

BOOK REVIEWS

For the Love of God's Word: An Introduction to Biblical Interpretation. By Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard D. Patterson. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2015, 444 pp., \$36.49.

For the Love of God's Word is an abridgement of Köstenberger and Patterson's more thorough *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation* (Kregel, 2011, 891 pp., \$56.90). According to the introduction, this "essential digest" is for high school, home school, and college students. One might suspect the authors have much to offer given their distinguished teaching careers and Köstenberger's post as editor of this *Journal*. Grant Osborne calls the book "an invaluable guide." Such an assessment is persuasive since it comes from the author of *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, which is itself both invaluable and essential for the would-be exegete.

The authors of this book succeed in many ways. The book is very readable, well organized, and helpful by way of charts, diagrams, indices, glossary, statements of objectives, and outlines for each chapter. For example, they provide a chart of biblical texts that connect the Ten Commandments with underlying principles (p. 66). Guidelines, key words, assignments, and key resources are provided at the end of each chapter. A threefold approach to interpretation is reinforced by a pyramid shape with the study of history and literature at the base and theology at the top. The shape and approach suggests that following the method of this little digest offers reasonable assurance of valid interpretation, which I would contrast with Osborne's suggestion that a "spiral" method is more reliable. Awareness of and sensitivity to nagging questions is very helpful as is the authors' care in making necessary distinctions (e.g. uses and types of law, p. 63). The bulk of the text (chaps. 5–13) takes the reader through the spectrum of literary genre and language concerns. Genres treated include history, poetry, prophecy, parables, epistles, and apocalyptic, while chapters 12 and 13 deal with context and word meaning. Each chapter guides the reader through characteristics of the genre and reasonable methods for interpretation based on those characteristics. This material offers helpful, basic tools for interpretation as well as an initial antidote against misreading texts. For example, in chapter 5, the reader is reminded that the term "story" does not imply fiction (p. 104). The reader is also informed that historical material has many purposes, including theological, doxological, didactic, and aesthetic (p. 107).

There are a few ways in which the authors may not have succeeded, at least not in everyone's eyes. If there is any truth in the saying, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," then it is especially true when interpreting the Bible. Part 2, Unit 1 contains a chapter on the canon of the OT and a chapter on the canon of the NT. Here I wonder if the reader might be over- and under-armed at the same time. On the one hand, reading this much about canonical issues might embolden the reader to enter debates he or she is ill equipped to pursue successfully. On the other hand, a reader might be led to believe the canon is more of an issue than it really is. Per-

haps this is a place to apply the sage advice of A. T. Robertson, who recognized that the canon is and remains established, which allows us to concentrate on the text before us.

A second area of shortcoming concerns the eyes of the beholders. Those who are devoted to the theology of John Calvin will give the presuppositions and claims found in this text a warm welcome. The authors devote special attention to treaties and covenants in chapter 3 on the OT canon. In chapter 4 on the NT canon, we read about “God’s irresistible, inexorable pursuit of lost sinners” (p. 91). For non-Calvinist students of the Word of God, it would appear the authors have their minds made up about what the text is going to say before the text says it. Granted, all readers bring presuppositions to any text and these authors are refreshingly unapologetic about their theological commitments. On the other hand, might we read the Bible in the first place with a strict focus on the hermeneutics that the Bible itself establishes in a variety of ways—perhaps following the “spiral” approach advanced by Osborne? Many biblical texts define or explain terms (often by the use of the exegetical *kai*). Other texts provide narrative that directs our study, as we find in Luke 24 where Jesus explains that all of Scripture points to him. Many parables are followed by explanations and the import of many historical events is indicated (e.g. 1 Corinthians 10 and the exodus; 1 Peter 3 and the flood).

Subscribers to *JETS* might receive an occasional plea from lay people for the kind of help this text provides. If those pleas come from people who are aware of the theological commitment of the text and agree with it, then this text is indeed a very useful and helpful tool.

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The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel. By Roland Boer. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015, xix + 308 pp., \$50.00 paper.

In *The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel*, Roland Boer offers an economic study intended to bring contemporary social science into dialogue with the world of ancient Israel. Focusing on the allocation and extraction economic patterns in ancient Israel and the historic interplay between these institutional systems, Boer argues that a Marxist analysis of the economic and social world of ancient Israel reveals a sacred complexity of economic institutions and activities that existed in tension with one another. As correlative arguments, Boer pushes back against postclassical assumptions of a proto-market economy in ancient Israel, advocates for a broader application of social-scientific research to biblical studies, argues for an integrated understanding of the sacred and secular in Israel, and in contrast to numerous contemporary studies contends that a complexity of institutions formed the basis of ancient Israel’s economy. Central to this study are the five building blocks of ancient Israel’s religiously regulated sacred economy—subsistence survival, kinship households, patronage, estates, and tribute exchanges—and the three regimes in

which these foundational institutions developed—systems of subsistence, palatine, and booty.

Following a brief introduction, Boer's lengthy first chapter outlines the economic theory at work in this volume. Especially important for Boer are Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems, Polanyi's substantivist proposals, Marxist-Leninist thought, and the *Régulation School* of economic theory. Though not beyond critiquing these influences, the major emphasis of this chapter involves pushback against the assumptions of contemporary postclassical and imperialist economics (capitalism), especially in works on ancient Israel. This chapter offers an important overview of Boer's methodological principles, but will likely prove difficult reading for those without some background in economics and/or Marxist thought.

Chapters 2–5 focus on the economic building blocks of ancient Israel. Chapter 2 examines the contours of agricultural subsistence survival, including the livelihoods of crop farming and animal husbandry. Especially noteworthy is reliance on zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical research, utilized to argue that subsistence survival stood as a central yet ambivalent form of ancient Israelite economic activity. Chapter 3 considers kinship structures and patronage, two necessarily related and formative structures for social and economic interaction in ancient Israel. Because these interpersonal relationships formed the basis by which subsistence survival was able to function, many OT laws engaged kinship and patronage interaction. Taken together, chapters 2 and 3 offer useful social and economic context for those desiring holistic engagement with living conditions of ancient Israel.

Chapters 4 and 5 consider the extractive institutional forms of the ancient Israelite economy: estates and tribute exchanges. Drawing on a wide variety of archaeological and biblical evidence, Boer argues that the "(e)states" of Israel included interactions between subsistence survivors and the temple, estates, and the developing monarchical state. These engagements fostered labor, class, and "axial" conflicts, which in turn led to economic tension and a shift in institutional economic forms. The final institutional form was that of tribute, where Boer contends that the many faces of plunder appeared, those ways in which the economic systems of ancient Israel became the means by which extortion occurred through forced labor and the acquisition of resources. Central to these chapters is Boer's argument that plunder remains futile for the long-term sustainability of an economy.

Chapter 6 turns to a diachronic examination of Israel's economic systems, particularly how these institutions were constantly being arranged and rearranged, negotiated and renegotiated throughout Israel's history. Here Boer outlines the three forms of regime—subsistence, palatine (estate/temple), and booty (empire)—which interacted and ruled at various points in ancient Israel. Only the subsistence regime remains a legitimate manner of economic institutionalization, a claim Boer argues for in his conclusion, where he outlines his program for the applicability of subsistence regimes in the contemporary world. In this view, subsistence involves optimal (rather than maximal) engagement with the environment, an inclusive and diverse use of resources, and employing stable and secure forms of subsistence living. The end matter includes eleven excurses on a number of economic and so-

cial topics, a helpful glossary of terms, and an extensive bibliographic list which should form the basis for any future study of ancient Israelite economics.

The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel offers much for those engaging either the social history of Israel or economic theology. This presentation comes couched in largely easily-understood terminology, wherein Boer impressively places Israel within its broader historical and social contexts. His project provides a unique—though not entirely innovative—integration of social science and social history into biblical studies, although many will push back on which social information is applicable in ancient Israel and how far those insights may be extended.

Boer has long been one of the world's leading Marxist scholars and currently serves as Professor at the Renmin University of China. Accordingly, his openly Marxist approach will be highly problematic for many readers, especially since Boer does little to address any long-standing critique of Marxist economics or history. His willingness to foreground these issues, however, allows this volume to remain informative even for non-Marxist scholars interested in understanding the social situation of ancient Israel's economy.

Boer's interactions with biblical materials are perhaps not as well rounded as some might prefer. For example, in chapter five he decries postclassical readings of Solomon as an example of the market economy in Israel. In his engagement, however, Boer offers a minimalist response to terminological ambiguities, extrapolating from his own viewpoint without adequate consideration of additional source material and context. This serves as a good example of how this volume sometimes focuses a little too "behind" the biblical text for those interested in biblical evidence for or against an ideological reading. Such concerns aside, Boer nonetheless offers a helpful contribution to discussions surrounding ancient Israel and economic theology. For scholars and students interested in engaging more contextually the sacred economy of Israel, Boer's work remains unparalleled and recommended. His clear presentation and demarcation of the critical issues involved in the social-scientific study of ancient Israel's economy will make this an important volume for years to come.

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Semitic Linguistics in Historical Perspective. By Edward Lipiński. *Orientalia Iovaniensia analecta* 230. Leuven: Peeters, 2014, xvi + 725 p., €95.00.

Edward Lipiński, a prolific scholar who taught for many years at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, has given the academic guild an intriguing compendium of scholarship in his *Semitic Linguistics in Historical Perspective*. As Lipiński recounts in the introduction, the contents of this book emerged over decades of teaching on the study of the Semitic languages. He intends this volume to serve "as a complement and companion" to his earlier *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (2nd ed.; OLA 80; Leuven: Peeters, 2001) and hopes it will remedy the problem that "the history of Semitic scholarship [is] poorly known to present-day students in the

field” (p. xiii). Most generally, the purpose of the book “is to give a ‘bird’s eye view’ of the Semitic languages in broad historical perspective” (p. xv).

The opening chapter surveys Afro-Asiatic, providing a broad framework for understanding the Semitic languages. Lipiński briefly outlines the placement of Semitic, Cushitic, Libyco-Berber, Egyptian, and Chadic within the Afro-Asiatic phylum. He pays special attention to Libyco-Berber, which he identifies as the closest to Semitic out of all the Afro-Asiatic languages, and considers Omotic part of Cushitic rather than a separate branch of Afro-Asiatic. Lipiński concludes this first chapter with a much-needed reminder that “research [on the Semitic languages] should ultimately attempt comparison also at the Afro-Asiatic level” (p. 24).

The next chapter provides an overview of the proto-history of Semitic linguistics. Here Lipiński treats several key topics, namely lexicography, grammar, phonology, and tone and stress accents. He emphasizes that, although comparative historical grammar is a creation of the nineteenth century of our era, descriptive grammars of the Semitic languages are attested much earlier. Furthermore, the peoples of the ancient Near East demonstrate early awareness of these topics as evidenced by, among other things, multilingual lexical lists (e.g. the lexical lists found at Ebla and Ugarit) and discussions of grammar (e.g. scribes’ identification of the *marû* “slow” conjugation with the Akkadian present *iparras* and the *hamtu* “fast” conjugation with the Akkadian preterite *iprus*).

Chapters 3–14, in which Lipiński surveys the study of individual Semitic languages, make up the bulk of the book. He devotes the most attention to Aramaic, with seven chapters on Syriac, Old Aramaic and Imperial Aramaic, Aramaic of the Greco-Roman period (Qumran, Targumic, Nabataean, Palmyrene, and Hatraean Aramaic), Aramaic of the Byzantine and Sassanian periods (Jewish Palestinian, Samaritan, and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic), Christian Palestinian Aramaic (what Lipiński calls “Syropalestinian” Aramaic), Mandaic, and Neo-Aramaic. The other five chapters on individual Semitic languages deal with Arabic, Hebrew, other first millennium BCE Northwest Semitic dialects (Phoenician, Punic, and Neo-Punic as well as Moabite, Ammonite, and Edomite), Ethiopic (Geʿez and modern dialects such as Tigre and Amharic), and South Arabian (in both its ancient and modern forms). Each of these chapters surveys key texts that have been discovered, the publication of *editiones principes* and other text editions, and important linguistic studies.

Chapters 15 and 16 outline the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs and cuneiform scripts, respectively. In his discussion of Egyptian hieroglyphs, Lipiński considers how decipherment of Egyptian has led to a better understanding of Semitic in light of the many phonological, morphological, and lexical correspondences between the two language families. In his overview of cuneiform scripts, Lipiński traces the adaptation of the cuneiform writing system in both Semitic (e.g. Akkadian and Ugaritic) as well as non-Semitic (e.g. Sumerian and Old Persian) environments.

In chapter 17, Lipiński examines Beja, a language spoken by over one million people in the Red Sea littoral of the Sudan. Lipiński largely follows Robert Hetzron (“The Limits of Cushitic,” *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 2 [1980]: 7–126) in ques-

tioning the alignment of Beja with Cushitic, instead highlighting its similarities with Semitic and considering it “a lateral branch of Semitic” (p. 482).

The final chapter examines comparative Semitic linguistics within the context of Afro-Asiatic. Lipiński’s discussion opens with a general survey of the development of comparative historical linguistics and subsequently moves to examination of verbal systems, ergative features, and lexicography in light of comparative phonology.

An approximately 175-page (!) bibliography and several indexes (listing languages and dialects, personal names, geographical names, linguistic subjects, and names of authors) conclude the volume.

In *Semitic Linguistics in Historical Perspective*, Lipiński guides the reader through an impressive mass of data, ably presenting the history of study of the Semitic languages. Given its scope, many readers will find something that interests them along the way. Linguists will appreciate the attention to matters of phonology, morphology, and lexicography; historians will enjoy the recounting of texts’ discoveries and their impact on scholarship; and those interested in the history of interpretation and reception will value the investigation into how Jews, Christians, and Muslims have used the Semitic languages for their sacred texts and study. The result is an engaging and interesting summary of the study of the Semitic languages.

The book’s most glaring weakness is its selectivity and uneven treatment of topics. Lipiński provides little rationale as to why he treats certain topics and leaves out others, resulting in a somewhat eclectic compendium of information. This is perhaps most evident in Lipiński’s discussion of the individual Semitic languages, which treats certain languages and dialects minimally without any rationale. The near omission of Akkadian and Ugaritic is unfortunate given the significance of these two languages for our understanding of the Semitic languages, even if other published works have covered their history of study. Similarly, the mere two-page discussion of Modern Israeli Hebrew (pp. 357–58) contrasts sharply with the attention given to modern Aramaic and Arabic dialects elsewhere in the volume.

The book’s introduction notifies the reader that the volume “may often express the writer’s own opinions and ideas” (p. xv), and indeed, Lipiński sometimes moves from discussing the history of study of the Semitic languages to reviewing comparative Semitics itself. It is understandable that presentation of the history of study should contain evaluation of that study—indeed, such a survey should contain at least some evaluation—but sometimes Lipiński’s evaluation and arguments are questionable. Not all scholars will agree with certain claims (e.g. Lipiński’s classification of the Afro-Asiatic languages, particularly his grouping of Beja with Semitic [pp. 475–82]), and some claims are based on significant misunderstandings of the data (e.g., Lipiński’s arguments for the existence of a bisyllabic present tense in Proto-Semitic [pp. 463–65, 491]). Such forays unfortunately distract from the survey of the history of study the book intends to provide.

