and close studies of Rom 15:1–6 (chap. 3), Rom 15:9–12 (chap. 4), and 2 Cor 4:13 (chap. 5). These studies are followed by a short conclusion that summarizes the exegetical and methodological contributions of the book.

The first chapter provides a close examination of the Haysian concept of metalepsis. Scott provides a nuanced discussion of “minimal” and “encyclopaedic” domains of metalepsis within biblical psalmody (pp. 22–27). He concludes that “metaleptic claims which bypass the first domain in favour of wider appeal to the contributing psalm, and which do not factor the second domain, run the risk of arbitrariness” (p. 27). By opting for this smaller domain—poetic distich in the Psalms—as a primary field for metalepsis, Scott parts company with the Haysian application of intertextuality. His subsequent chapters do not merely assume this methodological decision but demonstrate its utility (see esp. pp. 37–39, 61, 76–78, 129–30).

In preparation for his examination of Christological psalmody, Scott explores Paul’s use of David’s voice in Romans in chapter 2. There is a certain “givenness” to Davidic authorship of the Psalms that is common to early readers of the Psalms. Thus, the paucity of direct references to “David” in the accepted Pauline letters does not limit the investigation to only those instances. The key examples that Scott discusses are from Rom 4:6–8, Rom 11:9–10, and Rom 3:10–18. In the latter text, Paul attributes to “the Law” what could have belonged to the voice of psalmody (i.e. David). With due caution in light of Paul’s infrequent explicit use of David, Scott concludes that Paul evokes David’s voice in a way that both empowers and curtails. Specifically, Scott argues that Paul’s strategy often limits meaning (and metaleptic extension), so that Paul can co-opt discursive control.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore the installation of Christ as speaker in Rom 15:3 and 15:9–12. Despite a well-established pattern of placing words from Psalm 68 on the lips of Christ in the NT (e.g. John 2:17; 15:25), Scott argues that a degree of interpretive labor is necessary to follow Paul’s installation in Rom 15:3: there must be both predication (the statement is *about* Christ) and attribution (the statement is *made* by Christ). Scott follows the lead of John Barclay, who places the meaning of Rom 15:3 within its ancient socio-historical context. Specifically, Barclay adduces evidence that there would be a social cost for Romans who faithfully observe Jewish dietary laws (both Jews and Gentiles). He argues that the reproaches against Jews in Rome would be shared by “the strong” (Rom 15:1), if they were willing to adopt Jewish eating habits. This argument helps to explain why Paul selects just these words for his citation and why they would be found relevant by the “the strong.”

Turning to Rom 15:19–12, Scott deploys a cinematic model, drawing on the grammar of film to help describe the rhetorical effect of Paul’s Christological psalmody in Romans 15. This entails “an establishing shot” (15:9), “an extended tracking shot” (15:10), “a reversing shot” (15:11), and “a final establishing shot that constructs a new frame of cinematic reference” (15:12). This model is discussed throughout the chapter, focusing explicitly on the visual and dramatic aspects of Paul’s appropriation of psalmic texts.

In chapter 5 Scott weighs in on a highly debated Pauline citation. Although a number of previous interpreters have argued that Christ is viewed as the speaker of Ps 115:1 LXX in 2 Cor 4:13, this view also receives strong opposition in recent scholarship (e.g. Jan Lambrecht, “A Matter of Method: 2 Cor 4,13 and Stegman’s Recent Study,” *ETL* 84 [2008] 175–80; C. D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture* [London: T & T Clark, 2004] 98–105). As a further illustration of his attention to methodology, Scott lays out the differences in perspective between the potential domains of metalepsis, identifying not two (as discussed above) but five textual domains represented in recent scholarship: (1) delimited; (2) opening distich of Ps 115 LXX; (3) entirety of Ps 115 LXX; (4) Pss 114–115 LXX (+ recourse to Hebrew); and (5) encyclopedic biblical psalmody. Scott argues that Christ is installed as the speaking subject not simply because the Psalm text itself is amenable to the installation (Scott suggests it is not), but because the indeterminacy in quotation is best resolved by configuring the subject as representative of psalmody through the characterization offered by the “spirit of faith” and the language of “writtenness” (τὸ γεγραμμένον) in 2 Cor 4:13. Nevertheless, so subtle is Paul’s move that Scott argues that Paul’s readers may not have perceived it, because “[Christ’s] installation is not finally required for Paul’s discourse to be coherent” (p. 181).

It is refreshing that Scott is attuned to methodological issues throughout this study. Many other comparable projects simply declare their methodological stance in either vague or unreflective terms at the outset. Scott’s book stands out as a study that advances the field or, at minimum, provides fodder for future discussion of intertextuality in Paul. Because a spate of more maximalist approaches to Pauline intertextuality have been published in recent years, there is a healthy debate that awaits between the heirs of Hays’s approach and those who would follow an approach like that of Scott’s. Such a debate would be especially fascinating because Scott does not adopt an approach that is opposite to maximalism, but rather something generally more conservative methodologically. Nevertheless, Scott’s readings of Pauline texts are thoroughly sophisticated and expect much from the reader as part of its metaleptic extension. Even if not persuaded, maximalists could profitably read this book as an exercise in self-refinement.

Another significant point raised by this study concerns the question of hermeneutical priority: which came first, a Christological narrative or a Christological reading? Scott concludes that it is “not that a story about Christ has been interpreted in light of the psalm, Christologically read, but that the psalm has been read in light of a Christological story” (p. 90). In this respect, Scott’s book aligns with the recent study by Matthew Bates, *The Hermeneutics of Apostolic Proclamation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), who argues, “the received *apostolic proclamation* is the filter through which [Paul] reads his ancient Jewish scriptures” (p. 59). Both Scott and Bates have provided important data for understanding how theological construction relates to early Christian readings of the Jewish Scriptures.

Finally, this review would not be adequate without mentioning that Scott’s book is written lucidly and elegantly—traits not always typical of a published dissertation. The book is replete with allusive turns of phrase that playfully remind the reader of the interplay between texts that is the subject of this book. In a methodo-

logical discussion on the role of the author, Scott writes “the author implied in this process has undergone kenosis: he has become less that the reader may become more But this author is strong when he is weak” (p. 15). Such turns of phrase not only borrow from a stock of scriptural language but implicitly illustrate the potential limits of metalepsis constrained in Scott’s project. The methodological and exegetical insights offered by this book make it a welcome addition to the field of OT in the NT studies. Readers will be challenged to examine their own approaches to these (and more) Pauline texts as they ponder the creative ways that Paul appropriated the Psalms using the voice of Christ.

Seth M. Ehorn
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Galatians. By A. Andrew Das. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2014, lxix + 738 pp., \$54.99.

According to the editor’s preface, this series of commentaries stands in the exegetical tradition of Martin Luther and the other Lutheran reformers (p. xii). The author of this massive volume, accordingly, endeavors to defend “Lutheran” over against the connotations of “‘passé’, uncritical, and void of historical and scholarly rigor” (p. xiv), but with the qualification that Lutherans are not exempt from the perennial temptation to read into the biblical texts a “preconceived conclusion” (p. xv).

The introduction canvasses the situation at Galatia, the addressees, Pauline chronology as it bears on the date of the letter, and Greco-Roman rhetoric/epistolary analysis as pertaining to the structure of Galatians. The situation is depicted graphically: “The apostle is seething in righteous anger and indignation over the events at Galatia even as he conveys his hope that the Galatians might be coaxed back to the gospel” (p. 1). Thereafter, a series of questions is posed: Did these Gentile Christians understand themselves in continuity with the Jewish people? Were the Gentiles to be a distinctive community? Were they to adopt Moses’ Law and be circumcised as Jews in order to worship the God of the Jewish savior? It is clarified that that *nomos*, in translation, should be consistently capitalized as “Law,” since Paul consistently uses the term for the Mosaic legislation.

Das endorses the necessity of a mirror-reading of the letter, entailing a reconstruction of both the recipients and Paul’s rivals from the epistle itself. In keeping with such an approach, it is deduced that: “The Galatians are entertaining a position that would be the equivalent of a return to the same sad condition of slavery to the false gods and powers from which they had been rescued by Paul’s message” (p. 4). However, the “they group,” those who desire to be under the Torah, in advocating circumcision, they were not content to stop there but were promoting adherence to the entirety of the Mosaic Law (4:21). The “bewitchers” (3:1) were apparently urging the Galatians to consider the works prescribed in the Law as the key to unleashing the power of God’s Spirit. Another clue that Paul’s rivals were advocating a more comprehensive approach to the Law is 4:10. The Jews celebrat-

ed “days, months, seasons, and years” prescribed by the Torah, meaning that “Paul’s audience would thus be adopting a Jewish liturgical calendar which corresponded to the pagan calendars of their past” (p. 4). Such Law-observance was comprehensive (3:10), because, as Paul reminds the Galatians according to 5:3, they would be obliged to keep the entirety of the Law as an “all-or-nothing affair” (p. 6). The manner in which Paul employs the Jewish Scriptures provides further evidence that his rivals were advocating comprehensive obedience to Moses (pp. 7–10).

As to their precise identity, Das dubs the opponents “Christ-believing Jews.” In taking issue with Mark Nanos that the rivals were “non-Christ-believing Jews,” he maintains that Paul was interacting with a form of Jewish-Christianity. In contrast to earlier exegetes, he resists pejorative labels such as “legalism” and “works righteousness” in favor of a recognition that Paul’s concern was far more fundamental: the Law simply does not save; “God saves only through the work of Jesus Christ” (p. 15). The Jews of the apostle’s day were of varying convictions on the role of works, but rarely did they think that a person must obey God’s Law perfectly to be saved. Das writes: “The vast majority of Jews were of the position that God saved the people of Israel at the point of his election of the people. Their observance of the Law was simply a confession and a response to God’s gracious election” (p. 15). They recognized that their obedience was not perfect, but they relied on God’s mercy through repentance and atoning sacrifice. The rivals did not deny Christ’s saving work, but their pressure on the Gentiles to observe the Torah effectively rendered the Law as of the same importance as faith in/of Christ for salvation. “In so doing, they had, whether intentionally or not, denied Christ’s saving work as sufficient for a person’s salvation” (p. 16). Consequently, “legalists” would not be an adequate term for the enticers, nor would be “Judaizers,” “teachers,” “influencers,” or “missionaries.” Instead, they are “rivals,” but with the caveat that the people in question may well have viewed their Law-observant message as supplemental and compatible with Paul’s previous teaching, though correcting, they thought, a critical oversight on the apostle’s part.

The attraction of the rivals’ “Christ-plus-Law” message lay in its appeal to the ancient Jewish Scriptures. In response, Paul repeatedly finds himself reinterpreting Scriptural texts that, on the surface and apart from a fuller context, appeared to support the opponents’ claims. Most attractively, the Law offered a concrete sociology to replace the structure provided by the Galatians’ former habits as a religious people, albeit non-Christian. Their former life had been structured by rituals, ceremonies, and observances, but now, as Christians, they had been cut socially adrift. The rivals entered the picture just at that point by filling the void with the concrete structure and direction of Moses’ Law with its days, months, seasons, years, and rituals. These factors would have reinforced the readers’ sense of identity as the people of God. Paul’s counterclaim, in a nutshell, is that believers find their identity as those who are guided by the Spirit and who fulfill the law of Christ.

What undergirded Paul’s preaching was the conviction that the presence of the Spirit is proof positive that the new age has invaded the cosmos. The rivals’ advocacy of the Law placed them squarely in the age of Moses that has now passed away with Christ’s coming. His saving work has radically altered the way the Law is

to be understood in this new era. For this reason, the readers needed to recognize *what time it is*. By failing to do so, they are depriving themselves of the crucial power needed to combat the flesh (i.e. the Spirit who has attended Christ's advent). If the Galatians adopt the rival teaching, they will compromise the saving value of faith in/of Christ.

Das favors the South Galatian view of the recipients and places the letter's date at around AD 46–47. In a detailed consideration of Greco-Roman rhetoric and epistolary analysis, he helpfully sets out the various species of rhetoric and the letter's arrangement, while cautioning that no one has demonstrated that Galatians' style conforms to *any* of the ancient species of rhetoric (p. 53). A convincing case that Paul was formally trained in rhetoric has yet to be made (p. 61). Yet the conclusion is that, while the apostle may not have had formal exposure to ancient rhetorical methods and while Galatians does not conform naturally to any of the species of rhetoric, Paul was still aware of the employment of rhetoric in his day. Consequently, "Even if not at the level of formal rhetoric, Paul draws on rhetorical devices in making his case" (p. 68).

Because this commentary is rooted in the Lutheran tradition, it will be of interest to touch base with a test passage, 2:15–16, one that bears directly on the debate between the "Lutheran" and "New Perspective" approaches to the letter. Das appropriately reckons these verses among "the *nexus* of almost every major debate in Pauline theology" (p. 239). First, he reads the preposition *ek* in v. 16 as "on the basis of" faith in Christ (p. 243), despite its dominant partisan usage in Galatians, thus blunting the salvation-historical thrust of Paul's argument as underscored by this particular preposition. Conspicuously absent in this regard is any mention of Charles H. Cosgrove, "Justification in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Reflection," *JBL* 106 (1987) 653–70, esp. 654–62. Second, there is the verb *dikaioō*. Das artificially bifurcates the term by presenting an "either/or" alternative, that of Protestantism and Catholicism respectively. The problem is the failure to appreciate that a person who is vindicated in the covenant courtroom is consequently restored to the privileged position of covenant membership. Moreover, sufficient account is not taken of the backdrop of exile and return. In that setting, righteousness language pertains to the vindication of the people of God when they return from exile and their consequent enjoyment of the blessings of the new creation (e.g. Isa 32:15–20). Third, Das refreshingly understands "works of the law" not as "legalism" but as "obeying God's law and living according to its principles" (p. 246). It is in this sense that Paul argues: "God's favor may be enjoyed solely on the basis of faith in Christ and not on the observance of the law" (p. 246). As for the exact reference of "works of the law," Das correctly takes the phrase to be "deeds or actions which the law requires" (p. 249), which are not restricted to the "boundary markers" but comprise the totality of God's will for Israel. They are specifically "acts taken along the path of Law observance." Fourth, the problem of the disputed phrase *pistis Iēsou Christou* is left unresolved, with the conclusion that the arguments for both objective and subjective genitive are not ultimately decisive. In this discussion, neglected are Arland J. Hultgren, "The *Pistis Christou* Formulation in Paul," *NovT* 22 (1980) 248–63, and James D. G. Dunn, "EK PISTEOS: A Key to

the Meaning of PISTIS CHRISTOU,” in *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays in Honor of Richard B. Hays* (ed. by J. Ross Wagner, C. Kavin Rowe, and A. Katherine Grieb; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 351–66.

In sum, this is a fine treatment of Galatians and well worth the purchase, even with the burgeoning collection of commentaries already available. Students of the Greek text will be well served by its detailed linguistic analysis, as accompanied by the extensive textual notes. It is also replete with historical and theological materials, as conveyed by the numerous excursuses. Given the technical character of the writing, it a remarkably readable book.

Don Garlington
Toronto, ON

Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul's Letter. Edited by Mark W. Elliott, Scott J. Hafemann, N. T. Wright, and John Frederick. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014, xx + 380 pp., \$40.00 paper.

This collection of essays stems from the 2012 St. Andrews Galatians and Christian Theology Conference, the fourth in a series of triennial conferences held at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. The general purpose of these conferences is to “bring Scripture scholars and theologians together to try to get them to talk to one another” (p. ix). In this particular installment, biblical scholars and systematic theologians treat Galatians from their own areas of expertise. However, they also attempt to “do” Scripture and theology together “for the sake of intra-disciplinarity within divinity studies” (p. x).

The ten essays in part 1 cover a broad range of topics that are related generally, though sometimes tangentially, to justification and Galatians. N. T. Wright proposes that *Christos* means “Messiah” in Galatians and that the term’s messianic force is narratively “active” within Paul’s argument. Consequently, the story of Israel’s Messiah dominates Galatians, shapes Paul’s vision of the people of God as being “summed up in him,” and shows that theologically the letter is more about ecclesiology than soteriology (p. 18). Matthew V. Novenson argues that Ἰουδαϊσμός in Gal 1:13–14 refers to a “sectarian political program” in which Paul took part (p. 39). With respect to the Christ-Gentiles in Galatia, Paul is not concerned with a religion of non-Christian Jews called “Judaism” but with Gentile believers “Judaizing” (i.e. participating in a “kind of ethnos-bending activity”; p. 38). The joint essay by Pollmann and Elliott explores the pastoral, philosophical, and theological treatment of Galatians by fourth-century interpreters using Marius Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, Augustine, and the poem *Carmen adversus Marcionitas* as test cases. Thomas Söding investigates the ecumenical dimensions of Galatians arguing that Paul’s theology of justification consists of three aspects (conversion, mission, ecclesial unity) that are united by the common category of participation. Söding suggests that, although these three aspects of Paul’s ecumenical theology of justification have sometimes been obscured in the letter’s reception history, people can still find liberation as they participate in Christian conversion, mission, and unity. In his es-

say, Timothy G. Gombis proposes that Paul's comments about the law in Gal 3:10–14, particularly his remark about the "curse" of the law, are *ad hoc* arguments rather than abstractions about the Mosaic law or Judaism. Such comments have an "exclusive reference to the Galatian crisis" (p. 90).

Timothy Wengert assesses Luther's interpretation of Gal 3:6–14 and concludes that it demonstrates the "heart of Wittenberg's interpretation of Scripture" in general, namely "illuminating Christ's work and giving comfort" (p. 116). Scott Hafemann also examines Luther's reading of Gal 3:6–14, giving a "yes" to Luther's interpretation that "works of the law" in contrast to faith is a metonymy for a wider set of realities but a "no" to that wider reality being an anthropological concern with two different ways of relating to God. For Hafemann, the wider reality signaled by the metonymy is the antitheses in Paul's theology between two ages, two covenants, and the "distinct ways of life they bring about" (p. 128). Javier A. Garcia attempts to fill what he perceives to be a lacuna of substantive critiques of Finnish Luther scholar Tuomo Mannermaa's *Christ Present in Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005). Analyzing this seminal work of the new Finnish interpretation of Luther in light of Luther's 1535 lectures on Galatians, Garcia attempts to show that Mannermaa misinterprets Luther's Christology and views of justification and actually comes closer to the 16th century Lutheran mystic Osiander than Luther himself. Mark W. Elliott appeals to advances in modern theology in order to show that the New Perspective reading of Paul does not require a total overhaul of the Reformation understanding of justification by faith. The final essay in part 1 is by Bruce McCormack whose overarching ecumenical concern is to maneuver responsibly between "church theologies and guild commitments" as it relates to justification by faith (p. 162). He exemplifies such an approach by critiquing so-called apocalyptic readings of Paul and Galatians (Martyn, deBoer) in light of Barth's later thinking on forensic justification.

Part 2, labelled simply as "Gospel," contains seven essays beginning with Beverly Gaventa's examination of Gal 2:15–21 in which she argues that the connection between Paul's legal and existential language in this passage, and in the rest of his thought, can be found in what she refers to as the "singularity of the gospel" (p. 188). For Gaventa, that means "the gospel claims all that the human is; the gospel becomes the locus of human identity; the gospel replaces the old cosmos" (p. 188). Richard B. Hays argues that Gal 1:3–5 evokes a larger "cosmic narrative" consisting of three motifs by which the letter should be interpreted: God as father, Jesus' death as the pivotal liberating event, and union with Christ. He then discusses larger theological inferences drawn from this reading. Michael B. Corver suggests that Gal 4:21–31 betrays "traces of a Hellenistic allegoresis that is very much concerned with the timeless, ethical figuration of the characters of Genesis 21:9–10" (p. 222). Corver identifies the Platonizing polarities in Paul's allegoresis, namely the contrast between flesh and spirit as well as the image of the heavenly Jerusalem, and he analyzes them in light of the allegory's apocalyptic aspect. Edwin Chr. van Driel proposes an alternative to understanding the place of Christ in Paul's narrative through salvation-historical and apocalyptic readings. Noting the Christological deficiencies of such readings in the works of Wright and Martyn, he relies especially

on Ephesians and Colossians to suggest that these letters develop an understanding of the incarnation that is “christologically *supralapsarian*,” meaning that Christ’s revelatory and gathering activity is not simply a response to sin (Wright) or foreign to the history that preceded the incarnation (Martyn) but the “original goal of creation” (p. 237). Picking up on Martyn’s thesis that the central question in Galatians is about time, Todd D. Still applies A. J. Greimas’s narratival model (as presented by Hays) to argue for a three-part sequence in the letter. In light of this sequence, the answer to Martyn’s question is that it is time for the Galatians to return to the gospel. Darren O. Sumner also treats the motif of time in the letter arguing that, from a “deliberately theological interpretation” with help from the thought of Barth, the “fullness of time” in Gal 4:4 is a phrase that holds together God’s decision to send his Son and its actual occurrence (p. 250). He then explores the trinitarian implications of this reading. Scott R. Swain contemplates the doctrine of the Trinity in light of Gal 4:4–7 and concludes that the text implies a trinitarian theology that “presents the twofold mission of the Son and the Spirit as an instance of God’s immediate, natural agency” (p. 265).

Part 3, labelled “Ethics,” commences with Oliver O’Donovan’s argument that the opposition between flesh and Spirit in Gal 5:16–26 is the “contrast between life lived eschatologically and life lived elementally” (p. 282). The former is defined by a life of moral privilege in faith, freedom, and love in the Spirit, while the latter is defined by reactions to demands. Volker Rabens engages Horn and Zimmerman’s recent criticism of the well-known indicative/imperative model often used to articulate the relationship between Paul’s theology and ethics. Rabens supplements Zimmerman’s “implicit ethics” model with an emphasis on divine agency wherein the Spirit draws people closer to God and one another, a dynamic Rabens believes is quite prevalent in Galatians. John M. G. Barclay argues that Gal 6:1–6 is a set of maxims “designed to protect the community from the destructive influence of their contest-culture” and that such social practice is a necessary expression of the “Christ-gift” over against Roman culture’s competition for honor (p. 307). Jean-Noël Aletti addresses controversial exegetical points related to Gal 5:16–25, focusing especially on verse 17. He concludes that in this passage Paul “radicalizes” the questions and stakes surrounding circumcision, informing the Galatians that they are capable of making ethical choices and that the law and flesh are not the way to salvation. Simeon Zahl examines the tension between divine and human agency in Paul’s thought by reading Gal 5:16–25 in light of “affective Augustinianism” coupled with a “dramatic” approach to the text. Finally, Mariam J. Kamell identifies ethical parallels between Gal 5:13–6:10 and James, concluding that “Paul emphasizes the role of the Spirit in empowering, while for James it is wisdom that empowers” (p. 362).

Galatians and Christian Theology contains a number of essays that achieve the conference’s primary goal of helping biblical scholars and theologians to “talk to one another” about Galatians. Particularly noteworthy from this perspective are the essays by Hafemann, McCormack, O’Donovan, van Driel, and Zahl. This volume also reminds Pauline scholars that systematic theology raises important interpretational questions that are sometimes beyond the explicit historical exigencies of the

letter (e.g. Swain) and potentially sheds light on particular exegetical details (e.g. Sumner). A few essayists also highlight the value of reception history (e.g. Pollmann and Elliott) and present-day ecumenical concerns (e.g. Söding) for interpreting Galatians. There are also a number of essays that primarily address historical and literary issues (e.g. Wright, Novenson, and Barclay).

None of the essays provide insights that will drastically change the way Galatians is interpreted, though some might disagree. The first two chapters of Galatians are somewhat underrepresented although by no means entirely. Hays's essay is probably the gem out of all the contributions. Overall, for those interested in the relationship between biblical studies and theology, as well as some of the latest trends in the study of Galatians, this volume will be a valuable resource.

Channing L. Crisler
Anderson University, Anderson, SC

Kept for Jesus: What the NT Really Teaches about Assurance of Salvation and Eternal Security. By Sam Storms. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015, 203 pp., \$15.99 paper.

Kept for Jesus represents Sam Storms's biblical-theological treatment of the Reformed doctrine of eternal security. I appreciate his warm and approachable writing style, which produces a conversational tone for the book. In the introduction he outlines a two-fold purpose: (1) to convince Arminians and antinomians that they are mistaken in their beliefs; and (2) to deepen people's confidence in the Calvinistic understanding of God's saving and preserving grace (p. 17). My review will focus on (1), even though (2) is equally important. As a Reformed Arminian myself, I find that his attempt to convince us of Arminianism's errors suffers from too much caricature and is therefore not a serious engagement with what Arminians (Wesleyan or Reformed) actually say. I will revisit this problem after commenting on several aspects of the book's argument.