Despite its uneven treatment of topics and occasional misunderstandings of the comparative Semitic data, *Semitic Linguistics in Historical Perspective* is a welcome companion volume to Lipiński’s earlier comparative Semitic grammar. It constitutes a valuable reference tool for the study of the Semitic languages, which helps

us to refine our understanding of Biblical Hebrew and thereby better understand the Hebrew Bible.

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The Book of Genesis. Translated and edited by Joy A. Schroeder. The Bible in Medieval Tradition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015, x + 307 pp., \$35.00 paper.

Joy A. Schroeder offers the third installment in the Bible in Medieval Tradition series, which is edited by Philip D. W. Krey, Ian Christopher Levy, and Thomas Ryan. *The Book of Genesis* is the first OT volume in the series (volumes on Galatians and Romans were published in 2011 and 2013, respectively). It consists of fresh translations of excerpts by seven representative commentators, written in the ninth through fifteenth centuries. In keeping with the goal of the series generally, Schroeder's intent is to give contemporary readers access to previously untranslated medieval commentary on the first book of the Bible. Although there is a rich tradition of biblical interpretation from the medieval period, it has received less attention than earlier and later periods in church history. This book gives a glimpse into the way commentators were interpreting Genesis after the Patristic era and leading up to the Reformation.

In the book's introduction, Schroeder sets the project in context generally, identifying the interpretive tradition in which medieval interpreters found themselves. The hermeneutical heritage of concepts such as the fourfold sense of Scripture can clearly be seen in the writings of this volume. After these general remarks, Schroeder moves on to a more detailed introduction to each of the seven authors and their writings. Some may find this section itself to be worth the price of the book. Each interpreter is located historically as a representative not only of the medieval era generally, but also of his or her own particular interpretative tradition. For example, Rupert of Deutz represents monastic interpretation in the twelfth century, and Hildegard of Bingen represents the interpretive work of nuns and other women in the era. These concise yet thorough introductions survey the authors' historical context with respect to geographical, political, theological, and ecclesial details that influence their roles as biblical interpreters. The rest of the book consists of the seven translated excerpts, ordered chronologically from earliest to latest, and covering subsequent sections of Genesis.

The first section includes the comments on Genesis 1–3 from the *Exposition on Genesis* by Remigius of Auxerre. This serves as a sample of Carolingian biblical scholarship from the early Middle Ages. Remigius remarks on various details of these early chapters in Genesis and their theological and philosophical implications. Though the emphasis is primarily on the literal sense of the text, Remigius does foray into allegory at times as well. For instance, Adam and Eve signify Christ and the church, Adam's sleep is a symbol anticipating Christ's death on the cross, and just as Eve comes from Adam's side as he slept, so too the church is established by the blood and water, the sacraments, that flowed from the side of Jesus (pp. 73–74).

The next excerpt comes from Rupert of Deutz's *On the Trinity and Its Works: Comments on Genesis*. Comments on Genesis 4–8 are included. Rupert's interpretive approach places more emphasis on the allegorical sense, intentionally and enthusiastically striving for more rich and creative meanings from the text. He identifies Abel as "the first witness to the only begotten Son of God" (p. 87). By offering a voluntary sacrifice to God, he demonstrated belief in a coming lamb of God who would fulfill the prophecy of Gen 3:15 and crush the head of the serpent. Similarly, his allegorical interpretation of Noah, the ark, and the flood offers rich theological insight, though it is clear his priority is not to maintain the kind of exegetical care and precision we would expect of commentators today.

Hildegard of Bingen is the author of the third excerpt in the book. Here we read a translation of her *Solutions to Thirty-Eight Questions*, which touches on portions of Genesis 9, 18, 23, and 24. While the approaches and emphases of all the authors vary from one to the next, Hildegard is unique. Her contribution is very brief in comparison to the others and, rather than moving through a section chapter by chapter, it consists of four answers to difficult questions related to the biblical text. The answers or solutions she gives are meant to explain and clarify what the text means or why it is written in the way it is.

The fourth author represents the famous Parisian school at the abbey of Saint Victor. The section translated and included in this book is from Andrew of Saint Victor's *Exposition on Genesis*, and it covers Genesis 9–30. Andrew focuses almost exclusively on the literal meaning of the text, giving brief, rapid-fire explanation of terms, phrases, or sentences. Of the commentators in this volume, only Andrew and Nicholas of Lyra seem to have had any knowledge of Hebrew, and both are also frequently influenced by Jewish rabbinical interpretation. On the other hand, Andrew is very critical of other interpreters, especially Hugh of Saint Victor, at one point calling him "stupid" for his interpretation on Gen 20:16.

Next in sequence is Peter Comestor. Schroeder has included his comments on Genesis 31–41 from *Scholastic History*. Peter, like his contemporary Andrew of Saint Victor, values the insight of the Jews of his day. Throughout the excerpt he refers to both "the Hebrew" and "the Hebrews," though it appears his knowledge of both the Hebrew language and Jewish interpretation is mediated exclusively by Jerome. He also frequently cites the historical and exegetical observations of Josephus.

The sixth section of the volume includes an excerpt from Nicholas of Lyra's *Postills on Genesis*. The segment covers Genesis 42–46 and includes fairly detailed commentary on the text. The influence of Christian interpreters like Augustine and Andrew of Saint Victor is evident throughout Nicholas's commentary. However, he relies even more heavily on the Talmud, Midrash, and especially Rashi for exegetical insight. Rashi is cited on almost every page of the selection included here, which is consistent with his practice throughout the OT.

An excerpt from Denis the Carthusian's *Exposition on Genesis*, covering Genesis 47–50, makes up the last section of the book. Denis employs both literal exegesis and mystical meditations, moving freely between the literal and the allegorical and not always distinguishing clearly between the two. For example, after walking

through the text of Genesis 47, he moves immediately into an explanation of Joseph as an allegorical representation of Christ. Just as Joseph nourished his relatives and established them in the best location, so too Christ nourished his people spiritually and established them the Church (pp. 232–33).

Though there is much more in this book to commend than to critique, there is at least one minor, perhaps unavoidable, weakness to mention. There is a slight disadvantage (Schroeder acknowledges this in the introduction) with the way the sections are arranged. Since each translated excerpt covers a different section of Genesis, the reader is not able to compare various interpretations of the same text.

Overall, however, this volume is a valuable contribution. In addition to making these texts accessible, Schroeder has supplied an important resource for the historical context of these seven interpreters and the interpretive traditions they represent. Furthermore, the carefully footnoted citations from other interpreters shed light on the various influences of these interpreters. Similarly, this work also provides an excellent contribution to research related to Jewish influence on Christian interpretation in the medieval tradition leading up to the Reformation. This will prove useful not only for those interested in Genesis and its interpretive history, but also for those working in the history of interpretation more broadly, the medieval era and church, and various areas of biblical hermeneutics.

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Leviticus. By Jay Sklar. Tyndale OT Commentary Series. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 336 pp., \$18.00 paper.

This volume is another revision in the Tyndale OT Commentary series (TOTC), replacing R. K. Harrison's 1980 volume. Jay Sklar is a professor of OT at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Tyndale series was not written with the goal of providing a technical commentary, but with a "desire to engage with as full a range of interpretative issues as possible, without being lost in the minutiae of scholarly debate" (p. 7). Each chapter of the commentary is divided into three sections: "Context," "Comment," and "Meaning." First, the context of the passage under review is considered. Its literary setting within the work is considered along with any theological issues relevant to interpretation. The comment section follows, offering a brief examination of the text. Lastly, the meaning section strives to communicate the message of the passage by highlighting potential themes for application. The biblical text is not presented in translation so one needs to have the biblical text open while using this resource.

Sklar's personal goal for this commentary is "to make clear what it is that the Lord said to the ancient Israelites and, in so doing, to make clear what the Lord is saying to us today" (pp. 9–10). He suggests that the theme of Leviticus is "how to live as the holy priestly kingdom of the holy and heavenly King" (p. 30).

There is a fairly lengthy introduction (84 pp.) and Sklar takes a conservative approach to the authorship of the book, stating that Moses was the source and author of much of the book of Leviticus and “although it may include later editorial work ... it is the final form of the text that is canonical, and thus our focus” (p. 35).

There are some very positive elements and discussions throughout this work. The commentary includes several charts that visually synthesize the content of material such as a summary of the various sacrifices (p. 88) or the animal world in ancient Israel (pp. 164–65). Sklar does a good job of articulating the three ritual states of impure, pure, holy (pp. 44–49), the meaning of the word *‘āzā’zēl* in Lev. 16 (p. 209) and the semantic range of the word “slave” (pp. 307–11). He allows for latitude in such debates as whether or not there could be any mitigation for certain penalties if repentance was expressed by the perpetrator (p. 68) and why the length of impurity differs between boys and girls after the mother gives birth (p. 179). He humbly acknowledges that there are limitations in being able to offer definitive interpretations of these issues.

There are some elements that do however detract from this commentary. A number of times Sklar overstates his case or makes claims without proof or sources. For instance, in the introduction he states, “It would be a tragic mistake to overlook this book. In its pages, you will find answers to some of the most pressing questions we ask as human beings: Who are we? Why are we here? What is life about anyway? How can I find meaning and purpose? And you find these answers here” (p. 9). That is a bold claim for Sklar to make and I think most readers of this commentary would conclude that it fails to deliver in providing satisfactory answers to those specific questions. In another example he claims that “while many Christians regard Leviticus as a burden, the Israelites looked on it as a blessing” (p. 28). What is the evidence to back up that claim, and if the Israelites did view Leviticus as such a blessing, why did they seem to ignore it throughout most of their history as described in the OT text? On another occasion Sklar argues that two of the book’s central themes are the tabernacle and the covenant (p. 37). In reality these themes sound more like the central themes of the book of Exodus than Leviticus, and covenant is not a focus of the text of Leviticus until chapter 26, so claims like this need proof and not mere assertion. Some of the author’s interpretations seem to be a bit of a stretch, as when he suggests that the reason the animal involved in an act of bestiality was killed was perhaps because it was viewed as a willing partner (p. 258).

Even though this is not a technical commentary, there are elements that are missing from discussion or are given minimal coverage. For instance, Sklar states regarding authorship that “among European scholars, the DH (Documentary Hypothesis) is no longer a majority view” (p. 33), but what he understands as the current majority view is not articulated. The background of phrases such as “high-handed sin” (p. 43) or “salt of the covenant of your God” (p. 97) are not really explained. A key verse—Leviticus 19:18: “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”—is minimally discussed on page 247 and is certainly not foregrounded in the “meaning” section of this chapter even though it would seem a key application to

stress in light of passages like Mark 12:31 where Jesus grants this verse special status as one of the “greatest commandments.” In the introduction, it would be helpful to contain even a brief discussion of the origin of the office of priesthood since the book deals extensively with the priests’ duties. The meaning of the word “law” (*tôrâ*) (p. 127) is minimally discussed and the concept of “sacred space” is alluded to (pp. 52, 108, 204, 210) but not really expanded upon. Sometimes it appears some passages are not given enough coverage in comparison to other texts. For instance, there are only 11 pages on Leviticus 16 (Day of Atonement) compared to 15 pages on chapter 18.

In addition to some topics that are missing or minimized, there are some confusing elements to this commentary. It is not presented as a technical commentary, but sometimes transliteration of Hebrew words is included without discussion as to why it is important to know the specific Hebrew word (e.g. *hibdâl/hibhalék*, p. 28). There is confusion about the specific location of the “tent of meeting” within the tabernacle complex. The diagram on page 86 seems to localize it to just the holy place/most holy place substructure but it would be hard to believe that “all the congregation” could meet (Lev 8:3–4) at that more narrow smaller location when it seems to refer to the entrance of the entire tabernacle structure. In another instance, Sklar displays the same visualization of the chiasmic structure for Leviticus 12–15 in three places (pp. 174, 181, 198) but the wording of the middle section is not exactly the same in all three instances. He mentions chiasmic structures at various points in the commentary but often does not discuss the significance of what that structure is doing to help readers understand why they are present in the book (e.g., p. 254). When discussing the semantic range of the word “atonement” (he opts for “ransom-purification” on p. 51 as the best blend for this key word), he does not engage the debate about whether the Hebrew word “atone” (*kipper*) utilizes the more Akkadian notion of “wiping away” or the Arabic notion of “covering,” which is a crucial matter as to how one views the efficacy of the animal sacrifices in the Levitical system. Sklar, in citing Heb 10:4, seems to argue that the sacrificing of animal blood did not take away sins but instead, the sacrifices were “pointers to a much greater atoning sacrifice to come, one that would be enough to cover the debt fully and finally” (p. 72), so he seems to side with the more Arabic notion of “covering” for the word “atone” without much defense or discussing other options for the meaning of this key word in Leviticus. On page 216, he states that the rites of Leviticus 16 “fully atoned for the Israelites,” which seems at odds with his view that shed animal blood was only a “pointer” to greater atoning sacrifice (p. 72). It is not clear, then, according to Sklar, whether the sacrifices in Leviticus rendered full atonement or if they were only a temporary pointer to Jesus’s sacrifice.

A key goal of Sklar in this work is to “make clear what the Lord is saying to us today” (p. 10), but how he derives what the Lord is saying to us today from Leviticus is not always evident. He gravitates towards application that is more general in nature or not clearly foregrounded within the text of Leviticus itself. For instance, he states that the burnt offering’s second purpose was to underscore the offerers’ prayers, a type of exclamation point to what they were saying (p. 94) but “prayer” is not something the text of Leviticus seems to foreground as an application. He de-

clares that a theme of Leviticus is to present “The holy King: powerful and pure” (p. 40) and he cites 9:23 as support of that theme, but the word “glory” is foregrounded in that verse there, not God’s “power.” In discussing the ordination ceremony of the priests (p. 148), Sklar moves rather quickly to an application that the Lord “desires all people to be saved” and his being the “ultimate mediator.” While that is no doubt the case, it is not clear how that is a necessary application from the ceremony in Leviticus 8. At the end of the discussion of the notion of clean and unclean animals, Sklar opts for the low-hanging fruit application of this being a general call for believers today to seek “moral purity” (p. 173), which is a general application to which he seems to default rather frequently (e.g., pp. 188, 205, 263).

This is a serviceable, economical, non-technical commentary on Leviticus. It is an accessible entry point for those who want to begin to engage this intimidating book. Sklar begins to help readers see how practical Leviticus can be in today’s world. The brevity of the commentary does result in a degree of sketchiness in the discussion of many passages, terms, and theological themes, so this commentary will not satisfy those who desire a more detailed interaction with the text.

The criticisms offered above are not intended to detract from what Sklar has sought to achieve in this commentary. Rather, they highlight the enormous difficulties confronting anyone who writes a non-technical commentary on Leviticus. Professor Sklar deserves our gratitude for the way in which he has set about his task of providing an entry-level work for what many newcomers to the OT view as a daunting part of the Bible.

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Ruth. Apollos OT Commentary 7b. By L. Daniel Hawk. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015, xii + 166 pp., \$30.00.

L. Daniel Hawk is professor of OT and Hebrew at Ashland Theological Seminary and serves as a minister in the United Methodist Church. He has authored numerous books and articles including two commentaries on the book of Joshua (Michael Glazier, 2000; Wipf & Stock, 2010). Hawk’s commentary on Ruth is the ninth volume in the Apollos OT Commentary Series. The express aim of the series is to expound the OT in a scholarly manner that is accessible to non-experts. The series thus far has established itself as a standard go-to OT commentary, and this commentary on Ruth helps to further the notoriety of the series.

All of the commentaries in the Apollos series contain an introduction to the book and then proceed with an annotated translation from the author, a discussion of the form and structure of each section of the book, a comment section that provides theology and exegesis, and then an explanation of the text that serves as an exposition of the text. Hawk’s commentary is particularly focused on a literary narrative analysis of Ruth with a focus on Israelite self-identity.

The introduction of the commentary discusses how Ruth has been read both within the canon and by other major interpreters of the book. Hawk advances the

opinion that Ruth is a migration narrative along the lines of the patriarchal narratives and that the book is a narrative reflection on the Deuteronomic commands about the exclusion of the Moabites. Hawk asserts that it is “Ruth’s Moabite ethnicity that generates the energy that drive the plot” of the narrative (p. 20). He says the book of Ruth plays off of the anti-Moabite sentiments of other biblical texts and “turns them on their heads” (p. 23). All of this presents a story of intermarriage between an upstanding Judean and a Moabite woman that helps Israel to address its self-identity. The narrative features of the book, namely what Hawk refers to as metaphor, and the narrative structure, the dating and composition of the book, and the theology of the book all work to shape a self-identified Israel that moves beyond ancestral descent with the inclusion of faithful foreigners like Ruth.

There are several admirable features of this commentary, but two will be briefly mentioned. First, Hawk’s focus is clearly on the text of Ruth. This is something that the Apollos series has done well thus far. Many commentaries can get bogged down by heavy interaction with other commentators and scholars, but Hawk does not do this. Hawk’s focus is on the book of Ruth while at the same time it is clear that he knows and is conversant with the breadth of literature on the book. Second, within the commentary Hawk’s sections on the form and structure of the text were often very valuable, even when I did not fully agree with his analysis.

One critique that could be made of this work is that while the commentary at large will prove to be accessible to the non-expert, as is the goal of the series, there are times when the non-expert will struggle to understand what Hawk is saying without a previous knowledge of some of the areas of study with which he is interacting. The first place this will likely happen for most readers is in his discussion of metaphor. In particular, in this section Hawk discusses the idea that metaphor in Ruth can be discerned by how the book “addresses myth as a system of tensions and oppositions” (p. 24). Hawk is clear that Ruth is not myth. He is using the terminology of another scholar, Claude Lévi-Strauss, where myth is used to “mediate the contradictions in a culture’s belief system” by reconciling them through the use of metaphor (p. 25). With this discussion it should also be noted that there are times when Hawk appears to place biblical texts at odds with one another.

While not everyone will agree with everything in Hawk’s commentary (e.g. his dating of the book to the post-exilic period and his discussion of theology of the text as God reacting to the character within the story), his close narrative reading will prove to be helpful to the well-read student and the discerning pastor who are looking for a detailed interaction with the text. Many would find it beneficial to read this volume alongside Block’s commentary in the NAC series (Broadman, 1999) and Hubbard’s commentary in the NICOT series (Eerdmans, 1988). Together these three volumes would provide a variety of perspectives and complimentary details to various aspects of the book of Ruth.

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Job. The Two Horizons OT Commentary. By Lindsay Wilson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015, 420 pp., \$28.00 paper.

One must recognize, first of all, that this commentary is a “theological” commentary, “seeking to bridge the existing gap between biblical studies and systematic theology,” as the editors describe the purpose of the series. At the same time, the commentary proper (pp. 28–210) follows the outline of the book of Job as one would expect. Yet it is not heavy on the “exegetical” side of the study, even though it is quite evident that the theological interpretation originates in solid exegesis of the text. In further support of the theological approach, the second part of the book is a treatment of theological matters (“Theological Themes” and “Job and Theology”), and draws from the commentary itself while introducing new material on pertinent themes (e.g. “Suffering,” “The Fear of God,” etc.), and covers almost as many pages (pp. 211–382) as the commentary proper. Both in content and depth of thought the commentary fulfills its purpose.

Wilson begins with an introduction to the book of Job as a literary and theological work, briefly pointing out its uniqueness in Scripture and the ancient world, and provides the reader an extended outline of the book (pp. 17–23). In addition, he discusses its distinctive literary features as well as the nature of its arguments, particularly between Job and his three friends. Missing, however, from this introductory material is a discussion of the place of Job in the spectrum of the literature of ancient Israel, even though the author prefers a date for the book in the late exile or perhaps early in the post-exilic period (pp. 2–5). A treatment of his proposal that the book is intended as a corrective to the “fossilized” theory of retribution in Proverbs, especially in the vibrant new era of the return from Babylonian exile and the reconstitution of the nation, could have been very enlightening for the theological reader. Of course, the challenge for his dating is to explain satisfactorily Ezekiel’s reference to Job (Ezek 14:14, 20), since Ezekiel’s last dated prophecy is 571 BC, and one would assume that some time must elapse to fix Job in the prophetic memory (Wolfers, *Deep Things Out of Darkness*, fixes the date between 701 and 587 BC). For more information about Job’s place in the spectrum of the literature, but not necessarily the revision of the retributive justice theory, the reader may see other commentaries (e.g. Hartley, NICOT; Janzen, Interpretation; Clines, WBC).

The commentary itself reveals Wilson’s extensive familiarity with the scholarly sources and the various theories regarding the basic elements of the book: Prologue, Dialogue, the Verdicts, and the Epilogue. The author’s bibliography provides other resources (pp. 383–95). However, Clines’s extensive bibliography, arranged by subject, is indispensable for the study of Job (Clines, lxiii–cxv).

As already noted, underlying the entire commentary is Wilson’s belief that the book of Job is a literary unity and must be interpreted as such. In the light of that he is able to lay out three shaping purposes of the book: (1) to provide a corrective to the book of Proverbs and its fossilized retribution theory; (2) to explore the relationship between God and humanity (in this sense this book is akin to Robert Gordis’s theological commentary, *The Book of God and Man* [1965]); and (3) to focus

on the character of God. While Wilson gives much attention to all three, he does not allow them to slavishly dictate the ebb and flow of the commentary (especially its structure), but nonetheless to shape the interpretive content. In order to bring a summative resolution to these purposes, in the penultimate portion of the book ("Theological Themes") he provides an excellent discussion of these purposes under slightly different headings: the first purpose under the heading of "Retribution and Justice"; the second under the headings "The Fear of God" and "Humanity"; and the third purpose under the heading "God." These essays, plus quite a few others, constitute a splendid theological resource for the study of Job particularly and OT theology generally, and we can thank him and the editors for this focus. It might have been helpful, however, if Wilson had in fact arranged the "Theological Themes" section of material under the three purposes that he outlined in the beginning of the study (pp. 8–10).

The final portion of the study treats the book of Job in the larger context of biblical theology: Job and Biblical Theology, Job and Systematic Theology, Job and Moral Theology, and Job and Practical Theology.

While Wilson's respect for the literary integrity of the book is a highly commendable feature of this study, enabling a logical argument for the theological coherence of its parts, he fails, in my judgment, to see what we may consider a traceable progress in Job's thought, for example, Job's developing belief in the afterlife (14:7–19 → 19:25–27), and his advancing progress toward the confidence that there must be a mediator between him and God (9:32–35 → 16:19–22 → 19:25–27). His argument is that these latter texts that have been traditionally interpreted as alluding to a mediator (legal figure) should be viewed rather as alluding to "an imaginary figure" (pp. 107, 233). But why would Job entertain the idea of an imaginary figure in a context of personal suffering that was very real and demanded a real, not an imaginary, intervention? In all fairness, however, we should note that Wilson insists that this "imaginary" figure fits into the larger prophetic framework of Scripture, which climaxes in Jesus Christ.

In keeping with his confidence in the literary integrity of Job, Wilson takes the Elihu and the Yahweh speeches very seriously, and sets forth the purposes of each appearance. Here, as well as throughout the commentary, we should observe that the author's insight into Scripture is facilitated by his rhetorical ability to articulate it clearly. In regard to the Yahweh speeches, for example, Wilson insists that they are organically connected to the prologue and dialogue. Yahweh, in fact, twice describes Job as having spoken of him what is right (42:7–8). That means the reader is obligated to deal with the Yahweh speeches in relation to the rest of the book, and the author concludes that Job's problem was not that he "had wrong knowledge of God" (p. 183), but rather an inadequate knowledge, that is, "Job's understanding of how God orders his world, and what needs to be done, is limited and inadequate" (p. 201). In effect, Job's "repentance" in 42:6 is a change of direction rather than a confession of sin (that would have been an admission that the friends were right): "Clearly, then, the Yahweh speeches should not be seen as belittling Job, but simply seek to move him in a new direction now that a bigger picture of God's active rule has been explained" (p. 329). That is, he has "turned

away” from lamenting (“dust and ashes,” pp. 204–7), and basically withdrawn his litigation against God (p. 205). Here Wilson provides a good example of the substantive exegesis that lies behind his theological interpretation. And refreshingly he compliments Yahweh for his skillful rhetoric rather than charging him (or the author), as some scholars unfortunately do, with incoherence or avoiding the issue altogether (p. 184).

Wilson’s belief in the literary integrity of the book underlies his discussion of the epilogue as well. He explains that the fact of Yahweh’s restoration of Job’s possessions twofold is both an act of justice (“to leave Job unrestored seems unjust”) and an act of grace—twice as much (p. 208).

Finally, Wilson’s commentary deserves a place in the library of teachers and preachers who want to understand the book of Job without sacrificing its literary integrity. His interpretive skills and textual sensitivity are worthy of much commendation.

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The Book of Psalms. New International Commentary on the OT. By Nancy deClais-sé-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson, and Beth LaNeel Tanner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014, 1073 pp., \$60.00 hardcover.

This volume is a recent addition to the NICOT series and is a welcome one indeed. However, in several ways, it is idiosyncratic and even sometimes puzzling. In summary, this contribution to the NICOT series is a gender-neutral, multi-author commentary that attempts to be sensitive to canonical and narrative elements in the book of Psalms.

There is a concerted attempt on the part of these authors at “gender neutrality.” This is in theory a worthy goal; however, the particular way in which the authors pursue this goal is at times cumbersome, distracting, and inconsistent. Examples include the following: (1) In Psalm 25, Tanner renders the 3ms suffix as “that one,” which gets a bit awkward. “He [God] will instruct that one...That one in goodness will remain...his [God’s] covenant is made known to that one.” Perhaps the plural would have worked better. (2) Psalm 32:2: “Happy is the human to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity.” Really? Why not “the person”?

In terms of referring to the author of a psalm, the authors of this commentary have chosen to alternate between using feminine and masculine pronouns, *in succeeding paragraphs*. So, a particular psalmist (anonymous or not), who might be referred to as “he” in the first paragraph of commentary, becomes “she” in the next paragraph of commentary, then back to “he” in the third paragraph, and so on. I found this distracting and maybe even a bit jarring or confusing. Maybe it would have worked better to alternate between psalms, or perhaps they could have respected the traditional ascriptions of authorship and referred to those authors in the masculine and referred to the authors of the anonymous psalms in the feminine.

Sometimes the “neutrality” is applied inconsistently. “Fathers” becomes “ancestors” (Ps 22:4), but “daughters of Zion” remains “daughters” (why not “children”?) and Zion (Psalm 102), in the tradition of an ancient city pictured as a mother, is “she” (males can’t be nurturing?). Should they not have gone with the neuter? The authors confront a problem in this regard in Psalm 72, written either by or for Solomon (in both cases, a male), where Solomon represents the ideal in Israelite kingship (male), and perhaps also foreshadows the ultimate righteous Israelite king, the messiah (also male), but, at the same time, also represents “anyone who chooses to live as part of God’s kingdom” (p. 574). Tanner translates the psalm using 3ms pronouns. Also, although they use the traditional 3ms pronouns to refer to God in their translations, these authors never use a masculine pronoun to refer to God in their own commentary.

In summary, although a gender-neutral editorial stance does not usually affect the content of the commentary, it can sometimes affect its tone and fluidity. The gender-neutral editorial decision strikes me as forced and unnecessary, but what I find distracting others may find refreshing and affirming.

This volume is multi-authored. The authorial assignments (nearly always signed) do not seem to follow a clearly understandable logic, or at least no rationale is given in the “Acknowledgments” section, where the authors refer to “our self-assigned portions” (p. xvi). Jacobson comments on Psalms 1–21, 23–24, 27–30, 33–34, 36, 39–41, and 100–106; deClaisé-Walford comments on Psalms 42–451 and all of Book V (Psalms 107–150); and Tanner comments on Psalms 22, 25–26, 31–32, 35, 37–38, 52–72 (most of Book II), all of Book III (Psalms 73–89), and ten psalms from Book IV (Psalms 90–99). This means that in terms of totals, assignments are almost even (Jacobson writes most of the introduction plus 40 psalms; Tanner writes 56 psalms; deClaisé-Walford writes one of the introductory essays and 54 psalms).

A multi-authored work is not necessarily a negative, but in this case, each of the three authors has elected to structure their commentary a bit differently. Each offers an introduction to each psalm, a translation, and section-by-section commentary. However, Jacobson concludes each psalm with “reflections,” in which he teases out the theological implications and contemporary significance of his exegetical conclusions. deClaisé-Walford sometimes includes what look to me like brief excursions—helpful and interesting comments of a linguistic or historic nature separated from the commentary proper by footnote dividers. Her comments on application seem perfunctory and rarely extend beyond a brief paragraph. Tanner chooses to weave her theological reflections and applications in with her exegetical comments but she usually concludes her comments with a couple of longer paragraphs in which she contemplates possible avenues of contemporary significance or personal appropriation. I am not advocating a “right” way to do it, but this inconsistency creates a sense of unevenness.