Chapter 1 offers a cursory exposition of John 6 and 10. His interpretation of John 10:28, "no one can snatch them out of my hand," is summed up rather rhetorically: "Will you concur that 'no one' means *no one*? You don't have to go to seminary or be able to read Greek to figure that out" (p. 23). He argues that no one, not even oneself, can wrestle the believer from God's protective hand. By doing so he drives this passage into an interpretive corner and into contradiction with John 15:1–6 (treated in chap. 3). However, the point of John 10 is that no external power (human or supernatural) can undo the union between Christ and his people. It says nothing of the sin of unbelief or hardening of heart. John 15, on the other hand, utilizes the vine metaphor, stating that the vinedresser (identified as the Father in v. 1) cuts off the unfruitful branches and casts them into the fire. Storms criticizes the Arminian view for requiring "that what Jesus *denied* could happen to a believer in 6:37, he affirms *will* happen in 15:6" (p. 47). Yet this is an oversimplification. In 6:37 Jesus affirms the cohesion of the divine will: those the Father draws to the Son will certainly not be refused/cast away by the Son. In 15:6 the vinedresser who casts out the unfruitful branches is the Father, who cuts them out of the vine (the

Son) and casts them to destruction. Storms argues that these branches were never truly branches to begin with, but such an argument destroys the basic thrust of the metaphor. How can a false branch conceivably be in the vine?

Storms rightly acknowledges the NT teaching about false faith (esp. pp. 48–51). Such is undeniable from Scripture (e.g. 1 John 2:19), and therefore is not the sticking point. The real issue is that Scripture apparently attests another category that does not correspond to the false professions of 1 John 2:19: genuine believers who renounce Christ and are thus “removed” from him by the Father. How can one differentiate between genuine and fickle faith? Storms asserts: “to remain or abide in Jesus’s word” (p. 51). I could not agree more. To remain implies being placed within, which in theological terms constitutes union with Christ. Remarkably, Storms is forced to reinterpret the language of John 15, which places these branches “in” the Son. The NT language of being “in Christ” always denotes regenerate members of his body. To argue that “in me” in John 15:5 must modify “bears fruit” is both strange and exegetically unwarranted, since the condition is clearly “he who abides in me.” Besides, what would be the point of saying you must bear fruit “in me”? What would it mean to bear fruit outside of Christ?

The phenomenon of counterfeit faith equally applies to the sin against the Holy Spirit (Matt 12:22–32), according to Storms. He explains that to sin against the Holy Spirit involves “lifelong disdain for Jesus ... like the Pharisees of the first century” (p. 37). Yet the Pharisees were hardly lifelong “unbelievers” without qualification—they were spiritual leaders of the covenant community of Israel, who nonetheless rejected God’s work through Jesus Messiah. They are not blaspheming the Spirit of God as outsiders, but as insiders. This issue raises interesting questions for Calvinism in general: Why is the blasphemy of unbelievers against the Spirit a problem? What would it mean to be “beyond the forgiveness of God”? Does not God draw the elect to himself unconditionally (see pp. 78–79)? What would the point of this text be if it is only those irresistibly drawn who can never be “beyond the forgiveness of God” (pp. 38–39; cf. pp. 177–81)?

In further defense of the eternal security of the believer, Storms advocates the problematic view that “God ‘sustains’ some of his people ... by removing them from this life before they have opportunity to persist in their sin to such an extent that they apostatize” (p. 97, citing personal conversation with John Piper). Yet does this not pose serious problems for the doctrine of God’s sovereign preservation of the elect—that is, he cannot make them persevere, so he kills them prior to their eventual apostasy? His understanding that Ananias and Sapphira were “disciplined into heaven through premature physical death because of their lying to the Holy Spirit” (p. 99) gives a positive spin on a tragic example of God’s judgment in the early church.

Chapter 7 addresses why the individuals described in warning passages in Hebrews were not truly believers. His first reason appeals to the illustration in vv. 7–8: the ground yielding thorns and thistles proves they were never genuinely Christian. However, this fails to recognize the allusion to Deut 11:11 and the covenant curses. He also urges that we need to see what is not stated in Heb 6:4–6—terms like regeneration, conversion, justified, adopted, elect, and faith in Jesus. Yet these terms

are not typical of the book as a whole, but are much more Pauline (though not exclusively). The author of Hebrews often discusses concepts parallel with other NT teachings, but with different terminology (e.g. the incarnation of Christ in Hebrews 2). Storms's discussion of the individuals described in Hebrews 6 offers nothing new but rehearses unsubstantiated interpretations that strangle the text of its meaning, making every attempt to avoid that it describes covenant members. That said, what would it mean for such individuals to "come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit" or to "have felt the wooing of the Spirit," and yet not come to repentance (p. 111)? Is the Spirit's work resistible? If Hebrews 6 describes people who experienced the convicting work of the Holy Spirit but were never brought to conversion, one would think so.

Storms rejects Thomas Schreiner's "means of salvation" interpretation for the warnings of Scripture, particularly for Gal 5:2–14 and its mention of "falling from grace" (Schreiner similarly argues for Hebrews 6 and 10). Storms thinks Schreiner's attempt to maintain its interpretive force—warning believers not to apostatize is God's means of producing perseverance—leaves open the possibility that one could be cut off from Christ. Rather, he affirms, "our Father has guaranteed that it is impossible to be cut off from Christ" (p. 149). Yet that is exactly what Paul warns against, being "severed from Christ" (Gal 5:4). Nonetheless he is unwilling to accept the Arminian view that this passage speaks of true apostasy, despite his concession that none of the Calvinistic readings does it justice (pp. 149–50). The only solution for Storms is to emphasize that believers really have nothing to worry about since they cannot truly apostatize, thus gutting the warning of its genuine force.

Storms's forced reading of assurance passages makes them unnecessarily contradict scriptural warnings. Straining John 10 to say that no one will snatch the believer out of the Father's hand means that not even God can do so is irreconcilable with the warning in John 15 regarding the eventual fate of unfruitful branches—judgment. Perhaps we need to exercise greater care in establishing a more nuanced reading of each text in its own context. Storms is forcing assurance passages to say more than is exegetically warranted, thus creating unnecessary tension with scriptural warnings. Exegesis should not be so much about what a text could say, but first and foremost about what it does say. Treating a passage as "a problem for the doctrine of eternal security" but "not insurmountable" (p. 164) is not exegetically viable.

I am surprised that Storms never deals with 2 Pet 2:1, which explicitly applies redemption language to false teachers, who are said to "deny the master who bought them." He only mentions the proverbs of the dog returning to its vomit and the sow to the mire in vv. 20–22 (adopting Schreiner's *phenomenological* interpretation), but he does not comment on the significance of the redemption language in v. 1.

It is unfortunate that Storms appears only to engage a repeated regenerationist view of apostasy, a view that I believe is unfounded exegetically. This view of Arminianism believes that apostasy is remediable. However, justification results from our union with Christ and his righteousness through faith, so that apostasy

involves the Father's removing us from Christ should the condition of faith no longer remain. Such a state is irremediable (Num 15:30; Heb 6:4–6; 10:26). Storms charges, "if you believe that born-again Christians can apostatize and lose their salvation, you must embrace the doctrine of 'twice lost, always lost' ... because Hebrews 6 says it is impossible to renew them to repentance" (p. 114). This is precisely the point, making it all the more urgent. If, however, Storms maintains that there are some unbelievers who "have come so very close to true conversion but then have hardened their hearts to such a degree that when they finally turn away from Christ, God simply lets them go" (pp. 114–15), then he must also embrace the doctrine of resistible grace.

Storms is to be commended for bringing this important subject of theological inquiry to the table once again. In light of his stated goal to convince Arminians of their error, however, I am disappointed by his failure to engage Arminianism on a serious level. This would have been a most welcomed and beneficial enterprise for all interested parties. Yet *Kept for Jesus* in the main preaches to the choir. Most citations are from likeminded authors (esp. Piper), with little awareness of Arminian perspectives. His monolithic casting of Arminianism is surprising, since he has elsewhere reviewed J. Matthew Pinson's edited book, *Four Views on Eternal Security* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), which distinguishes Reformed and Wesleyan Arminianism. His intention to engage convincingly is laudable, but nevertheless unrealized.

Matthew McAfee
Welch College, Nashville, TN

Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants. By Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012, 848 pp., \$32.99.

Over the course of the last century much ink has been spilt over the divide that exists between covenant theology and dispensationalism. While copious amounts of discussion, disagreement, and modification have taken place, a gap still looms between these two theological systems. Seemingly, one can seldom delve into particular theological issues—baptism, the Israel/Church relationship, the work of Christ, details regarding last things, etc.—without detailing their particular stance regarding these two systems of thought. And so it has been for a number of generations; dialogue at a seeming impasse in some respects. However, discussion has begun afresh with the publication of *Kingdom through Covenant*, by Gentry and Wellum, and this is so due to their proposal of a *via media* between covenant theology on the one hand, and dispensationalism on the other (p. 12).

Gentry and Wellum both teach at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the former in the area of OT, the latter as professor of Christian Theology. There is, seemingly, a building momentum generated from such a publication to revisit this crucial conversation relating to exegesis and theological method. This is evidenced not merely by the publication of this book, but also the numerous lengthy reviews that have responded to their proposal. Also, there is a recent abridged version of

Gentry and Wellum's tome, entitled *God's Kingdom through God's Covenants*, as well as a future publication entitled *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies*. This latter work continues to develop the insights of *Kingdom through Covenant* by a team of scholars who accept the basic biblical-theological framework of Gentry and Wellum and develop that framework in areas that the initial book did not (e.g. Sabbath, warning passages, circumcision, land, relationship of the Law to the Christian). The present review will seek to keep these various publications and reviews in mind, but the central focus will be on their primary work *Kingdom through Covenant*.

From the outset Gentry and Wellum make clear that they aim to demonstrate two crucial ideas: first, the centrality of the covenants in forming the backbone of the biblical metanarrative, and, second, how a number of crucial theological differences can arise based on the way one treats the covenants' relationship to one another (p. 21). The authors believe that correctly "putting together" the biblical covenants is central to doing accurate biblical and systematic theology. As they believe covenant theology and dispensationalism do not put the covenants together in quite the right way, they offer a mediating position. Their proposal, entitled "kingdom through covenant," encapsulates their attempt to make "better sense of the overall presentation of Scripture, which, in the end, will help us resolve some of our theological differences" (p. 23).

This work is divided between the two authors, Gentry dealing with the close exegesis of key texts relating to the covenants, Wellum focusing on theological formulation and entailments. The prolegomena (chaps. 1–3) is written by Wellum. Within this section he addresses the significance of all of the biblical covenants for both biblical and systematic theology. He then gives a description of the two theological systems that have made use of the covenants, namely, covenant theology and dispensationalism. Wellum gives a fair description of each system, noting varying positions (e.g. classical, revised, and progressive dispensationalism) and typically citing key proponents of each. After describing and contrasting these systems, he alludes to where the rest of the book is going in terms of the *via media* known as "kingdom through covenant."

Thus, in chapter 3, Wellum delves into key hermeneutical issues in putting the covenants together in "biblical manner" (i.e. one that takes seriously what Scripture claims to be and interprets it in light of what it actually is as God's unfolding revelation across time; p. 83). After citing Scripture's character as the Word of God, Wellum cites the work of Richard Lints (*The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology*) and asserts that in the interpretation of Scripture, one must consider three horizons: textual (i.e. immediate context), epochal (i.e. location in redemptive history), and canonical (i.e. reading the Bible as unified whole; pp. 93–100). Wellum concludes, "the best way to read Scripture and to draw theological conclusions is to interpret a given text of Scripture in its linguistic-historical, literary, redemptive-historical, and canonical contexts" (p. 100). No doubt the best interpreters of covenant theology and dispensationalism would agree with such an approach, but the difference, Wellum contends, is in the way one unfolds the covenants as it relates to the promise-fulfillment motif. This relates directly to typology

and how the covenants and their signs point forward to Christ. Wellum briefly states his understanding of how typology works across the covenants, but it is here that this work differs from covenant and dispensational theology: “This observation that we, as the church, are the ‘Israel of God’ only by virtue of our union with Christ, who is the antitypical fulfillment of Israel, is crucial for carving a *via media* between dispensationalism’s and covenant theology’s view of the church” (p. 106 n. 55).

With this in mind, Wellum highlights two key areas of disagreement (while also noting a number of agreements) between their view and those of dispensationalism and covenant theology, respectively. For the former category, the authors believe understanding the covenants typologically and in relation to one another means that the land promise made to Israel in the OT is fulfilled in Christ, because he is the fulfillment of the covenants, and also points forward to the new heavens and new earth. This is in contradistinction to dispensationalism’s claim that the land promise will be fulfilled to ethnic Israel in the millennium. With regard to covenant theology, the authors aver that the “genealogical principle”—viewing the church as a mixed community (i.e. with both believers and non-believers) as Israel was—is wrong-headed due to the progression of the covenants, and especially the newness of the new covenant. All the people of that covenant will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:31–34). These two areas get at the heart of the respective systems, and it is here that Gentry and Wellum show the real takeaway that comes from adopting their system as opposed to the other two.