I need to discuss a bit more the characteristics of each author’s contribution. I will start with Jacobson. He writes all the introductory essays, except one: I. Title, Text, and Translation; II. Authorship; III. Form Criticism and History of Interpretation; IV. Canonical Shape (by deClaisé-Walford; more on that below); V. He-

brew Poetry; IV. Themes and Theology; VII. Outline; and VIII. Bibliography. A few comments will suffice. They seek to reconstruct not the “original” text but the text “at the beginning of the Masoretic tradition” (p. 5). They leave *besed* untranslated. In terms of authorship, “We believe that it is likely that the superscription *l’dāwid* did not originally indicate authorship” (p. 10). Rather, “for all practical purposes, all of the psalms are anonymous” (p. 11). Jacobson is well aware of the limits of the form-critical approach. He discusses Gunkel, Mowinckel, Gerstenberger, Westermann, and Brueggemann. He tries to “move beyond the temptation to reduce each lament to an example of the broader form and seek to interpret each psalm as a unique and particular prayer” (p. 18–19). He sees the Psalter as “a collection of poems that charts a new structure for existence and identity for a postnational, Lord-centered community” (p. 43), the dominant theological confession of which is “The Lord is faithful” (p. 45). The Analysis is a helpful outline noting the various collections within the Psalter. The select bibliography is only about four pages, so there is little attempt at bibliographic control.

In terms of his exegesis, Jacobson is delightful to read. He often summarizes theories about a psalm’s setting, then consistently rejects those theories as conjectural, preferring a textual or canonical setting. Although he advocates messianism in the Psalms, he often fails to mention NT use, as in the difficult quotation of Psalm 8 in Hebrews or Peter’s quotation of Psalm 16 in Acts 2. He is at his best when sensitively analyzing the flow and theology of an individual poem. In particular, he is very good on Psalms 1, 6, 36, 39, and the latter psalms in Book IV. He quotes widely, from Luther and Bonhoeffer to William Ernest Henley’s “Invictus” (he calls it a “wretched poem”) to a Monty Python parody of praise in the film *The Meaning of Life*. In an unusual though compelling move, he at least twice refers to the role the Psalms have played in his own battle against cancer. His discussion of the importance of *besed* in the introduction, Psalms 33 and 36, and the latter psalms of Book IV is very rich, and echoes his thesis that the theme of the Psalter is “The Lord is faithful.”

Beth LaNeel Tanner offers strong commentary, especially on Book III. She reads each psalm against the national tragedy of the exile and offers thoughts on how each psalm may have helped the nation struggle to a place of theological resolution with the painful and traumatic events of recent memory. I especially liked the concluding paragraphs to her commentary on each psalm. She writes warmly and pushes the reader to ask existential questions about his or her own interior life and walk with God. I sensed great effort here and pastoral sensitivity. Her commentary on Book III was for me one of the highlights of the volume. Tanner also makes an effort to read her psalms with a canonical awareness, a narrative sensitivity. She often notes that one psalm seems to be taking up a question raised by the previous psalm, or answering an unanswered issue from a few psalms before. This kind of reading is what is missing from most commentaries on Psalms, and Tanner makes a fine contribution here.

Nancy deClaisé-Walford provides the hermeneutical backdrop, the “big picture,” that she and the other two authors, generally speaking, rely on in their comments. Her contribution to the introductory essays, “The Canonical Shape of the

Psalter,” is easily the longest (17 pages) and is the most important, and here we must linger a bit. She reads the Psalter against the backdrop of the exile and restoration during the Persian period, and sees the Hebrew Bible as answering two questions: “Who are we?” and “What are we to do?” She goes on at some length to offer a canonical, macro-interpretation of the Psalter that contains a great deal of stimulating thinking. This review is already too long to offer extensive summary and interaction with her essay, but a glaring weakness in her macro-interpretation is that she ignores the concept of messianism altogether. For example, she says that Psalm 2 admonishes the reader to acknowledge God as sovereign. Well, yes, Psalm 2 is about God’s sovereignty, but *as exercised through his anointed one!* She argues that Book IV of the Psalter forbids the community of faith from returning “to the days of King David” (p. 34), but, although she acknowledges David’s reappearance in Book V, she does not seem to understand his significance. In Book V, David announces God’s love to the nations (Psalm 108), is slandered and rejected by his own people (Psalm 109), is vindicated by God (Psalm 110), and leads the people in righteousness in a new exodus after a miraculous vindication (Psalm 118). Moreover, God promises to “make a horn grow for David” in Psalm 132, in direct response to the Nathan oracle of 2 Samuel 7. So, it seems to me that any macro-interpretation of the Psalter that does not involve a Davidic messianism is insufficient. Be that as it may, deClaissé-Walford’s essay is a solid attempt at a macro-reading of the Psalter, and any future suggestions should interact with her work.

In summary, if I could characterize each of the writers, Jacobson is the most theologically rich; Tanner is canonically aware and devotionally warm; deClaissé-Walford is hermeneutically consistent, reading most psalms against a post-exilic *Sitz im Leben*.

A final note about the commentary’s length: it is puzzling to me that the editorship of the NICOT series did not allocate two volumes (at least) to the book of Psalms. Genesis, Ezekiel, Proverbs, Isaiah, and the Minor Prophets all received multi-volume treatments in this series. One would think that one of the three major books of the OT (along with Genesis and Isaiah) would garner more space, especially in light of the fresh questions that are being discussed in Psalms scholarship but on which so far little consensus has emerged, and 1,000 pages does not give sufficient space to interact with much scholarship. Too often the authors’ commentary in this volume seemed rushed or incomplete.

In the end, although this commentary has much to offer and makes some helpful contributions, it comes across not as an even, consistent, multi-author reference commentary, but rather as three partial commentaries by three different authors, based on an inadequate macro-interpretation, and these factors, in my opinion, hinder its acceptance as a reliable volume of commentary on the book of Psalms.

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I Will Lift My Eyes Unto the Hills: Learning from the Great Prayers of the OT. By Walter C. Kaiser Jr. Wooster, OH: Weaver, 2015. 162 pp., \$12.99 paper.

Walter Kaiser is President Emeritus and Professor of OT at Gordon-Conwell Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. Kaiser is a well-known biblical scholar, having written numerous OT commentaries, biblical-theological studies, and works relating to biblical hermeneutics and exposition. In recent years, Kaiser's work has turned to more practical matters, helping pastors to preach and teach the OT. *I Will Lift My Eyes Unto the Hills* is a practical, devotional book written at a popular level. The average length of the eleven chapters is about ten pages and each chapter has discussion questions at the end, so the book is well suited for either personal devotions or for small group Bible studies.

After an introduction stressing the power of prayer, Kaiser exposites selected prayers from the OT saints: Abraham, Moses, Hannah, David, two from Solomon, Jonah, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, Ezra, and Daniel. This is a helpful and unique focus since many Christians who think of prayer in the OT focus their attention on the prayers of the Psalms. Each chapter prints the biblical text in full, explains the literary and historical context, then exposites the passages section-by-section. The end of each chapter gives brief summary statements followed by discussion questions. There are occasional footnotes and a bibliography at the end of the book, but the book does not aim to be a scholarly work on prayer.

Though Kaiser's work is on a popular level, he does not shy away from difficulties and debated issues in the biblical texts. Kaiser argues for the variant reading of Genesis 18:22—"the Lord remained standing before Abraham" rather than "Abraham was left standing before the Lord" because the variant reading, though theologically unacceptable to the Jewish scribes, shows the closeness of Abraham's relationship to God (pp. 11–12). Kaiser carefully argues for the unconditional nature of the Davidic covenant (pp. 52–54): "the 'breaking' or conditionality of the covenant can only refer to the *individual* or *personal* invalidation of that individual's participation in the benefits of the covenant, but such disobedience would not affect the certainty of God's oath ... for the larger dynasty itself" (p. 53, italics original). Kaiser shows that English translations miss the significance of God's statement in 2 Samuel 7:19b; the NIV's "Is this your usual way of dealing with man?" misses the universal significance of the Davidic covenant. Kaiser instead suggests the translation: "And this is the charter/instruction for humanity," which emphasizes the universal blessings included in the Davidic covenant. Kaiser carefully explains how corporate responsibility for sin (as in Ezra's prayer) and individual responsibility for sin (as in Ezekiel 18 and Deut 24:16) can be held together: "Ezekiel 18 and Deuteronomy 24:16 are focused on the effects that an individual's sins has on his or her own person; these personal sins cannot be off-loaded onto the parents or to the children ... [yet] each of us is also part of a larger community in which the sin of the group ... cannot be shrugged off as if we had no complicity in that corporate guilt" (pp. 129–30). Kaiser discusses historical problems in the book of Daniel with regard to the identity of Darius the Mede in Dan 9:1, yet helpfully zooms out of the debate to focus on the key point: "The point to be made here is

that no longer do the people of the Old Testament set the dates for their story by the reign of those who are in David's line, for the time of the Gentiles has now begun. Their dating is now set by the reigns of the Persian kings" (p. 140).

Kaiser's work has a few minor weaknesses. In chapter 5, Kaiser raises the question of whether or not Solomon was a faithful and obedient king (pp. 63–64) yet ends the discussion without a definite conclusion, which will leave many readers unsatisfied and confused. In chapter 10, Kaiser's discussion of the sin of intermarriage does not explain the larger theological principle behind the sin. Kaiser's explanation is: "The reason for this prohibition against intermarriage has nothing to do with racism or the purity of the races, but simply and most directly with the matter of purity of the religion of Judah" (p. 128). Kaiser misses the larger theological point that carries over into the NT: Jews were not to marry outside the covenant community, just as Christians are not to marry outside the covenant community. However, there is a major difference: the covenant community of the OT only included people of Jewish descent since a person became part of Israel through natural birth. In contrast, the covenant community of the NT includes people of all ethnicities since a person becomes part of the church through the new birth, that is, regeneration. So the biblical prohibition is not against interracial marriage but against marrying outside the covenant community.

Apart from these minor weaknesses, however, Kaiser's work can be helpfully used for personal devotions, for small group Bible studies, or by the pastor preparing sermons on these biblical prayers.

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After the Invasion: A Reading of Jeremiah 40–44. By Keith Bodner. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 178 pp., \$90.00.

Keith Bodner has written extensively in narrative analysis of the OT, including volumes on David, Absalom, Elisha, and 1 and 2 Samuel. Narrative criticism involves close reading of the text with special attention to plot, characterization, and poetics, such as repetitions, intertextuality (both near and far), spatial details, irony, gaps, direct speech, and duration.

In this work, Bodner applies his skills to a short narrative section at the end of Jeremiah. According to Bodner, the events of Jeremiah 40–44 unfold in a fairly orderly fashion but raise several questions: (1) Why does the aftermath of the invasion of chapter 39 receive more attention than the invasion? (2) Why do these chapters concentrate on the community left in Judea? (3) Why are internal threats and violence more important than the external threat of Babylon? (4) What is Jeremiah's role (he begins and ends in this section as a prisoner)? Bodner looks at the narrative from four perspectives: (1) emplotment (why is the story told in this way?); (2) chronological markers; (3) allusions to other OT stories; and (4) the portrayal of the super-powers Babylon and Egypt.

Bodner divides Jeremiah 40–44 into seven sections and devotes one chapter to an examination of each section. His final chapter provides some conclusions and suggestions for further study. In chapter 1 (on Jer 40:1–6), Bodner explores why Jeremiah is in a different place than in chapter 39 and the positive role of Nebuzaradan, who seems to give a word of the Lord to the exiles. Intertextually, Bodner sees parallels between Joseph and Jeremiah and between Potiphar and Nebuzaradan. Chapter 2 (Jer 40:7–16) explores the character of Gedaliah, with his strengths and flaws. Why would he ignore Johanan’s warning about Ishmael? The place Mizpah has important geographical connections to earlier events. Why is Jeremiah absent in this section? Chapter 3 (Jer 41:1–8) demonstrates how intertextuality helps us understand the violent role of Ishmael in the story and the total collapse of the Davidic lineage. Ishmael is violent and flawed, like the last of the Davidic kings. Ironically, the remnant is in more danger from their own people than from the Babylonians. Chapter 4 (Jer 41:9–15) covers another violent section and Bodner sees significant parallels with the site of Gibeon in the narrative of David in 2 Samuel 2. Hence, Gibeon appears at the beginning and end of the Davidic dynasty. Johanan’s reappearance is a fortunate surprise. The connection of the cistern here with Asa’s time is a grim reversal of purpose. Ishmael’s escape east ends the Davidic dynasty. Again, where is Jeremiah? Chapter 5 (Jer 41:16–42:22) explores why Jeremiah is suddenly back on the scene after a long absence. His message echoes that of Nebuzaradan earlier: stay in the land and prosper. Even if the remnant flees to Egypt it will not escape the Babylonians there but will perish by their hand. In other words, Jeremiah’s message has not changed from before the fall of Jerusalem. The location near Bethlehem already tells us the trip to Egypt had begun and Jeremiah’s words will not be heeded. Chapter 6 (Jeremiah 43) explores why Jeremiah’s word is still considered false. The people still do not trust him even though events have vindicated his previous sermons. Jeremiah’s acted parable of the rock in Tahpanhes is similar to his other acted parables and assures the remnant’s demise at the hand of the Babylonians, even though they saw Egypt as a place of refuge. It is ironic that Israel ends up back in Egypt, from which God had delivered them under Moses. Chapter 7 (Jeremiah 44) analyzes Jeremiah’s final address to the exiles. The fugitives have their own view of history and causation centered in the worship of the queen of heaven. But they are little different from previous generations and will suffer the same consequences. The key word “watching” of Jer 1:11–12 is repeated in 44:27 to bring the prophetic book full circle.

Chapter 7 concludes the study with a summary of the benefits of narrative criticism of this text. It has shown the importance of spatial setting, intertextuality, irony, and characterization in understanding the text.

I agree with Bodner’s assessment of his work. In these four areas he has made a major contribution to the study of Jeremiah 40–44. His suggestions for textual allusions challenge any attempt to study a text in isolation from the rest of the OT. Asking the right questions of a text yields many dividends. Narrative poetics is a welcome relief from the aridity of redaction criticism and its offshoots.

This volume also demonstrates some of the weaknesses of the method: digressions (pp. 70–73), needless repetition at the beginning of each chapter, specula-

tions, and sometimes lengthy discussions yielding minimum results (e.g. chap. 4). Stylistically, Bodner seems to like run-on sentences; one measures ten lines of text.

This book is a good addition to studies in Jeremiah narrative but will appeal only to a narrow audience.

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The Message of Lamentations. By Christopher J. H. Wright. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015, 166 pp., \$16.00 paper.

Christopher J. H. Wright's study of Lamentations appears fittingly in the midst of the Syrian refugee crisis, to the children of which he has dedicated the book. The Bible Speaks Today series aims to accurately expound the biblical text, relate it to contemporary life, and be readable (p. 11). Wright's volume accomplishes these goals admirably well, with its sufficiently detailed but not overwhelming introduction, clear and concise comments on the text, and questions for reflection following the commentary on each poem. The select bibliography provides the interested reader with resources for more in-depth study of Lamentations.

In his introduction, Wright covers the standard introductory issues such as historical background, authorship, and poetic form. Notably, Wright is quite conservative in his remarks on authorship, coming as close to endorsing Jeremian authorship as possible without explicitly doing so, preferring to refer to the author simply as "the Poet" (p. 27–28).

The majority of the introduction contains his treatment of thematic and theological issues. Wright examines the function of the book as a memorial, giving voice to the destruction of which it speaks, a confession by the people of God who suffered that destruction, as well as a protest against the ongoing suffering. He examines the relationship of Lamentations to other parts of Scripture, noting the importance of context for the book provided by the larger story in Scripture: "587 BC was not the end" (p. 47). He also explores the christological dimensions of the text, relating it to Christ's suffering through the servant songs of Isaiah 40–55. Finally, Wright suggests lessons for the church from Lamentations. These include reminding the church of the anti-Semitic activities in which it has been party through the centuries, the call to be peacemakers prompted by the bellicose imagery in the book, the invitation to weep with those who weep suggested by the calls of Zion for sympathy in the book, and finally a message of hope such as it emerges in the biblical book (Lam 3:21).

In the commentary proper, as with the introduction, Wright does not offer particularly new insights as much as he offers readable and concise comments of a helpful character for readers of Lamentations. Although Wright characterizes the book as conveying the "silence" of God (pp. 42–44), he does not refrain from finding the voice of God in the book (p. 89–90). That 2:11 expresses the sorrow of God over Jerusalem's destruction (as opposed to that of the poet and people) is

unlikely, coming just a few verses after 2:4, where God is portrayed as the enemy slinging arrows at the city.

While what Wright writes in his commentary is quite good, it is what he does not write that left me disappointed. For example, his chapter-closing reflections tend to remain quite general and reliant on simple analogy with the situation of the ancient audience: “In what ways do the failures of leaders in today’s church . . . bring judgment on the church itself?” (p. 146); “What are things that Christians, as individuals or as a whole church, might be tempted to trust in and consider indestructible [as the temple was to Israel]?” (p. 99).

Another notable absence is reflection on what it does to and for the church to take up the poems of Lamentations as its own. This absence is apparent in several regards. Although Wright notes the protest that constitutes the book of Lamentations in its historical setting, he does not find any lesson of protest to God for the church through taking up the book. The morally delicate portions of the book (e.g. Lam 3:61–66) he questions whether Christians can take up as their own prayer (p. 127). And while he prompts readers to ponder the significance of Lamentations in the mouth of Christ (p. 75), consideration is all but absent about the significance of the body of Christ speaking Lamentations, even when urging to prayer emerges from his reflections on the book (e.g., p. 95). If Lamentations is truly a book for today, as the author notes (p. 21), it is not so for what it tells us about the destruction of Jerusalem or God’s character, but for how it can transform the church when it takes up the words of confession, weeping, and protest in the book as its own, and addresses its God on behalf of his world, calling “thy kingdom come!”

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Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi. By Anthony R. Petterson. Apollos OT Commentary. Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press, 2015, 451 pp., \$45.00.

According to the book jacket, the goal of the Apollos series of commentaries is “to keep one foot firmly planted in the universe of the original text and the other in that of the target audience, which is preachers, teachers and students of the Bible...exhibiting scholarly excellence along with practical insight for application.” Anthony Petterson, Lecturer in OT at Morling College in Australia, admirably fulfills both the goals of the series in this commentary: it is rich in scholarly expertise, building on his published Ph.D. thesis on Zechariah and interacting with the full spectrum of critical and evangelical studies, but it is also pastorally useful, steeped in biblical theology in the school of Graeme Goldsworthy. Petterson himself describes his approach as “Confessional Criticism,” by which he means solid roots in the classical Christian confession of Scripture as the Word of God, combined with genuine scholarly analysis (p. 39). What that means is that if you are a scholar, you will find much to ponder in this commentary, both in his judicious discussion of the work of others as well as in fresh insights from the author. Meanwhile, if you are a pastor, this volume will enhance your sermons on these neglected books by

showing you in an intellectually responsible way how these books fit in the larger narrative of Scripture, which finds its center in the Kingdom of God and leads forward to the coming of Christ.

In line with his “classical” approach, Petterson sees each of the three books as essentially a faithful record of the oracles of the prophets named in their superscriptions. That does not necessarily mean the prophets themselves wrote down all these words any more than Jesus wrote the Gospels, but the author argues strongly for the existence of these books at an early date in written form. Yet this is by no means a naïve, knee-jerk conservatism; rather, he argues the case in an appropriately academic and convincing manner, interacting with all of the relevant arguments in the scholarly world.

Likewise, against approaches that have tied various layers of these books together more strongly than the individual books themselves, Petterson argues for an original integrity and independence of the books (as with the rest of the Minor Prophets). He does allow for the possibility of minimal editing at the point where these books were brought together into what becomes functionally a single volume—“the Book of the Twelve.” For Petterson, the process of bringing the books together into the Book of the Twelve in this order (which is itself largely, though not entirely, chronological) allows readers to trace out the larger plotline of Israel and Judah and see more clearly the development of individual themes, such as “the Day of the Lord,” than would be the case if these books were treated in isolation. Yet, rather than reflecting the controlling and shaping hand of an anonymous master redactor/author throughout the Book of the Twelve, the formation takes place simply through the juxtaposition of individual books in an appropriate sequence. It is like seeing a picture in a particular frame—the frame does not change the picture itself, but it can influence how you view the picture (p. 29). An alternative image might be the compilation of individual sentence proverbs into larger collections. The individual proverbs retain their original integrity, yet in juxtaposition with other similar or contrasting proverbs they gain new layers of meaning.

The major themes of these post-exilic books are the restoration of the temple and kingship (Haggai, Zechariah) and the cleansing of the people and land (Malachi). Yet Petterson does not see these books as a “comedy” (in literary terms), providing a traditional happy ending for the otherwise somewhat gloom prophetic corpus. Rather, sin remains an enduring problem in the post-exilic community, because the judgment on Jerusalem, devastating though it was, has not changed people’s hearts. There is therefore a strong emphasis throughout these books on the necessity of repentance. Here Petterson identifies a similar mood to that of Moses at the end of Deuteronomy—a note of disappointment and pessimism about human ability to remain faithful to God and thus see a positive outcome from the Sinai covenant. Both still look forward to God coming in judgment and salvation, which requires God’s people to wait in the meantime in a posture of fearing Yahweh and honoring his name.

For Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the Day of the Lord is not merely something that has already happened in the past with the exile in Babylon. Even though Israel had returned from exile and her restoration had begun (albeit in a day of

small things), there was another exile-like experience—another Day of the Lord—still to come before Yahweh’s kingdom would finally arrive in its fullness (p. 35). According to the NT, this future exile-like experience is what Jesus undergoes at the cross in order finally to establish God’s kingdom. Indeed, the Gospels draw heavily on these books for the underpinnings of their presentation of Jesus as the crucified and exalted Messiah.

This leads naturally into application. The fundamental parallel between the situation of the returned exiles and Christians is that both live in between the partial coming of God’s kingdom and a future more glorious realization (p. 35). Christians, too, are called to build the Lord’s temple, the church, instead of our own houses. Yet building God’s house is also often for us a task that is “charged with hope and laced with disappointment” (p. 35). Like the people of the post-exilic period, we look back to the ways God has fulfilled his promises in the past and forward with hope to the full realization of those promises in the future. This “now-and-not-yet” paradigm forms a firm hermeneutical basis for exhortation and application from these books for modern believers, even if Petterson doesn’t always fully work out the implications for us as preachers.

In sum, this is a fine addition to a very useful series of commentaries and is highly commended both to academics and to preachers.

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Verbal Aspect Theory and the Prohibitions in the Greek NT. By Douglas S. Huffman. Studies in Biblical Greek 16. New York: Peter Lang, 2014, xxiv + 571 pp., \$59.95 paper.

Douglas Huffman’s book, published in a valuable monograph series, surveys at length two specific areas of verbal usage in NT Greek: how prohibitions are expressed and how tense-aspect should be interpreted in some of those expressions. These two areas of usage are presented in the two main sections of his book, with part 1 covering the latter topic and part 2 the former one. In part 2 he pays close attention to “lexical and pragmatic functions” (p. 124) and classifies various ways of expressing prohibitions into fifteen categories ranging from grammatical-syntactical features (e.g. negated imperatives, subjunctives, future indicatives, etc.) to various other ways of phrasing prohibitions (e.g. warnings, promises, questions, verbs of “refraining,” etc.). Huffman’s work in this section is to be commended for its clear explanations, attention to detail, and value for interpreting the NT passages that he covers. He displays a good sense for examining the wider context and analyzing the individual parts of these expressions in light of the whole phrase and its sense in the NT passage where it occurs.

Unfortunately this is something he fails to do in part 1 of his book. His fundamental thesis in part 1 is that an older view of the NT Greek prohibitions (though found still in many recent grammars) reflects an incorrect understanding of the difference between the present and aorist forms used in those prohibitions.

This is the view that the present calls for cessation of an action already underway and the aorist prohibits the start of an action, which Huffman labels the “cessative-ingressive” view (pp. 26–27). Huffman’s main thesis in part 1 is that “a verbal aspect understanding” of the difference between present and aorist forms in NT prohibitions provides a better explanation than the older view (p. 5), and on this central point he is certainly correct.

His development of this thesis, however, and the value that he finds in it (or rather fails to find) as an aid to NT interpretation leave much to be desired. Huffman characterizes the “cessative-ingressive” view as an understanding of the ancient Greek tense-forms based on *Aktionsart* rather than aspect. He contrasts these two as follows: *Aktionsart* “reflect[s] the kind of action in history” and “depend[s] upon ... the historical action,” while aspect “reflect[s] the writer’s subjective view” of the action (p. 59). In four detailed chapters he surveys the development of these contrasting approaches by NT grammarians from as far back as 1740 up to the present time. These surveys have some value but they are weakened by a tendency to minimize the interplay between the two views and the degree to which aspectual understandings of the Greek verb gradually grew out of *Aktionsart* views and were not radically separate from them. Huffman finds it helpful for his argument to emphasize a stark change that has come in the past fifty years (i.e. an older view being discredited by a revolutionary new “theory” now replacing it completely). Yet as his own survey shows (pp. 64, 77–80), even at the time when some were articulating a strong version of the “cessative-ingressive” distinction (late nineteenth to early twentieth century), grammarians were expressing ideas about the Greek tense-forms that mingled *Aktionsart* ideas with a rudimentary form of an aspectual approach. Huffman does mention several of these writers but minimizes their contribution. It is wrong to think that all earlier scholars who used the term *Aktionsart* to describe the ancient Greek tenses understood the forms to “depend upon the historical action” in a purely objective way, but this is how Huffman describes their work. Some grammarians certainly did see the tenses this way, but clarifications and refinements in understanding moved along all the while toward what later became a fully aspectual understanding. Several whom Huffman takes to task for “harsher” forms of the “cessative-ingressive” view spoke in various places about events “regarded,” or “conceived of,” or “represented” as a certain kind of action (e.g. Burton, Moulton, Robertson), but these details do not figure in Huffman’s presentation.

The other weakness of Huffman’s treatment is that he focuses almost entirely on grammars of ancient (mostly NT) Greek with very little attention to contributions from general linguistics and semantics. This is problematic particularly in chapter 5, since it discusses verbal aspect as a theory for understanding the Greek verb. While he footnotes some important work done in general linguistics (p. 61), there is no indication that these sources have informed his treatment in any significant way. In the course of his discussion (pp. 81–82, 94–97), he rejects any attempt to understand the interactions of aspect (i.e. the speaker’s subjective viewpoint on the occurrence) with *Aktionsart* (i.e. distinctions in actional character reflected in the verb’s lexical sense or in broader features of the context) even though the general

linguists he cites on p. 61 (especially Bache, Comrie, and Smith) regard this as a central task in working with verbal aspect. Attention to such interaction is a standard part of contemporary studies of aspect in general linguistics and semantics (see, e.g., *The Oxford Handbook of Tense and Aspect* [ed. Robert I. Binnick; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012]).

Huffman's failure to come to terms with recent work on verbal aspect is reflected also in the basic definitions he gives for the present and aorist in prohibitions and the glosses he uses to render NT examples into English. For example, he says that the present imperative in prohibitions gives "a view of the action as a process" (p. 105; see also pp. 75, 120). Without further qualification this definition reflects a lack of sensitivity to the semantic point that not all verbs express an "action" (some describe a state or condition), and among those that do express an action, not all of them describe a simple process (some describe a discrete event or a process culminating in an end-point). Most who write about verbal aspect make careful distinctions between such senses or declare at the outset that they will use a convenient general term (e.g. "occurrence," "situation") in order to cover all such possibilities without assuming that all verbs denote actions or processes. More importantly, they will suggest different senses that result when an aspect like the Greek present combines with a verb denoting a state as over against a verb denoting an activity or a discrete event.

Such distinctions become relevant when we try to employ aspectual distinctions in construing the appropriate sense of Greek verbs in actual NT usage. How helpful is it for interpretation if we apply the rule that the present "views the action as a process" to a present verb denoting a state or a discrete event? See, for example, Huffman's glosses for a series of present prohibitions in 1 Corinthians 7 and Ephesians 4 (pp. 166–68): "... must not be divorcing," "... must not be getting circumcised," "do not let the sun be setting on your anger," "do not let any harmful word be coming out of your mouth." In what sense do these verbs "view the action as a process"? Huffman notes that sometimes his glosses will seem awkward in English, but he provides no help to try to get behind the awkward rendering to discover the specific contextual sense except to repeat that the present "represents the author's subjective view of the action as a process" (p. 132). On an earlier page where he entertains the possibility that paying more attention to lexical and contextual features would be an aid to interpretation, he ultimately concludes that such an approach is "ultimately wrong-headed" (p. 95).

While Huffman is certainly right that verbal aspect (understood as the author's viewpoint on the action or condition denoted by the verb) explains the difference between present and aorist forms in NT Greek prohibitions, it is unfortunate that his book fails to push the question beyond an abstract, theoretical level. By not looking carefully at lexical and other contextual features of Greek aspectual usage, he provides little help for interpreters trying to analyze the overall sense of such usage in NT contexts.

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The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion: Meaning and Mission. By Seán Freyne. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014, xii + 383 pp., \$35.00 paper.

Sean Freyne (1935–2013) is known as the premier “Galilean scholar” of his generation. Freyne once told me that Galilee as research topic originally was suggested to him by Martin Hengel as a field of focus for advancing historical Jesus studies. This idea caught on with Freyne and eventually resulted in his magnum opus, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian 323 B.C.E. to 135 C.E.* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), a research work conducted in the well-appreciated source-oriented style of Martin Hengel. It is fair to say that this study produced a shift within historical Jesus research toward a stronger focus on Galilee as a background for understanding Jesus and his movement. Freyne subsequently wrote a large number of articles and several books on Galilee in relation to the historical Jesus.