Part two, the longest section of the book, looks in detail at specific exposition of (mainly) OT texts that frame their overall discussion. Together these chapters (4–15) address the major covenants of the Bible, including the Adamic/creation covenant along with the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and new covenants. Although Gentry begins with the Noahic covenant as essentially a reestablishment of the Adamic covenant, in summarizing the flow of the covenants, the summary of this section will begin with the covenant made with Adam. Being made in the *image* of God denotes Adam’s role as “servant-king” over God’s world. Being the *likeness* of God emphasizes Adam’s relationship to God as a son. In sum, the *likeness* concept emphasizes man’s relationship to God while *image* focuses on man’s relationship to creation. The Garden of Eden was the place where Adam and God dwelled together, and it functioned as an archetypal sacred place or sanctuary. Adam’s role was to rule and subdue the earth and thus expand the sacred space throughout God’s creation. With his sin and fall, though, Adam (as representative of mankind) failed in the mission given to him by God. The Noahic covenant was not a brand-new covenant but a continuation in some ways of the creation covenant made with Adam. As a second Adam, Noah was to succeed where Adam failed. But he did not succeed. Thus, the search for a faithful covenant adherent would continue. In regards to the Abrahamic covenant, “God intends to establish his rule over all creation through his relationship with Abram and his family: kingdom through covenant.” Through Abram and his descendants “the broken relationship between God and all the nations of the world will be reconciled and healed” (p. 245). The land promised to Abraham is to function as a new Eden.

Through Moses and the covenant made with Israel, the nation picks up the mantle of the new Adam. Israel was to be the mediator between God and the world, “a vehicle for bringing the nations to the divine presence and rule” (p. 322). Israel was to dwell in God’s presence and mediate his glory as a kingdom of priests through the appropriation of the Law. The next new Adam was David via Abraham and Israel. Like Adam, David is God’s son and like Adam, David was to mediate God’s blessings on a universal scale. The Davidic covenant which was given to him had the purpose of being “the instruction for humanity” (2 Sam 7:19), indicating that the covenant’s aim was universal blessing. Yet the record shows that both David and his descendants were sinful and failed. Finally, the covenants climax in the giving of the new covenant. With the new covenant, the baton of “new Adam” is then passed to the Davidic Messiah whom we now know as Jesus. He is the one who restores Israel for the good of the world. While all of the other “Adams” failed—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David—Jesus the Davidic Messiah succeeds. As the typological fulfillment, Wellum summarizes the storyline in this way: “It is only if God himself, as the covenant maker and keeper, unilaterally acts to keep his own promise through the provision of a faithful covenant partner that a new and better covenant can be established” (p. 611).

The work ends with the third section dealing with theological integration of the previous exegetical insights (chaps. 16–17). Here Wellum gives a biblical-theological summary of the overarching picture of their theological systems, and also highlights theological implications in relation to Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. The book ends with a lexical analysis of *bērît*.

On the whole, one must note that this work is a substantial contribution to biblical and theological studies, addressing a frequently held discussion regarding how the whole Bible hangs together. The authors state that in order to understand the Scripture, one needs to understand the biblical covenants (pp. 12–13). Furthermore, each covenant should be interpreted in context and “then viewed intertextually and canonically” (p. 14). The goal is to understand each covenant, how the covenants relate to each other, and how they inform the canonical narrative. This is a commendable goal, in thinking through the centrality of the covenants in a hermeneutical sense, and again the authors do an excellent job of advancing the discussion. The book offers a wealth of exegetical analysis and interacts with a select range of scholarly interpretations of biblical texts treating the divine covenants. In this sense it is truly a comprehensive treatment.

This work also does an excellent job in its treatment of covenant theology, noting the realities of the “newness” found in the new covenant and how this affects the way in which one speaks of the people of God. Perhaps one of the best critiques coming from the side of covenant theology comes from the pen of Michael Horton (<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/kingdom-through-covenant-a-review-by-michael-horton>). Horton presses on the reality of the new covenant and the people of God, saying that Jeremiah 31:34 simply means “all without distinction” when referring to the fact that they will all know the Lord. In a response to the review by Horton, Gentry and Wellum rightly contend that this makes sense if one assumes that the nature of Israel and the church is basically the

same, but it does not do justice to the significant number of texts that speak of new covenant members as not only those who know the Lord but also those who experience forgiveness of sins, have the Spirit, are joined to Christ, and are thus part of a community that is unlike the previous community (Jer. 31:31–34). As we come to the NT, this prophetic expectation is precisely what we see as Christ's people are described as those who have been brought from death to life, born and indwelt by the Spirit, united to Christ and thus justified, adopted, and sanctified in him. It is hard to apply these truths to those who do not claim to experience these new covenant realities (<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/gentry-and-wellum-respond-to-kingdom-through-covenant-reviews>). The exegetical rigor supporting these points is crucial to note, and it gives strong contention for a robust Baptist theology on this point.

More questions can be raised about issues of consistency when the authors seek to refute certain features of (progressive) dispensationalism. The major challenge to dispensationalism resides in this theological system distinguishing between Israel and the church too greatly by preserving promises (most specifically regarding the land) to Israel apart from the church. The idea of a future land promise that will be realized for Israel is rather to be seen as realized in Jesus and his victory on behalf of the world, because land is a type for a much larger promise of God (for further thoughts on the land in keeping with Gentry and Wellum's argument, see Oren Martin, *Bound for the Promised Land: The Land Promise in God's Redemptive Plan*). In relation to this argument, one area of critique raised by virtually every reviewer of this book is the lack of substantial attention given to NT exegesis, particularly a text such as Romans 9–11. Wellum and Gentry contend that dealing thoroughly with the NT would require another book, and, more substantively, "*within the OT itself*, the anticipation of the new covenant is already bringing the changes that the NT then announces and develops" (<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/gentry-and-wellum-respond-to-kingdom-through-covenant-reviews>; italics original). As such, attention given to the OT is warranted, and it also seems the NT will be more of an emphasis in the forthcoming work, *Progressive Covenantalism*.

However, as it relates to the land promise given to Israel, some further details are worth noting. Gentry and Wellum respond to a review by Darrell Bock, who maintains that the land promise must be fulfilled to ethnic Israel in the millennial age lest one undermine God's faithfulness to Israel: "Let us be clear: we do maintain a future for ethnic Israel, but that future is not as DT [dispensational theology] conceives it. Instead it is found in a massive end-time salvation of ethnic Jews brought to faith in their Messiah (Rom. 9–11) and then incorporated into the one new man, the church (Eph. 2:11–22). This is the true hope for Israel that Scripture holds out in all of his glory and grace" (<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/gentry-and-wellum-respond-to-kingdom-through-covenant-reviews>). Thus, Gentry and Wellum maintain a future for ethnic Israel, as stated in Romans 11, but more could also be said about the land promise. Their argument is that the land promise is taken up in the biblical story in a type escalation from Eden to the land of Israel to the new earth, such that the land comes to be replaced (fulfilled) by the new earth. The new earth, then, takes the place of the land promised to Israel in the

consummation. However, as Craig Blaising argues in a review of this work, the fact that the land serves as a type of blessing to be extended to the earth does not logically call for the elimination or annihilation of that land in the renewal process. The renewal of the land and the renewal of the whole earth go together in biblical thought. The claim that there will be no future fulfillment of the territorial promise given to Israel is sometimes supported by the thought that the NT never mentions the land *per se*. This is incorrect, as Paul's statement in Acts 13:19 is too often overlooked: "After destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them [this people Israel; v.17] their land as an inheritance." The phrase is taken from covenant language in Deuteronomy (4:21, 38; 12:10; 15:4; 19:10, 14; 21:23; 24:4; 25:19). In particular, Deuteronomy 4 is a crucial text speaking of a future exile and restoration of Israel (parallel to chap. 30). It is instructive that the repeated reference of the gift of the land as an inheritance is supplemented by the phrase "the land that the Lord your God is giving you for all time" (Deut. 4:40). The gift of the land as an inheritance is linked to the everlasting covenant promise in Ps 105:7–11. Moreover Paul, who says that God gave them their land as an inheritance, is the same Paul who says in Roman 11:29 that "the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." It seems that at least one of those "gifts" is the land, as it is repeatedly spoken of in the OT as a gift of the Lord to Israel: "the land that the Lord gave you" (e.g. Josh. 1:15). In this same context (Romans 11), Paul speaks of the restoration of Israel in accordance with the covenant promise. The NT does not dwell on the land promise because it was not really a matter of dispute. The matter of dispute in NT writings was whether Jesus was the Christ. That was the main point in Paul's synagogue speech in Acts 13, where he does mention the gift of the land to Israel as an inheritance (<http://www.tms.edu/m/msj26h.pdf>).

This and several other arguments made by others in the progressive dispensational camp should be considered. This, however, does not detract from the real advancements made by such a work to the discussion of the biblical covenants, typology, and the way in which the whole Bible comes together cohesively. Due to its technical nature, particularly in the exegetical chapters, the audience will be somewhat limited to scholars, seminary students, and pastors who have their Hebrew in good working order. In the call for the authors to be "biblical" in one's theology, this work offers a challenge for those in biblical and theological studies to strive for scholarship filled with acumen and rigor.

Jeremy Kimble
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

Christ Crucified: Understanding the Atonement. By Donald Macleod. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 272 pp., \$22.00 paper.

Macleod's book is one of a spate of publications defending penal substitution to appear in the last two years or so. It is a book of elegantly simple biblical scholarship, combined with theological comprehensiveness and oozing of reverence and worshipful wonder at the cross. Macleod was professor and chair of systematic

theology at the Free Church of Scotland College in Edinburgh. He is also a former pastor and columnist.

Discussions of the atonement have often become stuck in meta-theoretical issues such as the role of models and metaphors. Macleod happily avoids such matters and presents a substantive and coherent interpretation of the work of Christ. Without being unaware of hermeneutical issues surrounding models and metaphors, he is confident that the meaning of the cross is not difficult to discern. He is very convincing that the paschal event is clearly situated within a sacrificial framework, where the blood of the sacrificial victim indicates not so much the idea of life transmitted, as of life taken and punishment. It is difficult not to feel the force of Macleod's arguments, as he builds a comprehensive biblical case for the centrality of the death of Jesus and in particular its penal quality for reconciliation.

The whole book is a combination of biblical exegesis and theological construction, with the former aspect often getting the upper hand. This results in certain conversations being omitted, although most relevant recent contributions are at least mentioned. Macleod prefers to build a primarily biblical case for penal substitution, one that occasionally engages with contemporary issues and objections, yet without making this apologetic dimension central. Completely absent, for example, are engagements with proponents of non-violent atonement or the work of Girardians, but also postcolonial critics. There is, however, some minor engagement with feminist concerns. Some people would cast this as a case of the best defense being a good offense, and they would not be too far off.

The first three chapters of the book, comprising Part 1, present an often moving narrative of central events in the passion-resurrection story. These chapters set the stage for the interpretation of the passion story that follows. Part 2, containing the bulk of the book, includes chapters on a variety of key terms, mostly biblical: substitution, expiation, propitiation, reconciliation, satisfaction, redemption, and victory. All of these key terms lead back to the central truth of the atonement, that Christ bore our penalty for sin, and stood condemned in our place. In the process of unpacking the meaning of these terms—Macleod hesitates to call them metaphors, to avoid possible non-cognitive connotations—he exegetes key texts and engages with pivotal debates. With a few notable exceptions (C. H. Dodd, T. F. Torrance, and James Torrance), his engagement with contrary viewpoints is rather brief. Historical milestones are also treated in connection to the central themes of each chapter. Of these, most attention went to Anselm and Grotius. Intriguingly, Macleod chose not to highlight the non-penal character of satisfaction theory, emphasizing the fact that penal substitution falls within roughly the same framework. While this is true in the sense of the necessity and centrality of the cross, the non-penal character of Christ's death (Anselm's position) has serious implications for an understanding of justification, penance, etc.

An especially instructive discussion centers on the historical controversy at the Synod of Dort about universal redemption. Macleod sides with Dort on this issue, against both universal redemption and Amyraldians. His presentation of the opposing views is generally fair and charitable, avoiding typical caricature and vitriol. However, he helpfully shows that this is not simply theological hair-splitting, but

that the positions have significant repercussions for Christian life, assurance, one's understanding of faith, and so on.