In what turned out to be his last book, *The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion*, Freyne combined his interest in Galilee and the historical Jesus with a treatment of the earliest Christian sources and the history of the early church. It is best described as a *tour de force* of the most relevant sources and research positions concerning Judean, Galilean, and Judeo-Christian socio-economic history, extending from Antiochus Epiphanes’s profanation of the temple to early Christian writers such as Justin and Tertullian.

The first two chapters deal with the history of Galilee. Chapter 1 investigates in what sense Galilee was a “Galilee of the Gentiles,” by outlining archaeological research pointing to the Hasmonean expansion into Galilee and by analyzing the growth of Hellenistic city-culture around Galilee (Paneas, Hippos, Tyre, Sidon, Ptolemais, Scythopolis, and more). Like Hengel before him, Freyne concludes that Greek culture was close to and part of Jewish life in *eretẓ Israel*. The second chapter focuses on the Roman presence in Israel, detailing how the Herodian rulers adopted as much as they could of Roman imperial ideology. Freyne draws on Josephus, Psalms of Solomon, Qumran sources, numismatic material, and more.

Shifting to socio-economic history in chapter 3, Freyne reevaluates his earlier work on a significant question: Was Galilee on the brink of meltdown during the time of Jesus due especially to Herod Antipas’s rule and building ambitions? Freyne admits that the answer to this is buried somewhere between the sources on the ground and the interpretive model used to make stones speak. Opting for a “middle ground” (p. 131), Freyne concludes that Antipas’s building program caused “some problems” for the Galileans (p. 131), although they were more modest than those of his father.

Chapter 4, “Situating Jesus,” outlines the basic narrative of the life of Jesus as we have it in the Gospels measured up against Galilee and Jerusalem as historical backgrounds. Beginning with John the Baptist, whose program of repentance and forgiveness is interpreted as a temple critique in the light of other contemporary temple critiques, Freyne moves along through the life of Jesus discussing his kingdom preaching, his clashes with authorities, his messianic deeds, and his apocalyptic sayings, before pressing on to his last days in Jerusalem.

Chapter 5 outlines the story of the early church in Jerusalem. Freyne first deals with the historical credibility of the outline of events as provided in Acts, an issue on which he takes a middle position. Seemingly accepting a late date to the second century for Acts, Freyne nevertheless states that “we should not dismiss Luke’s opus as mere fiction, in the sense of a purely fabricated history” (p. 197). This is, by the way, a typical statement by Freyne, who in principal follows critical assessments but in reality uses NT sources quite freely. The bulk of the chapter is reserved for a historical discussion of the Hebrews and the Hellenists in the Jerusalem church (drawing on Ben F. Meyer’s work), including the role of James the Just and his martyrdom, a discussion in which many later primary sources are brought into play. A fine discussion of the role of the Ebionites rounds off the chapter.

Chapters 6 and 7 treat the earliest written sources for the life of Jesus according to Freyne, especially Q and Mark and Matthew but also the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Didache*. Q is of special importance to Freyne, since its origins can be traced to Galilee (an argument built on its mention of three Galilean towns besides the Lake). Based on this assumption, Freyne wishes to use Q to give “a first insight” into the “Palestinian milieu” from which it emerged (p. 247). While a Galilean provenance for the *Didache* and the *Gospel of Thomas* cannot be established, a first-century dating of both (albeit, not for the final version of *Thomas*) allows Freyne both to establish a historical reconstruction of the early Jesus movement and to conclude that these works “provide us with windows on the diverse and complex world of the early Christians and the many different paths that were taken on the basis of the memory of Jesus and his ministry” (p. 272). Next, Freyne analyzes the Gospel of Mark in order to gain a perspective on its strand of early Christianity. He dates Mark’s Gospel to the time immediately after the destruction of the temple and locates it in Syria (p. 281). In terms of Christology, he argues for a high view of the divinity of Jesus presented in the repeated revelatory pattern of the baptism, the confession of Peter, the transfiguration, and finally the trial and crucifixion scenes. This, combined with the roles assigned to Gentiles, makes Freyne conclude that Mark “belonged to the *Hellenistai* rather than the *Hebraioi* trajectory within earliest Christianity” (p. 295). Finally, Freyne treats the Gospel of Matthew, which he dates to around 85–90 and places in Syria/Antioch. According to Freyne, Matthew was written to present a vision for “an inclusive Israel,” one that from within a Jewish ethos could serve as a basis for the “messianic community of the end time” comprised of Jews and non-Jews alike (p. 312).

In the final chapter, “Into the Second Century,” Freyne widens his scope quite a bit and outlines some of the major developments within the post-apostolic church. His approach is yet again to trace as many strands of groups as possible, trying to avoid building solely on the conquering orthodox tradition (Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, etc.) and so looking also at evidence in, for example, the Nag Hammadi library. Freyne demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the sources in this period and provides a close reading that highlights how the different sources and groups navigated between the Roman tradition, which became ostensibly more “Greek” and self-aware in this period (not least under Trajan and Hadrian), and the Jewish tradition. The *Epistle of Barnabas*, for instance, contains an outright condem-

nation of Jewish tradition, which has lost the right to the covenant, whereas Justin in his dialogue with Trypho was more lenient towards the remnants of Jewish Christ-believers. The debate with Greek philosophy and tradition also became acute in this period, at least if we accept Tertullian's claim that all heresy derived from Greek philosophy, especially the gnostic trend, which was fertilized by Platonism.

In evaluation, on the positive side stands Freyne's effort to outline the history of Jesus, his followers, and the early church in an extended way through the lens of Galilee in particular. His book also amply demonstrates intimate knowledge of a vast array of sources from written as well as archaeological material, besides a knowledge of and interaction with premier scholarship in the issues discussed. However, on the negative side stands the lack of an overall thesis to be discussed or a convincing reason for what is included in the discussion and what is left out. At times, the methodological assumptions for Freyne's work are somewhat unclear, which is especially true for chapter 4 with its sketch of the historical Jesus. Finally, I also find the book a bit wordy, which adds to the general feeling of a lack of coherency and clarity. That said, I certainly learned from Freyne's in-depth knowledge of the source material and recommend the book to those who seek a "critical but not that critical" presentation of the early Jesus movement.

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Children in Early Christian Narratives. By Sharon Betsworth. Library of NT Studies 521. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015, x + 211 pp., \$112.00.

When Sharon Betsworth reads the canonical Gospels as well as the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* and the *Protoevangelium of James* with an eye for non-adult children (a "Childist Interpretation" method [p. 4]), she discovers that "children are firmly embedded in the Gospel narrative through main themes and motifs." In other words, when the Gospel writers highlight major themes, they mention children. For Betsworth, this is a powerful discovery indeed. The inclusion of children not only affirms their prevalence in the first-century world, but it also affirms their great value. They function, for the Gospel writers, as exemplars of following Christ and even pictures of Christ in his humility. Her approach touches all aspects of the text: its background by uncovering "the historical realities that would have shaped the lives of real children," the text itself where "children play a significant role in the narrative," and the theology of the text that affirms children as "valuable members of the human community" (p. 185).

After a brief orienting introduction, Betsworth begins with history. In a tantalizing chapter that treats everything from infanticide to puberty, *Children in Early Christian Narratives* provides a thorough introduction both to ideas and also to experiences of children in the Greco-Roman and Jewish first-century world. The reader is left desiring to know more, and her extensive footnotes provide the resources.

From there, the chapters each take a Gospel in turn. Betsworth orients the reader by providing an introduction to the genre, themes, audience, or manuscript tradition of the work in question and then exegetes the passages in which children appear. A conclusion in each summarizes her findings.

The strength of Betsworth's work lies in both form and content. Formally, she writes with great clarity, providing sign posts to readers indicating where they are going and where they have been. At times these border on repetitiveness, but I would rather have direction than disorganization. The rich content reveals the great value of the signposts. Betsworth shines as an exegete. In the chapter on Mark, she devotes attention to a section she terms "the daughter cycle" (p. 47). Mark 4:35–8:26 includes stories about four daughters: the daughter of Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood whom Jesus addresses as "daughter" (5:34), the child of the Syro-Phoenician woman, and the child of Herodias. Categorizing the stories in that way calls attention to the presence of children in the narrative. Betsworth goes on to highlight the importance of Jesus using the term daughter for the woman who desires healing; this term "draws the woman into his family of those who do the will of God" (p. 49). In the story of Jairus's daughter, the description of her as "near her last" (5:23) could be an echo of the theme of reversal in 9:35 and 10:31 just as her being raised (5:41–42) foreshadows Jesus's resurrection (p. 52).

In the chapter on Matthew, she draws a comparison between the child brought "into the midst" by Jesus (18:2) and Herod's daughter who dances "in the midst" of his party (14:6). This "brings Herodias' daughter into the sphere of Jesus' teachings about children. She is not excluded from his care and compassion because her father and mother killed John the Baptist She will be included in Jesus' pronouncement regarding to whom the reign of heaven belongs (19:14)" (p. 93). Betsworth has the ability to notice major movements and small details that support her thesis, namely, the significance of children in the Gospel narratives.

In a few places, I would challenge her conclusions. First, in the story of Jesus with the Syro-Phoenician woman, she states that "Jesus' compassion has stretched far enough to exorcise the demon from her, but not so far that he is willing to accompany a single Greek woman to her home to touch her female child" and that, in the end, Jesus acknowledges that "he has been bested" (p. 54). While I appreciate her honesty in admitting that "while the children are given more prominence in the Gospels than one would expect from the culture, there are still discursive elements of the text that keep them marginal" (p. 54 n. 80). In other words, the Gospels open up new avenues through cultural boundaries, but do not go as far as future generations might take those avenues. This being the case, I would still argue that in this instance there are more gracious ways to read the interaction of Jesus and the Syro-Phoenician woman. If the woman "bested" Jesus, he has entered into the conversation in such a way that this would happen, namely that she would "anticipate Jesus' definitions of discipleship" (C. Clifton Black, *Mark* [ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2011], 180). Moreover, I would have liked to see more possible reasons why Jesus may not have been willing to transgress the boundary of approaching her house at that moment.

The second deserves mention, though in her presentation it plays a small role in her overarching thesis. Quoting Sharon Ringe's commentary on Luke (*Luke* [Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995], 31), Betsworth hedges her bets on Luke's theory of Jesus's conception. Even though she asserts that in Luke Jesus's conception is by the *power* of the Holy Spirit, "the concern is not with the virginal conception, but rather with the miraculous nature of the conception and the identity of the one to be born" (p. 103). And again, "By calling the child, 'Son of God,' Luke is not indicating divine paternity, but rather affirming 'God's self-evident, indelible commitment and engagement in this human life from before its beginning'" (p. 104). Her "but rather's" seem to imply mutually exclusive choices that need not be. Could Luke not affirm both virginal conception/divine paternity and also Jesus's amazing identity because of God's commitment to him? Not only does her reading seem to press Luke's statements in unfitting modern and critical directions, but it stands at odds with the affirmations of the church ancient and global. It does so in such a way that could eventually affect her thesis. If Jesus is only human and not divine—even if only Luke thinks so—then how can his childhood experience fundamentally redeem the marginality and precarious position of all children? One child can do little to change the nature of others, but one God-child could do it all.

That being said, *Children in Early Christian Narratives* does, in fact, reach its goal: readers of this text will now notice the children in the Gospels. They walk away more informed of their history and, I believe, more convinced of the significant role they play in the narratives (p. 185). At the close of the book, Betsworth encourages her readers to read and re-read these stories, their childist vision now appropriately attuned, in order to know that "children are a part of the family of God, a part of the reign of God, and a part of the human community" (p. 187). She has done much historical and exegetical work, and now what? It is my hope that she or another will take up where she left off. What does it mean that children "equally bear the image of God" (p. 186)? How is Christology impacted when we think about Jesus as a true child? How might we live differently in church and society if children are as valuable as these texts seem to indicate? *Children in Early Christian Narratives* deserves a read by anyone seeking to discover the richness of the Gospels or anyone seeking to understand more clearly the experience of children, especially ancient ones. My hope is that when works such as these are read, readers not only begin to notice children but, like Jesus did (Mark 9:36), also embrace them.

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Studies in the Pauline Epistles: Essays in Honor of Douglas J. Moo. Edited by Matthew S. Harmon and Jay E. Smith. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014, 311 pp., \$49.99.

Sixteen Pauline specialists contributed to this Festschrift honoring Douglas Moo. The first six tackle specific exegetical matters. Ardel Caneday teases out the realized and unrealized aspects of the phrase "will reign in life" in Rom 5:17, which

he connects to Romans 6 instead of Rom 8:18–25. Those in Christ *already* reign in life over sin (cf. Gen 4:7). Christ has restored what Adam abdicated. Chris Vlachos advances an Edenic reading of Romans 6–7 in relation to the Law’s catalytic activity. For Jonathan Moo, Paul’s role as a parent assumes his authority even as the apostle counter-culturally models for his addressees transformative love, self-sacrifice, and brotherly mutuality under God as *the* Father. In a lengthy essay, Jay Smith provides additional (refitted) arguments in favor of a slogan in 1 Cor 6:18b. Were the unusual grammatical expression Paul’s own, then he would be offering a lone exception to a powerful rhetorical hyperbole. Without comment, Paul identifies several other sins that are *also* against the body. Paul uses *hamartēma* when his more typical *hamartia* would be more apt for 6:18b. Lastly, 1 Cor 6:18–20 is the third in a slogan-retort cycle (with 6:12 and 6:13–18a). D. A. Carson urges caution in mirror-reading and outlines the options in identifying “some from James” as opposed to “those of the circumcision” in Gal 2:12. In a nod to Moo’s work as chair of the Committee on Bible Translation (NIV), the late Verlyn Verbrugge faults most modern translations for not recognizing that in Phil 2:12 the phrase *mē . . . monon alla nun* must go with the imperative *katerygaxesthe* and not the indicative *hypēkousate*.

The next three essays treat intertextual matters. Craig Blomberg applies Hays’s well-known methodology for the identification of scriptural echoes to the Jesus tradition. Admittedly leaning toward the maximalist position (contra Victor Paul Furnish), Blomberg identifies a clear quotation, several clear allusions, and a number of possible echoes. Matthew Harmon argues that Gal 4:21–5:1 is neither allegory nor typology. Philo’s work is representative of the use of the verb *allegoreō* in ancient literature for “reading a text through the lens of another textual, philosophical, or theological framework to reveal a fuller meaning” (p. 150). Philo uses natural or Greek philosophy or even a theological axiom from another passage of Scripture as a lens of interpretation. Harmon concludes that Paul is reading Genesis 16–21 through the lens of Isa 54:1, and the word *allegoreō* is best translated as “take figuratively.” Grant Osborne notes the military imagery in the full context of Ps 68:18 and the use of that sort of imagery in Eph 4:7–10. He concludes that Paul is drawing on the Psalm verse in reference to Christ’s descent to earth at his incarnation, his ascension, and then his grace-gifts to his new messianic community. Paul’s Divine Warrior motif accounts for the change of the Psalm’s “received gifts” to “gave gifts.”