The theological comprehensiveness of the volume was already noted. By this I mean that Macleod is especially sensitive to the correlation between atonement and other central doctrines. He is especially interested in consistency with Christology, the doctrine of the Trinity, but also the doctrines of sin and grace. Sadly—though perhaps unavoidably, given the limitations of space—lacking are more intentional correlations with creation and eschatology, but also with ecclesiology. The Christological and trinitarian correlation deserves further comment. Macleod rightly appeals to the Trinity to prevent caricatures of the cross as divine child abuse. He rightly understands the cross as an event of God taking upon Godself the penalty for sin—in the human nature of Jesus Christ. He also invokes—though without using the technical name—the doctrine of divine simplicity to relate God's love and justice as unified aspects of his nature. He also finds a place for the doctrine of inseparable operations (again, without naming it as such) in his discussion of universal redemption. Echoing Owen (although, strangely, he does not reference him at this particular point), Macleod writes, "It is inconceivable, therefore, that Christ would redeem all, but the Holy Spirit transform only some" (p. 126).

This trinitarian homologation of atonement doctrine is crucial, and it is refreshing to see it occupy Macleod. I might be forgiven for registering one disagreement in this area. While rightly emphasizing the eternal trinitarian agreement between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with respect to the work of atonement, Macleod sometimes seems to (unintentionally?) revert to a problematic model of the *opera ad extra* in terms of cooperation. For example, he writes that Christ's ministry "was a transaction between the persons of the blessed Trinity. The Son finished the work the Father gave him to do; and then Father glorified the Son" (p. 96). He states that we have to affirm such paradoxes as "one member of the Trinity punishing another member of the Trinity" (p. 96). It is doubtful, however, that the doctrine of inseparable operations permits such a differentiation in the economy.

Macleod further demonstrates Christological expertise in his critique of the Torrances' "vicarious humanity" position on the atonement. He finds their position unsustainable for a number of reasons: it invokes the indefensible notion that Christ assumes the whole of human nature, rather than an individual human nature, with the empirically dubious implication that human nature is already healed; it implies that Christ has assumed a fallen human nature—a position which Macleod dismisses rather too summarily; and it misconstrues saving faith as the faith of Christ, rather than faith in Christ.

As his discussion of "vicarious humanity" reveals, Macleod is generally suspicious of replacing the judicial with the ontological as primary interpretive frameworks. He views justice as essential to God, and rightly so, though I suspect there needs to be no such dichotomy between the juridical and the ontological. This takes nothing away from what is a truly remarkable book. Perhaps Macleod's greatest feat is to have given a defense of an old doctrine, yet without being in the least predictable, dull, and dogmatic. While not necessarily presenting new arguments for penal substitution, the book succeeds in what is perhaps the most important thing:

to help us revisit the events, to stand once again at the foot of the cross, and to face its scandal anew, a scandal no more striking today than it was then.

Adonis Vidu
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, MA

Sanctification: Explorations in Theology and Practice. Edited by Kelly M. Kopic. Kindle edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014, 6242 Kindle locations (= 300 pp.), \$12.99 Kindle.

Kopic's *Sanctification* is a collection of essays loosely arranged around the theme of sanctification and having an "ecclesial focus" (Kindle locations [henceforth K.l.] 104–6, 109–10), much like Eilers and Strobel's recent anthology, *Sanctified by Grace: A Theology of the Christian Life*. Kopic's *Sanctification* also shares a neo-Barthian perspective with Eilers and Strobel's *Sanctified*, but the former has its own unique Reformed emphasis. Following an opening homily, the book's essays are grouped into three parts respectively focusing on three motifs: (1) the relation of sanctification to union with Christ, (2) the problem of human agency in conjunction with sanctification's relationship to ethics, and (3) theological and pastoral meditations on sanctification.

With regard to the book's contribution to scholarship, *Sanctification* relates to three relatively recent trends in works on sanctification, perpetuating the first two and advancing or perhaps establishing the third: (1) trinitarian sanctification; (2) virtue-ethical sanctification; and (3) sanctification in relation to union with Christ. These three trends represent renewed interests in other areas of study that have been applied to sanctification because of the doctrine's close relationship to those issues. The first trend of trinitarian sanctification is the result of the recent enthusiasm for the doctrine of the Trinity stirred up by Barth's commentary on Romans (1919) and in part by Grenz's second phase of enthusiasm for the doctrine of the Trinity in which the Trinity is related to other doctrines and issues. Consequently, a number of recent works on sanctification have placed special emphasis on "trinitarian sanctification" or have described the doctrine of sanctification in trinitarian terms (e.g. Hoekema, "The Reformed Perspective," in *Five Views on Sanctification* [1987]; Webster, *Holiness* [2003]; Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* [2005]; Eilers and Strobel, *Sanctified by Grace* [2014]). Several of the authors of Kopic's anthology display this trend of trinitarian sanctification (K.l. 551–81, 1164, 1910–2189, 3207–8, 3762). For example, Horton, who most strongly displays the trend of trinitarian sanctification, claims, "First, it is trinitarian: the Father speaks (through the embassy of his angel), the Son is the content and the Spirit is the one who will bring the word to pass" (K.l. 2099–2100).

A second trend perpetuated by Kopic's book, and one that is tied to the recent resurgence of interest in virtue ethics, is that of virtue-ethical sanctification, or relating sanctification to ethics. The current consensus in the fields of philosophy and ethics seems to be that following a golden age up until at least Aquinas, virtue ethics waned until it was eclipsed by Kant and revived by Anscombe. With the re-

surge of interest in virtue ethics, a number of scholars make links between virtue ethics and sanctification (e.g. Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life* [1975]; Woodill, *The Fellowship of Life* [1998]). Despite the strong deontological-voluntaristic emphasis of the Reformed tradition through its stress on the Ten Commandments, the law, the will (both human and divine), and the existential emphasis of neo-Barthianism, not only does Part 2 focus on the connection between sanctification and ethics, but several of the essays throughout this anthology deal with virtue generally (K.I. 2802–4, 2845–56, 4004), the theological virtues (K.I. 2356–58, 2429–2611, 2845–55, 3420ff.), and even concepts such as moral exemplars and habituation (K.I. 350–51, 4043–46, 4169–70, 4207–51) without explicitly mentioning the virtue-ethical dimension of biblical sanctification. Kopic's essay most exemplifies this trend through his claim, "I want to organize our meditation on suffering and sanctification around three theological words—faith, hope and love This triplet of theological virtues then connects to the three Christian images of cross, resurrection and feast" (K.I. 3417–21).

Possibly the most significant contribution of the book is its advancement or possibly establishment of a third trend of treating sanctification in relation to union with Christ. The concept of union with Christ, particularly associated with Bernard of Clairvaux and Calvin and more recently highlighted in Luther, was all but lost in the mid-seventh century and returned in part due to the controversies surrounding the New Perspective on Paul, Radical Orthodoxy, and the New Finnish-Helsinki (Mannermaa) school of Lutheran research. Although books dealing with union may treat sanctification among other issues and in relation to various elements in the *ordo salutis*, there seems to be a relatively recent and growing trend of treating sanctification in relation to union in discussions of sanctification. Examples include Hoekema, "The Reformed Perspective," in *Five Views on Sanctification* [1987]; Horton, *Systematic Theology* [2011]; Erickson, *Christian Theology* [2013] 905; and Eilers and Strobel, *Sanctified* [2014] K.I. 164–67. Not only do the four essays in Part 1 focus on the relation between sanctification and union, but so do a few of the other essays. For example, this trend appears in Canlis's explanation of the main thrust of her essay: "This term *adoption* is used at times by Calvin to speak of our election, our justification or 'acceptance,' our regeneration, and even our sanctification. ... I am going to be using it in the sense that Calvin sometimes uses it, where he makes explicit connection between Christ's Sonship and our becoming sons, ... being united to Christ's own union" (K.I. 3765–71).

A common tension between the first trend of trinitarian sanctification and the third trend of sanctification in relation to union is present in Kopic's collection of essays. While union with Christ does not preclude a trinitarian formulation of sanctification, historically authors describing sanctification in conjunction with union, and particularly when using a strong form of Oden's "Triune Premise" (*Systematic Theology* [1992] 3:25, 28), have generally failed to produce trinitarian formulations of sanctification because of their strong focus on the Son and Spirit. The fact that this tendency is generally present among the authors of Kopic's anthology is exemplified by the lack of reference to God the Father in Figure 3 of Ellis's essay (K.I. 1396).

With regard to the book as a whole, similar to Eilers and Strobel's *Sanctified*, readers who are Barthians, existentialists, egalitarians, proponents of the New Perspective on Paul, and/or champions of Vanhoozer's theodramatic proposal will be delighted to see these ideologies also worked out in the area of sanctification to varying degrees. However, those who are not in favor of these ideologies will still find Kopic's book a much easier and more fruitful read than Eilers and Strobel's anthology. *Sanctification* achieves its "ecclesial focus" far more than does *Sanctified*. For instance, Tidball's opening homily is in many ways a structural model for pastors on how to preach, and the closing pastoral meditations in Part 3 are far more accessible to laypeople than much of the "technical or philosophical" material in the book (K.I. 111).

With regard to some of the anthology's individual authors, Ellis draws an important parallel between union with Christ and communion with the saints in the church, both in relation to sanctification. However, contrary to Kopic's assessment that Ellis "does not collapse soteriology and ecclesiology into one another" (K.I. 131) and an extensive denial of such a conflation by Ellis himself (K.I. 1358ff.), Ellis's dominant rhetoric stressing synonymy—e.g. "materially equivalent," "theological equivalence," "coextensive," "the very same reality," and "vice versa" (K.I. 1182, 1318, 1296, 1252, 1353, 1482, 1436, 1510)—overwhelms his relatively sparse language of "complementary" and "inseparability" (K.I. 1183, 1262, 1397), suggesting that he has collapsed the two into each other. Ellis might strengthen his otherwise profitable argument and more forcefully persuade readers that he is not collapsing soteriology and ecclesiology by using more careful language such as "inseparable, but distinguishable" and "overlapping, but not identical," by explaining the distinctive features and areas of overlap between the two concepts of union and church, and by elaborating on the biblical references he provides.

While Blocher and Davidson wisely interact with Peterson's *Possessed by God* (1995), their treatment of Peterson is deficient on at least two counts. First, because Peterson has written one of the most recent scholarly monographs on sanctification, and because his view is historic and gaining popular traction, his work deserves more attention than the four endnotes he receives (K.I. 4933–34, 4944–46, 4951–52, 5646–48). Second, and more seriously, Blocher and Davidson seem to have misunderstood Peterson's thesis. For example, Davidson describes Peterson's work as "a sustained defense of the priority of positional or definitive rather than progressive sanctification" (K.I. 5646–48). However, despite Peterson's qualifications, his claims indicate that he is really arguing for the "position-only" view or the idea that, contrary to the traditional views of sanctification, in the NT "sanctification" refers *only* to the positional event of God's possession, while the idea of progression (moral transformation) is expressed by the terms "regeneration," "renewal," and "transformation and growth," and *not* sanctification (Peterson, *Possessed by God* 136). As the case of Ellis collapsing soteriology and ecclesiology demonstrates, so in the case of Peterson, what an author explicitly denies by qualification is sometimes exactly what the rest of his work suggests he is actually arguing.

Kopic's anthology is a must-read not only because it is one of the most recent and few works on sanctification, but also because it offers many helpful insights

into the doctrine of sanctification, particularly its relation to the three contemporary trends of the doctrine's relation to the Trinity, ethics, and union with Christ.

Ronald M. Rothenberg
Grand Prairie, TX

Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory: Rethinking the Things that Matter Most. By Jerry L. Walls. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2015, 235 pp., \$19.99 paper.

In *Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory*, Jerry L. Walls again engages current philosophical and theological debates surrounding eschatology, this time offering a popularized summary of his three previous works. Walls's purpose in this book is essentially twofold. In the first section, he defines heaven, hell, and purgatory, defending both their necessary existence and their relation to broader issues. In the second half, Walls demonstrates how proper application of these definitions may have significant implications for current moral debate.

Proposing that heaven is the logical point to begin, Walls argues that heaven is inherently connected with man's "built-in" desire for happiness and love (p. 23). This teleological relationship is evident, according to Walls, when we consider seven truths regarding heaven's nature and function identified in Revelation 19–22: (1) the restoration of man's proper relationship with God; (2) the perpetual fulfillment of previous earthly desires; (3) the redemption of the created order; (4) intimacy with God that displaces pain; (5) the perfect unity of truth, beauty, and goodness; (6) preservation and celebration of culture; and (7) the place where man "dwells with God" (p. 36). At the root of this definition is what Walls understands to be the "watershed issue" regarding heaven: it is defined primarily in light of God's love as modelled both within the Trinity and in Christ's sacrificial death (p. 46). In each respect, love is the driving framework: the goods of this world are redeemed to become greater expressions of love for God (p. 38), and the loving sacrifice of Christ to remove enmity between God and man is brought to its fullest expression (p. 45).

Chapter two builds upon this definition by examining how worldviews that reject heaven are left with fatal "gaps" regarding human teleology and morality. First, Bertrand Russell's physicalism typified is rejected because its insistence that all beliefs are products of "random combinations of atoms" leaves no objective grounding for moral claims regarding teleology (p. 53). Similarly, Walls rejects as overly idealistic the recent work of Richard Taylor whereby humanity can be satisfied in its work regardless of its ultimate meaninglessness in the absence of an after-life (p. 56). Subsequently, both Thomas Nagel's praise of human capacity as the locus of meaning and Keith Parson's denunciation of the "egocentrism" of searching for meaning are rejected as two opposing extremes. Where Nagel's praise of rationality only heightens one's awareness of the futility of existence, Parson's ambivalence regarding teleology undermines his ability to truly value the current world (pp. 58, 62). Therefore, Walls concludes, the failure of these ontologies demonstrates that the rejection of heaven creates inescapable gaps in how we un-

derstand reality and ourselves, resulting inevitably in the tragedy of disappointment (p. 65).

In chapter three, Walls defends the existence of hell by appealing to similar logic commonly used regarding the problem of evil: for heaven *and* freedom to exist, then hell must also exist (p. 70). Walls subsequently defends this thesis against two challenges. First, against Marilyn Adams's charge that this view of freedom minimizes the "size gap" between man and God, Walls argues that Scripture affirms that God's desire to hold humanity accountable demonstrates a relational dynamic more akin to that of a parent-child relationship (p. 75). Second, Walls addresses Thomas Talbott's contention that if eternal damnation and freedom is "logically impossible" because rational choice demands full knowledge, and if this occurs, no rational being would chose hell (p. 77). At the heart of Talbott's argument is the distinction between compulsion by force or by evidence; the former clearly violates freedom while the latter does not. Yet Walls rejects Talbott's distinction as problematic because if hell represents "unbearable suffering" so as to *necessitate* belief, this must produce the wrong form of compulsion (p. 82). In response, Walls argues that hell must be populated by the willing whose unrepentance has irreversibly warped their sensibilities (p. 84).

In chapter four, Walls introduces purgatory with the preface that everyone needs a theology of purgatory in the sense that it must account for how impure believers are transformed or "purged" of their remaining impurities before heaven (p. 94). In arguing that purgatory offers the best response, Walls is careful to distinguish between two forms: satisfaction and sanctification (p. 97). Although purgatory is often identified as the former, which emphasizes divine punishment, Walls argues for the latter, for three reasons. First, building on C. S. Lewis's rejection of penal substitutionary atonement, Walls argues that Christ's death does not remove the necessity of our perfect repentance but forms our model and the agency of our transformation (p. 103). Thus, purgatory serves as the intermediate state whereby Christ completes his sanctifying work through our continued repentance (p. 107). Second, Walls/Lewis assert that forgiveness is not enough; rather, we need the redemptive transformation of our hearts, the root cause of sin. While Christ's blood covers our acts of sin, we need an "additional work of grace that transforms *who we are* in the depths of our beings," which, according to Walls/Lewis, requires the time afforded by purgatory (p. 112). Third, Walls argues that the traditional belief that sanctification is instantaneous is problematic as it devalues the work of repentance in this life and our freedom within the process (p. 113).

In the book's second half, Walls addresses the problem of personal identity, arguing that if we take seriously the resurrection of Christ, this should impact our understanding of identity and the relationship between the soul and body (p. 120). Surveying recent dualist and physicalist conceptions of personal identity, Walls argues that the central issue is continuity of identity, and the failure of these views to adequately address it demands their rejection (p. 126). Walls maintains that the loss of continuity of identity poses difficulties for moral accountability and human teleology; in this respect, then, purgatory offers the best explanation (p.132). Quoting David Brown, Walls proposes that the drastic transformation of an individual from

impure to pure upon death creates problems for identity whereby person A at time x has become person B at time y with no basis by which to explain how this transformation takes place (p. 133). Thus, both the lack of continuity and the significant ontological change between persons A and B suggest they are different people; purgatory, however, offers a ready answer to this objection in both respects.

In chapter six, Walls addresses the problem of evil, arguing that rejection of heaven and hell creates insurmountable problems for understanding the existence, severity, and resolution of evil and suffering (p. 144). Influenced by Marilyn Adams and in light of biblical evidence, Walls argues that dwelling with God represents an “immeasurable/incommensurate good” that completely negates any need to balance suffering/pleasure (p. 147). In response to the problem that this creates regarding the justice of perpetrators of evil enjoying this immeasurable good, Walls appeals to his doctrine of purgatory, arguing that salvation is more than mere forgiveness but continued repentance (p. 152). In the final section, Walls addresses the criticism that heaven cannot be an immeasurable good because of the painful knowledge of those in hell. In response, Walls rejects that hell has the power to “veto” the goodness of heaven by again arguing that hell is populated by the willing. Because they have chosen to remain in hell, their alienation from God cannot stain the goodness of heaven (p. 158).

In chapter seven, Walls reexamines his claim that the afterlife provides the only objective grounding for human purpose and morality. Quoting Henry Sedgwick, Walls spends the first half of the chapter outlining how naturalist moral philosophy persistently struggles to account for our intense *feelings* of moral obligation within its emphasis upon the rationality of self-interest (p. 169). The complexity of this moral tension is best witnessed in current struggles among philosophers to determine the relationship between altruism and egoism (p. 172). In response, Walls argues that the only means of understanding how obligation and self-interest can coexist within moral claims is in reference to heaven (p. 176). While naturalism may explain why we have “feelings of obligation,” it is wholly unable to explain how we “really are obligated,” whereas heaven offers a solution in two respects (p. 177). First, our moral obligation is based on the sacrifice and love first demonstrated by God towards us through his offer of eternal joy (p. 179). Second, as the promise of heaven exerts both strong moral obligations *and* incentives for personal happiness, it is a plausible solution to the dilemma concerning the relationship between altruism and egoism (p. 183).

In his final chapter, Walls returns to one of the major challenges identified in the introduction: the inevitability and/or eternity of hell. While maintaining that hell must represent finality, Walls argues that purgatory may explain our intuitions regarding justice. His argument centers on God’s hypothetical knowledge of an individual’s likelihood of repentance whereby person A and person B have identical lives and are in an accident whereby A is killed but B lives and repents of his sin. In this case, it is likely that A *would* have repented if he had lived and thus should have the opportunity to repent in purgatory (p. 192). Next, Walls discusses those who never had an opportunity for salvation, arguing that both recent and historical work demonstrates a significant intuition regarding the justice of God in necessitating

universal opportunity. In response, Walls argues for what he terms “optimal grace” by which God, out of his love for all persons and his ability to save, will offer every opportunity “short of overriding their freedom” (p. 200). Admitting little scriptural support, Walls asks whether it is biblically consistent to infer that God both *can* and *would* provide optimal grace for all (p. 202). Arguing the former is evidently true, Walls admits the latter is ambiguous and proposes that purgatory offers a solution as an interim state where a final opportunity is possible (p. 206). Wary of the charge of universalism, Walls responds that while possible, his view is consistent with his earlier argument concerning those who inhabit hell do so by informed choice (p. 209).

In light of Walls’s purpose in condensing his three previous works into a popular format, this book is largely successful. He strikes a strong balance between popular rhetoric and substantive argument that is accessible yet intellectually stimulating. This is particularly evident in Walls’s ability to construct compelling illustrations in service to his various arguments. For example, in discussing the problem of evil, Walls demonstrates how carefully crafted thought experiments and illustrations can serve to convey both the intellectual difficulties associated with the problem *and* the intense emotional weight it carries (p. 143). This skill is augmented by Walls’s commitment to substantive engagement with philosophers and theologians not commonly cited in similar literature and therefore unfamiliar to a general audience. The result is a book that both appeals to various levels of scholarly ability and introduces several unique perspectives and questions to stimulate further dialogue.

Yet, even as Walls is largely successful in this condensation, the enormity of the task results in moments of confusion or a lack of coherence. While his argumentation is often concise and effective, there are multiple points where Walls’ purpose is unclear. For example, in his first chapter on heaven, Walls proposes seven truths regarding heaven, a basis for human teleology, the relationship between the physical and spiritual, and how the love is the “primordial reality.” However, the interrelationship between these points is often unclear resulting in confusion regarding how he arrives at his conclusion (p. 46). This is compounded by instances where Walls makes claims with little evidence or explanation. For example, in discussing personal identity, Walls essentially assumes Christ’s resurrection as normative for understanding human identity, but it is not clear as to why (p. 119). While likely a casualty of condensing earlier works, these problems combine to diminish the overall coherence of Walls’s argument.

A strong component of Walls’s work is his substantive engagement with major philosophical or theological positions in service to his argument. Walls displays considerable skill not only in constructing rival positions without mischaracterization but in utilizing their strengths and/or weaknesses as evidence for broader claims. While one can criticize Walls for the absence of key philosophers (e.g. Swinburne and Moreland), the inclusion of thinkers such as Adams and Sedgwick differentiates Walls’s work from similar popular theological/apologetic efforts. In this respect, Walls’s skill as philosopher may be undervalued insofar as it allows him to challenge the logical coherence of specific aspects of our collective definition of heaven. For example, in distinguishing between satisfaction and sanctifica-

tion models of purgatory, Walls' question regarding the process by which impure believers enter heaven poses a far greater soteriological/eschatological problem than commonly admitted. Conversely, this becomes problematic when Walls ignores biblical themes that have direct import on his argument, themes such as flesh/spirit and glorification. Their absence dampens the force of what otherwise would be significant questions.

Despite raising important questions, Walls's definition of purgatory struggles in three respects. First, promising a biblical and theological doctrine of purgatory, Walls rarely uses Scripture as justification except in what amounts to arguments from silence (p. 114). This is compounded by his later rejection of Tiessen's use of Scripture to rule out postmortem repentance on the basis that these texts do not *necessarily* support this reading. This is particularly weak as it promotes ambiguity rather than provide compelling evidence to contradict Tiessen (p. 204). While Walls never pretends to offer an exegetical argument, this is notable insofar as his intention is to appeal to a popular, presumably Protestant, audience. While Walls seems to think that appealing to C. S. Lewis will garner evangelical credibility, the absence of biblical texts essentially makes his position easy for casual readers to dismiss.

Second, while acknowledging the existence of his critics, Walls never substantively addresses counterarguments to his view of purgatory. This absence is particularly glaring in considering the frequency with which Walls interacts with opposing perspectives throughout the book. For example, aside from a half-hearted attempt at the close of chapter three, Walls never addresses exactly how an individual's sanctification continues in purgatory. This problem alone raises countless subsequent questions that Walls leaves unaddressed. If this transformation occurs over time, does that mean sin can occur in this middle state as we slowly progress towards holiness? If this is process, at what point are we judged pure? Sections on purgatory, therefore, often feel underdeveloped or defensive in contrast to other components of the book.

Third, Walls's "hypothetical repentance" defense of purgatory is problematic insofar as his failure to perceive numerous clear objections renders it easy to dismiss. For example, if the afterlife depends upon the *potential* to repent, is the reciprocal true regarding those who may *potentially* reject their faith? Is it possible that professing believers are condemned to hell based on the likelihood of apostasy? Even as it is unclear how Walls escapes this criticism, it is also unclear how Walls avoids arbitrariness in determining the age at which God judges future actions. If an individual dies at eighty, are we not reasonable in believing that he may have repented if he had lived longer? Although hardly defeaters, these problems reveal a lack of clarity that Walls demonstrates at other key points in the book.

Andrew E. MacDonald

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Language for God in Patristic Tradition: Wrestling with Biblical Anthropomorphism. By Mark Sheridan. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015, 254 pp., \$26.00 paper.

Mark Sheridan, whose is vice rector and dean of the faculty at the Pontifical Athenaeum of St. Anselm in Rome, writes an important book about the wrestling of the Church Fathers with several aspects of the OT. Sheridan rightly remarks that for the Church Fathers, the first question in explaining Scripture was not the original historical context in which the words were spoken and written, but how the text could be related to God as its first Author, and how it could be used for the building up of the church in godliness in the present time. Such was the case especially with the Alexandrian School that allegorized Scripture, especially when its literal meaning gave rise to theological problems. The Antiochene School stressed the importance of the literal meaning together with typology present in the text of Scripture. Sheridan rightly remarks that the distinction made between allegory and typology goes in a certain sense back to the Antiochene School, but that the word typology as such is a modern word. I add that the distinction between allegory and typology was first made in the nineteenth century.

On several important points I disagree with Sheridan, but together with him I am convinced that we ought to explain Scripture in a theological way. In this respect the theological interpretation of the ancient church is still relevant today. Ancient Christian interpreters used two principles to explain how biblical texts should be read. It is necessary to distinguish between *theologia* (what God is) and *oikonomia* (what God does). Pointing to Deut 1:31, the Church Fathers said that in revealing himself to us, God speaks to us as a father to his children. They used the concept *synbasis*: in revealing himself to us, God accommodates himself to our limited human capacities. I note this concept has a central place in all classic theology, with a nod especially to Calvin.