The remaining seven essays are on broader topics of contemporary significance. Robert Yarbrough laments the eclipse of the work of Oscar Cullman, especially his advocacy of salvation history (*heilsgeschichte*). God in the course of history is bringing about the redemption of the world and is transforming the world into the eternal order prophesied by Christ and the prophets. G. K. Beale briefly sketches the eschatological already/not-yet tension in Paul’s understanding of the resurrection, regeneration, the Spirit, sanctification, justification, the Law, and ecclesiology.

James D. G. Dunn, representing the “new” perspective on Paul, stresses the saving “righteousness of God” as fulfillment of covenant obligation to Israel. Dunn clarifies that the forensic use of the verb *dikaioō* should not be emphasized at the

expense of Paul's more pervasive "in Christ" category. Paul contrasts "faith" with Jewish "faithfulness" (Israel's response to the covenant promise), and thus faith is apart from self-achieving works. Paul, nevertheless, leaves room for judgment *according* to works—exclusive of Jewish identity markers. Stephen Westerholm, representing the "old" perspective, notes the role of works alongside grace in the Judaisms Sanders analyzed (including the merit of the patriarchs). Paul was not, however, opposing boasting "legalists." Old perspective interpreters agree that the barrier is torn down between Jews and Gentiles, but Westerholm sees this as a *consequence* and not the center of Paul's understanding of justification. No human being, and not just the Jewish nationalist, can stand before God as righteous.

N. T. Wright defines "the righteousness of God" as God's own faithfulness to "the" covenant with Israel. Motivated by the work of J. Louis Martyn, Wright then brings his understanding of righteousness into conversation with Ernst Käsemann's apocalyptic definition of "salvation-creating power." For Wright, *even Käsemann* understood the righteousness of God as including "covenant faithfulness." Thomas Schreiner explores the concept of truth in Paul. Humans apart from Christ are not neutral toward God's truth but suppress and rebel against it. The cure for the human intellect is the Holy Spirit through the revealed gospel of Jesus Christ, although even believers are caught up in the eschatological tension between now and not-yet. Mark Seifrid closes the volume with a wide-ranging, almost homiletic exposition of the implications of Paul's theology for the modern world, especially with reference to the Corinthian correspondence.

Several of the essays raise worthy matters for further exploration. Jonathan Moo, for instance, maintains that Paul is subverting all worldly claims to status, authority, or identity, but Moo significantly interjects into Gal 3:28 the notion of equality (p. 72); Paul's own category is "oneness." The implications of that oneness are unpacked later in the letter, but not in terms of equality. Yarbrough might have compared his narrative of salvation history with the larger narratives that others, such as Richard Hays and N. T. Wright, have sketched across the pages of Paul and the NT—a convergence in their projects. Carson's footnote numbering in his text does not correspond to the footnotes themselves. He overlooks that the focus of Gal 2:11–14 is on Peter with no mention of the food, purity concerns, or the behavior of the *other* Jewish Christians at the meal. James was concerned with the impact of Peter's behavior on his mission targets—a matter of even greater worry if the feared "circumcision party" has a broader reference.

Vlachos lists the potential connections between Rom 7:7–11 and Genesis 2–3 but does not address well-known objections to that reading: (1) the command not to eat came right after the first couple's creation, and thus Adam was never really "apart from the law" ("command" would be more apt); (2) the "I" is *already* under sin's influence *prior* to the command's impacting the consciousness—unlike Adam; and (3) the inner struggles of the "I" in Rom 7:14–25 are not characteristic of Adam's description in Jewish literature.

Harmon's claim that Paul interprets Genesis 15–21 through the lens of Isa 54:1 is doubtful. The advocate of intertextual connection must also attend to the *differences* between texts. Isaiah's initially fertile woman is the married woman. The

fertile Hagar was not originally married to Abraham; she was the slave woman. Hagar is left desolate in the wilderness (Gen 21:14) whereas in Isa 54:1 the desolate, barren woman is the one who is blessed and shall give birth. The contrasting pairs of women in Isa 54:1 and Gal 4:22–26 do not correspond. As Paul draws on Isa 54:1, he has left behind Hagar and Sarah (who is not even mentioned by name).

Wright's and Dunn's essays betray the influence of Sanders's famous "covenantal nomism." His work, however, did not demonstrate *covenantal* nomism but rather *elective* nomism. The Hebrew terms for "covenant" and "righteousness" rarely appear in proximity to each other—in only seven passages out of the several hundred instances. Because covenant-keeping is actually a *subset* of "righteousness" and because of the meager overlap in terminology, the notion that "God's righteousness" must be related to a particular covenant instrument should not just be assumed. Furthermore, Second Temple literature presents a wide array of views on covenant, from no interest at all, to a concern with *multiple* covenant instruments, to a focus on a single covenant with Moses. One should not assume that the "righteousness of God" in Rom 1:16–17 refers to a covenant faithfulness to Israel for which Paul *has yet to contend*. Paul turns to God's relationship with ethnic Israel in Romans 9–11 and makes his case *there* for God's faithfulness to Israel. Not surprisingly, Paul employs *diathēkē* at *that* point in the letter. In Romans 1–4 God is acting not just on Israel's behalf but on behalf of *all* humanity (e.g. 1:16; 3:21–30; 4:11–12).

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Bowing before Christ—Nodding to the State? Reading Paul Politically with Oliver O'Donovan and John Howard Yoder. By Dorothea H. Bertschmann. Library of NT Studies 502. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014, xiii + 208 pp., \$112.00.

The old adage may still be true at a dinner party: "Don't talk about politics or religion." Moreover, do not ever attempt to mix politics and religion. This book courageously does both. It derives mostly from a doctoral thesis completed at the University of Durham. What Bertschmann attempts is a "political reading" of the apostle Paul using the insights of the Christian ethicist and political philosopher Oliver O'Donovan (b. 1945) and the late celebrated theologian and ethicist John Howard Yoder (d. 1997). "In this book I want to take one step back and give a more coherent account of Paul's political discourse. I will not only ask what political imagery we find in Paul, but more precisely how he himself uses this imagery" (p. 4). In some ways, the author searches for the "political Paul," in a similar way to what has often been done with the historical Jesus.

The book proceeds by first describing the research context, question, and methodology (chap. 1), followed by an investigation of Oliver O'Donovan's writings and contribution to the obedience of rulers (chap. 2). Next we find an investigation of John Howard Yoder with an emphasis on the faithful church (chap. 3). What follows then is an interlude that unpacks both O'Donovan's and Yoder's

unique perspectives on four important questions: (1) *What is “political”?*—here O’Donovan and Yoder basically agree that the gospel has political ramifications; (2) *In what way is Jesus Christ Lord?*—here O’Donovan argues that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic kingly line evidenced with exorcisms and healings by Jesus, whereas Yoder sees lordship embodied in the Suffering Servant; (3) *In what way is the church a “political society”?*—here both agree that the church embodies the lordship of Christ most unswervingly by demonstrating an “eschatological tension”; and (4) *What interaction can be expected between the church and political authorities in this eschatological age?*—here O’Donovan sees this relationship as ambiguous (somewhat positive); whereas Yoder is mostly negative. Finally, Bertschmann navigates exegetical terrain by examining Philippians, especially 2:5–11 and chapter 3, and Romans, especially chapter 12 and 13:1–7 (chaps. 5 and 6 respectively). She then offers some insightful conclusions.

The crux of the matter for Bertschmann is how O’Donovan and Yoder understand the complex metaphor “Christ the Lord” and whether the apostle Paul himself aligns with one political reading versus another. This is perhaps the driving force in the book.

So what then are O’Donovan’s and Yoder’s contributions to a political reading of Paul? In chapter 2, Bertschmann enters into a robust dialogue with O’Donovan, especially his landmark work *The Desire of the Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Here O’Donovan has a high regard for the term political authority (=obedience of rulers), which ideally enables human flourishing. Yet it is fraught with ambivalence. As Bertschmann notes in her conclusion of chapter 2:

Because O’Donovan’s notions of Christ’s rule oscillates so much between something that is on a different plane from standard political authority and something that is on a comparable level with rulers of this world, and therefore engages and confronts them, the interaction of the church similarly oscillates between needing and not needing the state, between rejecting its salvific promises and supporting its efforts to uphold communities, between calling the state to modest minimal functions and encouraging the state to display maximum features of Christ’s Kingdom (p. 41).

In chapter 3, Bertschmann discusses Yoder’s contribution, especially his best known work *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972). Yoder believed that the church should simply “be the church” in the world and not align itself with any earthly political forces. Hence, the church ought to be faithful. “Yoder’s central concern is to rediscover the meaning of the Lordship of Jesus for the church. If Jesus is Lord, the pattern he set in his earthly career, both in word and deed, is binding for the church” (p. 44; for Jesus’s pattern in word and deed, think “faithfulness” as exemplified in the chapter’s title). Jesus’s lordship is also to be non-coercive and non-dominating, since “faithfulness must always prevail over success” (p. 183). Furthermore, Jesus is portrayed in this political reading as a “non-nationalistic, non-violent ‘Zealot,’ a pacifist revolutionary” (p. 47).

For those in the field of biblical studies, Bertschmann offers a brilliant foray into the exegetical niceties and nuances of some well-studied passages. Chapter 5 (“Philippians: Bowing Before Christ,” on Phil 2:5–11 and Philippians 3) and chapter 6 (“Romans 13:1–7: Nodding to the State?”) are the “meat-and-potatoes” of the book. This is also where she gets the title of her book. Here are some of her basic conclusions.

As for a political reading of the “Christ Hymn” (Phil 2:5–11), Bertschmann concludes: “What matters enormously for Paul is not the issue of challenging and resisting proud rulers but the conformity of the church towards its Lord. We could almost say that Paul forgoes *one political reading*, namely the direct setting up of Lord Jesus vs. Lord Caesar and goes for *another political reading*, the shaping of a ‘community under ultimate authority,’ to use O’Donovan’s helpful phrase” (p. 98, italics hers). Thus, Christ’s Lordship is ultimate, and although no specific rulers are mentioned in the hymn, the ending “every knee should bend” and “every tongue should confess” certainly implies rulers of this world. Likewise, Bertschmann correctly argues that the hymn is an ethical admonition; namely, the Philippian believers are to emulate Jesus’s humility and obedience in the last days, since they are actually citizens of another kingdom (cf. Phil. 3:20: “But our citizenship is in heaven”).

As for Bertschmann’s reflection on Rom 13:1–7, the question mark in the book’s title is telling. She suggests that Paul issues an unqualified call for submission to authorities in this passage. A plain-sense reading of this passage seems to demand it. Paul admonishes believers in Rome to have good conduct (Rom 13:3), by embodying a new social reality that the lordship of Christ establishes in the church. In addition, by embodying this new social reality, believers should end some rules (e.g. the distinction between Jews and Gentiles) and establish rules of grace and life, “in which [they] participate and to which they owe obedience” (p. 140).

So then what is the verdict? Is Paul a “political” agitator, especially as it pertains to the role of the church in the world? Or is Paul somewhat politically unengaged? In many ways, Bertschmann makes a strong case against a tendentious reading of Paul as anti-imperial. Rather, for the author, Paul accentuates a cosmic vision of Christ’s lordship—something that resonates well with a Yoderian view of the faithfulness of the “church-in-the-world” (as a co-editor of *Jesus is Lord, Caesar is Not* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012], I much appreciate the balance and nuance offered by Bertschmann). Hence, it appears that Paul is somewhat politically unengaged:

Paul knew the church to be a tiny and politically powerless minority. He set the scene for a church which is at the same time vulnerable and confident, at once powerless and connected to ultimate power, both at the periphery of world history, but also as the center of God’s story in the world. (p. 185)

It is always difficult, and Bertschmann notes this well (“The enterprise . . . is of course fraught with dangers” [p. 7]), when attempting to use recent theorists (e.g. O’Donovan and Yoder) in interpreting ancient documents, especially when those

documents are written by a first-century Pharisee named Paul. There are always “anachronistic temptations,” salaciously lurking in front of the reading of our texts. Bertschmann handles this temptation well.

It is my hope that Bertschmann will write another book to make her research even more accessible to the church and to the academy, especially undergraduates. The book has potential use in both graduate biblical studies and political science courses.

As Michael Gorman duly observes in his *Reading Paul* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), the apostle espoused principally a “theopolitical” gospel (see p. 8); that is, “good news” that offers a robust theological and political vision for the world. The goal, of course, for the interpreter is to interpret this vision. I think we are further along this path because of Bertschmann’s well-researched, well-written, and well-conceived book. For that, NT scholarship (and the church) ought to be grateful.

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If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul’s Letter to the Romans. By Rafael Rodríguez. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014, xix + 317 pp., \$37.00 paper.

In the last few decades several scholars have advanced the notion that the audience of Romans was not mixed between Jewish and Gentile Christians, but was, rather, completely Gentile. Rafael Rodríguez’s volume is the latest of these, building on the work of Stanley Stowers, Andrew Das, and Runar Thorsteinsson, but offering a fresh reading of his own. He notes that the support for a mixed audience in Rome is based on circular logic. The construction of Jewish-Christian life in Rome is typically based on Romans itself, which then serves to inform the assumption that, since Christian communities in Rome were mixtures of Jewish and non-Jewish Jesus-followers, Paul must have written his letter to address a mixed audience (pp. 258–61). Nowhere in the letter, however, does Paul mention that he addresses Jewish Christians, even though he argues from the Scriptures of Israel and uses “terminology distinctively appropriate to *Jewish* discourse and praxis” (p. 260, italics his).

The evidence that he addresses Gentiles, however, is quite extensive. When he speaks of Gentiles, he notes that his readers are among that group (1:5–6). He addresses Gentiles specifically in 11:13 without also turning to address a Jewish faction in the church. In Rom 15:15–19, where Paul refers to his writing to “you” several times, he speaks also of his apostleship to the Gentiles, correlating his target audience very plainly with Gentiles (p. 261). These indications throughout the letter raise the question, then, of how to interpret passages that traditionally have been read as addressing Jewish Christians.

Rom 1:18–3:20 has typically been interpreted to indict all humanity under sin, first the Gentile world (1:18–32) and then all Jews (2:1–3:20). Rodríguez claims that Rom 1:18–32 is not directed toward all Gentiles and not even all Gentile religiosity.