Sheridan states appropriately that the starting point of patristic interpretation is that Scripture is a coherent unity. The Church Fathers deemed it very important not to ascribe passions to God; indeed, they spoke about the *apatheia* of God. We see here the influence of Greek philosophy, and also of Philo the Alexandrian Jew, who himself was deeply rooted in Greek philosophy. At the same time, we must understand that in the ancient culture the word “passions” had only a negative connotation, being emotions over which one has no control. The Church Fathers deemed it unworthy to think in this way about God. They especially emphasized that wrath and anger are not passions of God.

Here I would give more commentary than Sheridan does. I would say that we can agree with what the Church Fathers said about God’s *apatheia* and at the same time underscore more than they did the reality of both the anger and love of God. At the same, I do not think that we are saying something completely different from what the church fathers said. In this way we emphasize an element that is surely fundamental for their piety but receives less attention in their theological thinking. With the exception of Origen, who because of some of his views was finally not hailed as church father, we must say that the ancient church almost universally

taught the reality of the eternal punishment. That Church Fathers knew about God's love for his church, is above questioning.

Sheridan gives four cases of patristic interpretation employing the concept of *synbasis*; these cases underscore that for the Church Fathers, no interpretation of Scripture is valid if it is not worthy of God and useful for piety. These are the first chapters of Genesis, the narrative of Sarah and Hagar, the command to wipe of the original nations of Canaan, and the imprecations of the enemies in the Psalms.

The Church Fathers struggled with the first chapter of Genesis especially because of its great number of anthropomorphisms. A solution was sought in God's condescension to our human level. For Augustine all anthropomorphisms can be interpreted in terms of abstract qualities of God. When Sheridan states that the situation that the Church Fathers faced was quite different from our concerns, I cannot agree completely. The Church Fathers highlighted creation *ex nihilo* knowing that this view was not in conformity with the prevailing philosophical—and we can say academic—view of their day, namely, that both matter and God are eternal. In the second place—as also Sheridan himself shows—they denied that the first chapters of Genesis present a mythological version of human origins.

It is true that Origen sought only for a theological meaning of the narrative of Adam and Eve in paradise and denied its historical value. But he was an exception. Not only Epiphanius but also Augustine emphasized that the narrative of paradise and the exile from it are real history. According to Augustine, the church can draw allegorical or spiritual lessons from it but must never deny its literal and historical meaning. I would say that surely the first chapters of Genesis are not written in academic language, but this does not mean that they give no information of a historical character. They give, in the language that everyone can understand, the ultimate answer on the origin of the universe and of humanity, an answer that is rooted in what really happened.

Sheridan tells us that most of the Church Fathers saw a form of adultery in what Abraham and Hagar did. I must say that I cannot understand them here; it is just an example of polygamy that was tolerated under the old dispensation. The Church Fathers said that Abraham did not break the seventh command because it was not yet given. This seems to me not really satisfying. Sheridan himself seeks the solution in the development seen in the history of morals. I agree with the view that he criticizes, namely, although Abraham and Sarah acted in a way that was not found immoral in their days, they were too much children of their time. Though the biblical narrator gives no commentary, the way he presents the narrative and underscores the many struggles that came from the decision of Abraham and Sarah, shows his disapproval and thus also God's disapproval. It is a failure that Sheridan omits this important element.

The Psalms are the prayer book of the Christian church. But how can a Christian pray for the destruction of his enemies? What is to be done with the imprecations in the Psalms? The Church Fathers either interpreted these imprecations allegorically, saying that sins and vices are meant, or they identified the speaker not as the Psalmist himself. For Sheridan the Psalms reflect a stage in the development of the biblical religion that is surpassed by the NT revelation. I would explain this

element in the Psalms by pointing to the fact that in the NT, much greater weight is given to the coming world and to the final eternal judgment than in the OT. In this dispensation we have to love our enemies and pray for their salvation, but when we see that they remain stubborn and refuse finally to repent, we know at the final judgment we will completely agree with God's righteous judgment and rejoice that he acts in justice.

The ancient church always read the OT through the interpretations found in the NT. The OT was for them fully Christian Scripture. Much more than Sheridan I would say that Christ is really present in the OT. An academic reading of the OT, which does not notice this, is deficient in one way or another. I agree with Sheridan that what can learn from the ancient Christian interpreters is to interpret the OT—and more generally the whole Bible—in a theological way, and not only with a historical consciousness of the text of Scripture. Following the Church Fathers in this respect, we can, without agreeing always with them, still profit in more than one way from their interpretation of Scripture. *Language for God in Patristic Tradition* helps us to understand better the motives and intentions of the Church Fathers in their interpretation of Scripture. Most important is that we ought to agree with the ancient church that God is the final Author of all Scripture and acknowledge that our ultimate aim in studying Scripture should be to know him better and glorify him more.

Pieter de Vries

Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Theology's Epistemological Dilemma: How Karl Barth and Alvin Plantinga Provide a Unified Response. By Kevin Diller. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 326 pp., \$34.00 paper .

The theological epistemologies of Karl Barth and Alvin Plantinga are not usually considered to be on the same side of any divide. Diller, who teaches theology and philosophy at Taylor University, mounts a convincing argument that in fact they are allies who helpfully complement each other's weaknesses. Both thinkers are giving a similar diagnosis of the predicament of theological epistemology and, moreover, both suggest similar responses to it. Diller does not so much set out to correct perceptions of their respective work as being opposite to each other on the whole. The current consensus, rather, is that there are discrete aspects of their positions that are antithetical to each other. Diller helps us see that behind those minor disagreements lies a greater and truly momentous agreement on theological epistemology. What results is a synthesis that combines Barth's dogmatic thoroughness with Plantinga's analytical precision into a unified position that provides fresh insights on three related issues: the place of natural theology; the relation between faith, revelation, and propositions; and the authority and inerrancy of Scripture.

But what is "theology's epistemological dilemma?" Diller explains that "the epistemic problem for Christian theology ... is the seemingly unavoidable tension between a properly high view of theological knowledge and yet a low view of the

independent capacities of human theologians” (p. 42). Christian theologians, it seems, have to affirm two things: on the one hand, the necessity of talking about God, mandated through revelation, and, on the other hand, the impossibility of a grasp of God by human concepts, propositions, etc. Diller suggests that Barth’s and Plantinga’s responses to the dilemma mutually enrich each other. He takes up the first five chapters to sketch their respective solutions in the context of their larger work.

Barth’s suggested treatment for theology’s dilemma is often perceived as a sort of irrationalism. Theological knowledge is possible because of revelation. However, revelation is not something that must be objectified, such that in revelation we are given a manipulable set of propositions that describe God in and of themselves. Such a view of revelation mistakenly assumes that the form in which revelation takes place (human concepts and propositions) is by itself capable of representing God and conveying knowledge about him. Barth insists that if there is to be knowledge of God, then this knowledge is brought about by the ongoing operation of the Trinity, such that there is no way to God “from below,” so to speak. It is not difficult to read into this an “apophatic approach” that disparages human reasons, arguments, and concepts as failing to convey any knowledge of God. Nothing could be further from the truth, Diller suggests. To cut a long story short, Barth only rejects the view that human concepts, propositions, and arguments can *of their own power* mediate knowledge of God, not the view that they are necessarily involved in any adequate knowledge of God. Diller’s task, then, is to help us properly locate the role of the cognitive and propositional in Barth’s theology of revelation.

Plantinga’s work, Diller argues, can help add some philosophical precision and, I might add, philosophical respectability to Barth’s dogmatic stance. His critique of enlightenment foundationalism dovetails nicely with Barth’s own critique of philosophy. Plantinga denies an internalist account of epistemology, according to which epistemic justification is a condition of knowledge. He replaces this with an externalist emphasis on warrant as a necessary condition of knowledge. Plantinga’s account of warrant is shown to be compatible with specifically Christian assumptions about the noetic effects of sin, yielding a coherent account of the way in which true and warranted beliefs about God are formed. The significant common ground between Barth and Plantinga is their common claim that knowledge of God can only be created and gifted to humans by God himself. Plantinga supplements Barth’s emphasis on revelation with his clarifying work on the doxastic apparatus that makes possible the formation of beliefs. Diller further shows that Plantinga’s model is sufficiently nimble to account for all sorts of theological assumptions about both the nature of God and anthropology. Plantinga, in short, shows that a respectable philosophical account—based on externalism, warrant, and proper function—can be given to Barth’s dogmatic emphasis that God alone must be both the object and subject of theological beliefs, and that such an account can withstand accusations of irrationalism or non-cognitivism.

Diller summarizes the “unified response” in a helpful interlude before moving on to apply it to three specific issues. It will help the readers if I echo some salient

points about theological knowledge. (1) Knowledge of God is a real gift, which emerges “within but not from human conceptuality” (p. 169). (2) Theological epistemology is theo-foundational, meaning that God himself “creates and enables our capacity to receive the knowledge of him” (p. 170). (3) This knowledge is “freely transformational” in that it restores proper function to faculties that are otherwise disoriented by sin. (4) It is “corporately known.” (5) It is by grace alone. (6) It is personal and cognitive, that is, a knowledge of God as he truly is, which inevitably involves propositions. (7) While mediated, it is not reduced to the medium (see below). (8) It is secured in God’s self-attestation alone, such that “what anchors the warrant for and therefore strength of our belief is not the strength of arguments in its favor but the free act of God restoring proper function and conducive environments according to his personally tailored, truth-aimed design plan for knowing him” (p. 171). (9) It eschews theological prolegomena but prefers an ontological account of an already established way of knowing. (10) Finally, it is coherent and warranted.

Having outlined the contours of the unified proposal, Diller goes on to apply it to three particular issues: the role of natural theology; the relationship between faith, revelation, and propositions; and the doctrine of Scripture. Readers of this journal will be particularly intrigued by Diller’s discussion of Scripture, which I will sketch here briefly. The context of the doctrine of Scripture is the discussion of the conditions under which the human text of Scripture can serve as divine revelation. In keeping with the claim that there is nothing inherent in the human form to enable its mediation of revelation, Diller defends Barth’s view of Scripture from both detractors and misrepresentations. He argues that, contrary to, for example, Christian Smith, Barth does not encourage us to lower our view of Scripture, because he “never separates or stratifies revelations into kinds... . We can distinguish aspects of God’s revealing action, but they correspond to the Trinity and are therefore distinguishable but inseparable” (p. 267). A proper “ontology of Scripture” will never separate it from God’s actual self-revelation. Yet, the human form must be distinguished from the content of that revelation. Contrary to some, however, Diller does not think that the humanity of Scripture necessarily requires a frank admission of errors and inconsistencies in the Bible. In fact, he suggests that the Barth/Plantinga proposal best fits with what he calls a “qualified notion of the inerrancy of Scripture.” The qualification relates inerrancy to what we might mean by error. Diller walks a fine line here. On the one hand, he is not comfortable with accounts where revelation through Scripture happens “in spite of the human witness; it happens by divine coordination of that witness in a thoroughly though not merely human process” (p. 274). On the other hand, he does not rule out the possibility that Scripture affirms false propositions. If such were the case, what would remain essential is that such imperfections do not cause a “breakdown in the coordination between the human witness and the divine intensions of that witness” (p. 275).

As may be seen from the above, Diller’s proposal is extremely wide-ranging. This book is only deceptively about an obscure bit of theological prolegomena. In fact, it becomes clear very early on that it sets forth a comprehensive account of

knowledge of God, fully thought through to its ultimate implications and correlations with the rest of Christian doctrine. The fecundity of the project shows forth clearly, yet without any fanfare.

It is only natural that such a wide-ranging proposal is going to prompt further conversation and debate. It is doubtful, however, that the unified proposal is a way out of theology's epistemological dilemma. I would like to supply a particular example of how the dilemma resurfaces.

If human theological concepts work not because of their inherent properties, but simply because of God's requisitioning them into the service of his self-revelation, what does this actually mean? What does it mean that they become adequate to revelation? It might be replied that this question implies a presumption of elevating ourselves above the "knowing relation" such that we are able to neutrally and objectively analyze its constituents. That may be true, but one could reply in return that, unless some further analysis is given about what it might mean for God to "commandeer" (p. 169) our concepts, then we are purporting to solve the dilemma with mysterious concepts. In that case the dilemma would remain as a potentially unresolvable contradiction. Diller does not include a discussion of truth, or the correspondence theory of truth, beyond affirming strongly realist intuitions and expressing a preference "to avoid the controversy by leaving unspecified the precise nature of the correspondence relation" (p. 37). He does speak favorably of Davidson's refusal to define truth and to think that the truth relation is basic and cannot be analyzed into further constituents.