Specifically, Paul's target is Gentile idol worship "of graven images patterned after mortal creatures," which was also the target of other Jewish and even Greco-Roman critiques (p. 29). Whereas traditionally this passage has been taken to condemn all Gentiles under sin, Rodríguez asserts that Paul is conducting "a discussion *with* one party (gentile Christians in Rome; see Rom 1:7, 13–15) *about* another party (debauched, idol-worshipping gentiles)" (p. 31, italics his). This is by way of rhetorical set-up. Paul is expecting his audience to agree with him, nodding in approval of his condemnation of "those people," "confident that Paul's harangue is neither intended for nor applies to them" (p. 32).

The person addressed in Rom 2:1–16 is still the Gentile. The majority view is that Paul's turn here from a third person address to second person represents a turn to a different target, perhaps the Jew who is confident in his election or the self-confident Pharisee who has no awareness of his own need for repentance (p. 33). For Rodríguez, Paul's rhetorical purpose is not polemical but pedagogical. He is not necessarily debating his interlocutor, but hoping to instruct him. Rodríguez follows Stowers on this point, citing the dialogical style of diatribe as used in contemporary philosophical schools (p. 36). Rather than the self-righteous Jew of traditional approaches, then, Paul is here dialoguing with "a gentile moralist who, like Paul, disapproves of those who lose control of their emotions or desires and succumb to the power of their passions" (p. 37). Though he critiques the idolatry of others, he is also guilty of forsaking the worship of the Creator God (p. 46).

Even at 2:17 Paul is addressing a Gentile audience, constructing a Gentile dialogue partner. Paul notes that his interlocutor calls himself a Jew, and he follows this with a list of items in which his target "boasts" and on which he "relies" (vv. 17–20). According to Rodríguez, Paul is speaking to a Gentile proselyte to Judaism: "Paul still imagines a gentile in vv. 17ff., only now this gentile has taken on the yoke of Torah and, in contrast to the pagan moralist of 2:1–6, worships the Creator God of Israel" (p. 49). Rodríguez claims that an interlocutor typically remains the same unless there is some indication otherwise, so that the burden of proof is on those who "envision a *Jewish* interlocutor beginning in 2:17" (p. 50, italics his). For Rodríguez, this person is a Jewish convert but is ethnically Gentile. This is crucial for his case. He stresses: "*The choice between an actually Jewish interlocutor in Rom 2:17–29 and an ethnically-gentile-religiously-Jewish interlocutor will prove to be the fork in the road for our reading of Romans as a whole*" (p. 51, italics his). Whereas some commentators see Romans as Paul's response to anti-Jewish sentiment among a Gentile-Christian majority in the Roman churches, Rodríguez claims that Paul's discussion is aimed at "*enthusiasm* for Torah among Paul's gentile audience rather than any anti-Jewish sentiment" (p. 51).

The foundation for Rodríguez's case is largely laid in reading Romans 1–3 in this manner, and his approach has many interpretive implications, a few of which may be briefly noted. First, Paul's rhetoric against the Law of Moses in Romans is directed neither toward the Law itself nor Judaism. He is not critiquing legalistic works-righteousness as opposed to grace. Paul inveighs against Gentiles taking on Torah-observance, which was not intended for them (p. 60), and, insofar as there is any problem with Torah, "it is not that it presents a works-based system of atone-

ment.” Rather, the “problem with Torah is that God’s people—the Jews—have been unfaithful [*apistia*; 3:3] to the grace God offers to them through Torah” (p. 94).

Second, Romans 7 is not Paul’s lament over his inability to obey the Law even though he knows it is the revelation of the will of God (p. 125). Like other portions of the letter, Rodríguez envisions Paul addressing “a gentile audience that is positively disposed toward Torah,” whom he must convince that “Torah cannot deliver gentiles from the power of their passions . . . and that freedom from sin comes through some other means” (p. 127). Most interpreters note that in Rom 7:7–25 Paul uses the rhetorical device of *prosōpopoiia* (“speech in character”), though the identity of the speaker is notoriously contested. The identity of the “I” who speaks here, according to Rodríguez, is “the gentile proselyte who has submitted himself to Torah’s authority as a means to achieve self-mastery,” a person “who once lived without any reference to Israel’s Torah but who no longer does so” (p. 137). The failure the “I” experiences is due to slavery to sin and death. Gentile observance of Israel’s Torah, which was not God’s intention, only brings judgment, failure, and further enslavement to sin.

Third, regarding the strong and the weak in Romans 14–15, Rodríguez claims that even here there is a fully Gentile audience. Traditionally, “the strong” are seen as Gentile Christians, and “the weak” are Jewish Christians who struggle to live in the fullness of their freedom in Christ. Yet nothing in this text, claims Rodríguez, demands that Paul addresses a mixed audience. In a similar context in 1 Corinthians 9, Paul mentions “the weak” and Jews as different groups, and, while he does not necessarily identify with either group in Romans 14–15, if the strong are those with a more robust conception of the gospel’s implications, one would expect that Paul would be among them. For Rodríguez, the implication is that these two groups do not fall along ethnic lines.

Because Rodríguez offers a reading of the entirety of Paul’s letter, there will inevitably be much with which to quibble. Not everyone will be convinced that the issue in Rome is the proper mode to achieve self-mastery. He has, however, made a strong case for a Gentile audience. Further, he has offered a fascinating account of Paul’s rhetorical and theological strategy in Rom 7:7–25, going beyond Stowers’s seminal work. His reading provides scope for fresh thinking about Paul’s negative statements about the Mosaic Law, the situation Paul addresses, and the ethnic constitution of the Roman churches.

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The Righteousness of God: A Lexical Examination of the Covenant-Faithfulness Interpretation. By Charles Lee Irons. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/386. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015, xxiii + 444 pp., €89.00 paper.

In this revised dissertation completed under the supervision of Donald Hagner and Seyoon Kim at Fuller Theological Seminary, Irons mounts an attack on the popular but recent view that Paul’s “righteousness of God” language should be

understood as God's faithfulness to his covenant. Thus, rather than the traditional description of God's gift of a status of righteousness whereby sinners are justified by the atoning work of Christ, the phrase is often redefined in relational and covenantal terms as the act whereby God fulfills his promises to his people and demonstrates that someone is a member of God's covenant people. Irons instead argues "that 'righteousness,' for Paul is not covenant membership but the state of being legally recognized as *δίκαιος* before God, a state theoretically achievable by perfect good behavior and one which God requires of all humans if they are to avoid perishing and inherit eternal life" (pp. 6–7). In order to accomplish both his negative aim (the critique of the covenant faithfulness view of God's righteousness) and his positive aim (advancing the traditional interpretation), Irons engages in a thorough and detailed lexical analysis of righteousness language.

In chapter 1, Irons presents a survey of the history of interpretation of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in Paul. While there is certainly not unanimity in the church fathers (e.g. Origen and Ambrosiaster) or the medieval period (Aquinas), the phrase is most frequently understood to refer to an attribute of God as well as the foundation of the Christian's justification before God. The Reformation tradition only differs in a significant manner in its treatment of the righteousness of God as Christ's imputed righteousness to the believer. It is in the 19th-century German context, especially with the work of Hermann Cremer's investigation of righteousness language, that righteousness is now seen as a relational concept. Cremer argues that righteousness within the biblical context does not refer to some abstract norm against which actions are evaluated; rather, righteousness means that someone upholds the claims and obligations of an existing relationship. Cremer and those who follow him often speak of a contrast between a relational *Hebraic* and a distributive *Greek* notion of righteousness. Cremer further emphasizes that God's righteousness always refers to God's judicial act whereby he saves his oppressed people from their wicked oppressors (*iustitia salutifera*). This opens the way for Pauline interpreters to now see God's righteousness as a relational and social concept that refers to God's faithfulness to fulfill his promises to his people Israel.

One of the central methodological principles that undergird Irons's criticism of the covenant faithfulness interpretation, set forth in chapter 2, is the distinction between lexical concepts and discourse concepts. Confusion and imprecision occurs when "concepts derived from some contexts are read into the lexical sense of the word" (p. 65). Large theological themes can then often be unwisely predicated of the lexical phrase "God's righteousness," and this can easily result in the fallacy of totality transfer. Thus, faithfulness or keeping one's promises is not *the meaning* of righteousness but is rather a subset or specific instance of "righteousness."

Chapters 3–5 set forth the heart of Irons's lexical analysis of righteousness in extra-biblical Greek (chap. 3), in the OT (chap. 4), and in Jewish literature (chap. 5). In Greek literature, "righteousness" almost certainly originates out of a judicial context and often refers to the virtuous behavior of acting rightly in a variety of social situations. Doing or observing righteousness often occurs within social relationships that are "formalized as promises, oaths, contracts, covenants, treaties, and so on" (p. 105). Within the OT writings, Irons argues for three basic categories of

righteousness language as comprising the lexeme's semantic range. First, the most prevalent use of the term occurs in legal settings and frequently law-court imagery is used. Here God or the king is often seen as acting to judge, execute a decree, or vindicate the righteous *and* punish the wicked. The king is often tasked with the responsibility, for example, of enacting justice for the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the oppressed (e.g. Psalm 72). Irons rightly notes that the enactment of justice will regularly result in salvation for the oppressed *and* judgment and condemnation for the oppressor. Irons provides important nuance to the discussion, then, by showing that the OT texts that refer to God's righteousness as his saving justice are best seen "as a particular subset of the distributive justice of God" since God's righteousness saves "precisely because it is a divine judicial activity" (p. 150). Thus, those interpretations that posit only a positive salvific meaning for divine righteousness are off the mark. Again, when "God saves, his 'righteousness' is manifested ... as the divine action of issuing judgments in particular situations, judgments that are experienced by Israel's enemies as punishment and by Israel herself as deliverance and salvation" (p. 151). The second category is ethical righteousness, and here Irons draws attention to the simple category of acting with integrity and honesty before God. The third category is that of correctness, as seen, for example, in the references to just balances or doing something the correct way. With respect to the language of "the righteousness of God," Irons convincingly argues that the fundamental meaning within the OT refers "to God's justice in executing judgment on the enemies of his people and thereby vindicating his people in the face of their oppressors" (p. 178). Thus, the language can be used to speak of either the act of judgment against the wicked *or* vindication and deliverance of the oppressed. Probably the most significant point Irons makes is that righteousness is not defined by the relational theory that emphasizes the fulfillment of one's promises. This is, rather, simply one subset (among many) of the meanings of righteousness.

Within Jewish literature, Irons argues that the Dead Sea Scrolls show the greatest similarity to the OT usage with a high frequency of God's righteousness referring to his act of deliverance for his oppressed people. Throughout his survey of Jewish literature, Irons notes an increase in the frequency of the concept of righteousness "before God," which is not as frequent in the OT. The notion of righteousness as fulfilling one's promises or having integrity with one's vows is only very infrequently found.

In chapter 6 ("Exegesis of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in Paul") Irons now investigates Paul's righteousness language in light of his analysis of the semantic range of his word study and with due awareness of Paul's own creative insights. The reader will not be surprised that Irons finds no credence for viewing God's righteousness as covenant faithfulness. For example, in Rom 3:1–8, God's righteousness (v. 5) is *not* equivalent to "God's faithfulness" (v. 3). Rather, the context and the citation of Ps 50:6 (LXX) in v. 4 indicates that God's righteousness refers to a legal context where God enacts judicial activity against the sinful and wicked. Irons is not impressed either with those arguments that see God's righteousness as referring to "God's Saving Activity or Power" (pp. 296–311). Exegetical purchase for this view has been found, in part, by the three supposed subjective genitives in Rom 1:16–18

(God's power, God's righteousness, and God's wrath), but Irons argues that this misunderstands Paul's argument. "The wrath of God is the backdrop of salvation. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. And the righteousness of God ... that is the offer of 'the righteousness of faith,' is the central content of the gospel message" (p. 300). Irons is highly critical of Richard Hays and Douglas Campbell for their intertextual methodology that, according to Irons, wrongly begins with the supposed OT intertext rather than with Paul himself. He accuses them of starting "with what they presume to be the known meaning of 'God's righteousness' in the OT ... and then import[ing] that meaning into Paul's usage of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*" (p. 304). They exemplify "the erroneous method of starting with a preformed notion of what 'God's righteousness' means in the OT, formed without reference to Paul's usage" (pp. 307–8). One may disagree with Hays and Campbell here, but I imagine that most who have read them will find this rhetoric to be hyperbolic and unhelpful.

Finally, Irons sets forth his case for reading "God's righteousness" as "the status of divinely approved righteousness that comes from God as a gift" (p. 312). This is certainly a plausible interpretation of "God's righteousness," and Irons leans quite strongly on passages like Rom 4:3 and 10:6–10. However, I do find it interesting that whereas Irons claims Paul speaks of God's righteousness as something "that is either offered to or received by faith," the texts themselves do not support this contention in the way Irons presumes. So in Rom 1:17, God's righteousness is *revealed*. Again in Rom 3:21, God's righteousness is disclosed and witnessed unto (with 3:22 following in suit). Rom 3:5, 25, and 26 clearly do not speak of God's righteousness as a gift; rather God "establishes" his righteousness or provides something as a "proof" of his righteousness. Further, given Irons's persuasive case for the frequency of God's righteousness in the OT as his deliverance of the righteous and judgment of the wicked, I was surprised that he did not consider this as a possible meaning for Paul's righteousness of God language (especially in light of his admiration for Mark Seifrid's important work!). In addition to Mark Seifrid, it would have also been helpful to see some substantive interaction with Douglas Campbell's work on God's righteousness (chaps. 15–17 in *The Deliverance of God* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009]). Thus, while I was not persuaded with Irons's cursory exegesis of Paul's righteousness of God language, I do think that his bold claim to have demolished the covenant faithfulness view is warranted. However, I suspect his own argument that God's righteousness frequently refers to his act of deliverance of the righteous oppressed and judgment of the wicked oppressors holds more significance for the interpretation of Paul's letters than he himself recognizes.

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What Is Scripture? Paul's Use of Graphe in the Letters to Timothy. By L. Timothy Swinson. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014, x + 205 pp., \$24.00 paper.

L. Timothy Swinson, instructional mentor and assistant professor at Liberty University, has done both the church and the academy a service by publishing a light revision of his 2010 dissertation, completed at Trinity International University under Robert Yarbrough. Arguing that Paul explicitly views apostolic writings as Scripture, Swinson sets forth a dual thesis: (1) in 1 Tim 5:18, Paul cites a written version of the Gospel of Luke; and (2) in 2 Tim 3:16, Paul uses the adjective “all” (πᾶς) to bring together two collections of writings—the OT and apostolic writings extant in Paul’s day—under the broader rubric of “Scripture” in the phrase “all Scripture” (πᾶσα γραφή). These lines of argument together support the larger concept that Paul “ascribes to his own teaching and to that of his apostolic coworkers an authoritative standing equal to that attributed to the sacred writings (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα) found in the OT” (p. 1). This notion has obvious implications for canon, and Swinson sets forth his work over against the “canonical skepticism” of such scholars as Barr, McDonald, and Ehrman (p. 2).

Chapter 1 addresses thesis, methodology, and the *status quaestionis*. Swinson acknowledges that it has already