Davidson, however, can avoid analyzing truth in a way that Diller cannot, because the former is concerned mostly with empirically accessible objects, whereas Diller is dealing with non-empirical, transcendent realities. Such an analysis of the concept of truth when applied to theological statements need not imply that which Diller fears most, namely, that we are going to discover a property of human concepts on the basis of which these concepts can be truth bearers.

Let me approach the problem from another angle. If the content of theological propositions is not given exclusively and independently by their human form, but it is constituted by the faith-mediated reference relation to their divine object (see chap. 8, in particular), how is it possible to know that two believers ever actually affirm the same propositions, because the personal relation with God each has in faith, is private and spontaneous, a gift? My hesitation about Barth's actualism is that it so easily can degenerate into solipsism, the problem with which being that it disconnects knowledge from social relations. Here again the question is how may we define the logical and ontological link between whatever it is that God does to our concepts, on the one hand, and the rest of our beliefs, propositions, and theological systems, on the other hand. Aquinas responds to that question by way of the concept of analogy; Diller does not—as yet—have an answer, but the question remains unavoidable.

There is nothing to suggest that such an analysis of the truth relation for theological statements is either impossible for, or detrimental to, Diller's "unified approach." His project is extremely stimulating, comprehensive, and wide-ranging. I should add that the book is a perfect example of what analytical theology can be:

extremely clear and precise, and rigorous in its argumentation. This will become a standard text in theological epistemology, philosophy of religion, and theological method classes.

Adonis Vidu
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, MA

Second Forgetting: Remembering the Power of the Gospel during Alzheimer's Disease. By Benjamin T. Mast. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014, 191 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Anyone looking for rich biblical theology combined with an extensive clinical knowledge of Alzheimer's and dementia will be pleased with Benjamin Mast's latest book, *Second Forgetting: Remembering the Power of the Gospel during Alzheimer's Disease*. Mast, a licensed clinical psychologist, board-certified geropsychologist, and professor at the University of Louisville, also serves as an elder at Sojourn Community Church. The purpose of his book is simple, yet unique in Alzheimer's literature. Mast desires that those with Alzheimer's and their families be reminded of the rich hope and power of the gospel during their trying situation. Additionally, Mast wrote this book as a tool for churches so they might have a clearer vision of how to care for and serve, in a Christ-exalting manner, those affected by Alzheimer's.

Mast begins in the first chapter to explain the significance of the book's title. He describes that the individual afflicted with Alzheimer's experiences the first forgetting, but "the second forgetting reflects a spiritual forgetting expressed not only by the person with Alzheimer's, but more broadly by their family, friends, and even the church who seeks to care for them" (p. 18). Mast wastes no time joining this to Scripture. The OT account of the people of Israel in a foreign land, groaning because of their captivity and their seemingly hopeless state, is one example Mast utilizes to display this second forgetting. God had made a promise to Abraham that he would make him a great nation and would give the people of Israel a land of rest—the promised land. Though the Israelites forgot God and his promises during that time, God heard the groaning of his people and remembered and reaffirmed his promises to them. This is a major point for Mast: though people may forget the promises of God in the midst of great crisis and suffering, they should take comfort in the fact that their God does not forget his promises or his people. Even when faced with trials and tribulations, when it seems they are wandering through the wilderness of Alzheimer's, God calls them to trust in him, believe his promises, and taste and see that he is good and will soon bring them into the true promised land (pp. 24–25).

Mast informs his reader that they cannot do anything currently about the first forgetting, for medicine and science has not cured Alzheimer's. Nevertheless, the second forgetting can be addressed biblically. Those in the church are called to help one another remember the Lord's faithfulness in spite of the health of their brains. Thus, as Mast points out, *Second Forgetting* is not only about Alzheimer's. "It is also about how we respond to the seemingly overwhelming situations of life and the weight of suffering" (p. 25). In this way, the book seems very much to be counsel-

ing oriented and pastorally inclined. It has a much broader reach than merely the suffering of dementia, for it addresses how people respond to those situations in life that are seemingly too much to handle.

Being a clinical geropsychologist—one who applies the principles of psychology to understanding and helping older persons and their families maintain wellbeing and overcome obstacles—Mast is interested in helping his audience understand Alzheimer's disease. He devotes all of chapter two to this important matter. As he explains in semi-technical language, communication between neurons in the brain is disrupted in the brains of those suffering with Alzheimer's. The brain changes due to the disintegration of certain microtubules that can no longer support nutrients, leading to cell death. The atrophy of brain tissue follows as a natural result of this process. All of these changes take place gradually, and oftentimes individuals do not notice alterations in their cognitive processes or behaviors until the disease has matured. Nonetheless, due to the nature of the disease, the longer the person lives with it, the more severe and widespread the underlying brain changes will become.

Surprisingly, a diagnosis of Alzheimer's cannot be made by brain scans such as MRIs or CTs. While a person is living, such diagnosis focuses on memory loss or other cognitive changes. Though the outlook for treating the disease is not very positive, Mast reminds his readers that they are not without hope and are never alone. "It can be tempting to believe that the future holds nothing but decay and deterioration, followed by death," says Mast. However, as he encourages, it is imperative to remember the powerful promises of the gospel in the midst of Alzheimer's. Our Father desires that his children turn their eyes away from the enemy, Alzheimer's, and focus on him, his wonderful acts, and his promises for their future.

After a more clinically oriented description of Alzheimer's in the first three chapters, the remainder of the book has a much more pastoral feel to it, which is undoubtedly a great strength of the book. Mast finds that the biblical metanarrative of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration can help believers to understand Alzheimer's. The four themes of the metanarrative unfold a story of hopefulness by giving those with Alzheimer's both an identity and a hope for living in the present and in the face of death. While Alzheimer's may strip away a person's worldly identity, Mast is quick to point out that all people have intrinsic value simply for who they are, apart from what they can do or contribute. In pastoral style he reminds his reader that the Alzheimer's patient is still a child of God and one who bears his image. Though the person's brain may be irreparably damaged by this fallen world, the identity in Christ is secure. Indeed, the promise of God that nothing can separate those who are in Christ from the love and grace of God is greater than the powerful enemy of Alzheimer's.

When we speak of Alzheimer's, oftentimes those who care for the individual with the disease get overlooked. Mast shows great concern for those who provide care for the person with Alzheimer's. He readily recognizes the challenging situation of many spouses, family members, and other caregivers. Astoundingly, on average a caregiver will spend seventy hours per week providing care for a person

with Alzheimer's. This number is extremely high, and many caregivers will find their tasks burdensome and riddled with stress. Caregivers may also feel that they are absolutely alone in their tasks and that no one understands what they are going through. Mast, in typical fashion, brings Scripture to speak these feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and hopelessness. He uses the words of Asaph in Psalm 77 to illustrate that the remembrance of God and his faithfulness has the ability to turn one's experiences from loneliness to comfort. Indeed, God has great grace for caregivers, and when they feel that they cannot bear their earthly burdens, God calls them to trust in him. In so doing, they can know more deeply the power and grace that only he can provide. The caregivers' comfort can come from the knowledge that they, too, have a caregiver. Christ, their caregiver, is able to abundantly supply and meet all their needs. In fact, as Mast points out, Christ is our model humble servant. While he certainly does not downplay the difficulties of caregivers, Mast provides hope and perspective, reminding his audience that God's great grace is new every morning. Therefore, Mast advises that instead of worrying about current predicaments, caregivers must learn to trust in God's provision for them today. Just as he says in Matt 11:28–30, Jesus is calling caregivers to bring their burdens and weariness to him for rest.

Midway through *Second Forgetting* Mast turns to address the church. This section on how the church can best serve those with Alzheimer's is one of the book's greatest strengths. According to Mast, the church must admit that it needs help in this area; it needs to be better equipped to minister to people with Alzheimer's. While Christians may be prone to assume that Alzheimer's is not an issue within their church, this can be deceiving. In an aging congregation, up to 36% of people over the age of seventy have either Alzheimer's or another form of cognitive impairment. Further, there may be individuals in the church who are caregivers for their loved one with a cognitive impairment. How can the church serve the families affected by dementia in practical and meaningful ways? Mast affirms that the church can help by offering physical, emotional, and spiritual support. Further, the church can help people with Alzheimer's maintain as much independence as possible and enable them and their caregivers to maintain a connection to the church. Those affected by Alzheimer's and their families constitute a great opportunity to be ministered to by the church. As Mast encourages, when churches recognize they have a divine opportunity to remember and minister to those with Alzheimer's, the glory of God is uniquely and beautifully displayed.

Mast provides many other practical ways of how the church can help people with Alzheimer's and their families. The church should be willing to journey alongside them. Mast is adamant that it is not good for those with Alzheimer's to be alone or for their caregiver to do everything on their own. As the church engages in such ministry, it does so not in hopes of reversing the disease, but to encourage their faith in God. By giving practical helps such as meeting at the home of an Alzheimer's person for small group Bible studies, Mast displays realistic ways in which the church can still try to connect and pursue those with Alzheimer's, very similar to the way in which Christ pursues the church.

One of the final chapters of *Second Forgetting* deals with the issue of prevention and planning. As Mast acknowledges, new research constantly emerges that suggests people should eat certain foods, drink particular herbal teas, or take up solving crossword puzzles in order to stave off Alzheimer's disease. However, do these actually work? Mast reports that cognitive training and engagement, high vegetable intake, and a Mediterranean diet have all been associated with lower risks of cognitive decline, though these things will not eliminate one's risks. Thus, it does seem that crossword puzzles and Sudoku may have some effect on decreasing Alzheimer's. Mast further states that the most consistent and powerful risk factor associated with dementia is simply growing older, and research has found that other factors, including smoking, depression, and diabetes, may also be associated with an increased risk of cognitive decline. One's genetic makeup is also a risk factor, and those with a parent, sibling, or child with Alzheimer's have two to four times greater risk of developing Alzheimer's. While it is important to do what can to prevent dementia, Mast notes that planning must not be neglected. Areas to consider when planning for Alzheimer's are legal and financial matters, care preferences, and decisions at the end of life. Mast is careful to remind readers that there is wisdom in numbering their days and considering how they might live in the days God gives to them.

The final chapter of *Second Forgetting*, fittingly entitled "God Never Forgets," addresses a major recurring theme of the book. "Though it may seem as if the Lord has forgotten us, we cling to the underlying truth that although we forget our Creator and Redeemer, he never forgets us," Mast emphatically asserts (p. 162). Our Father never forgets his people, and he sustains them every day as they approach the end of their earthly life. In his insightful manner, Mast affirms that it is much more important that God remember his people than that they remember him. This has tremendous implications for salvation. For believers who develop Alzheimer's, friends and loved ones must trust that the faith they exhibited throughout their lifetime before they had Alzheimer's is the faith that will save them and ultimately bring about their full restoration in the life to come.

A prominent idea that Mast develops throughout *Second Forgetting* is the notion of dignity. He desires his readers to understand the love that God continually displays for people with Alzheimer's: though they may have forgotten God due to the curse of this fallen world, God has never and will never forget them. In fact, God is actively working to restore all things, which will not ultimately come until the new heavens and new earth. In the meantime, Mast wishes for the church to see the inherent dignity of those with Alzheimer's. While this world may not attach any significant value or dignity to them, the church should be assured that God still attaches immeasurable dignity and worth to them, for they are his creation, his children, and bearers of his divine image. In light of this, the church has the important role of not forgetting those with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. The job of the church is to show the respect and love that is required by dignity.

Throughout the entirety of *Second Forgetting* Mast introduces his chapters by recounting personal stories to aid his description. Narrative is a powerful tool and it allows readers to witness the private accounts of those who have suffered with

Alzheimer's and their families who have cared for them. In this way, narrative has the power to pull readers into the book and make it less clinical and more pastoral in nature.

Overall, *Second Forgetting* is a wonderful book for those wanting to learn more about how to minister to those dealing with Alzheimer's. Mast concludes each chapter with a section "For Further Reflection." These small sections consist of a few questions to consider. This feature will be helpful for small group Bible studies or for individuals. Further, as already noted, Mast brings a pastoral dimension to this very tough topic, which is one of the great strengths of the book. This is truly a much-needed addition for the church and is also a very timely book. As the baby boomer generation ages, Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia will likely become more prevalent. The church will increasingly be needed to remind those with dementia and their caregivers that according to the gospel, their God has not forgotten them in the midst of their trials. The church will need to remind people of the inherent dignity they possess apart from what they can add to society. In so doing, the church, by the grace of God, may help in diminishing the "second forgetting."

Daniel J. Hurst
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA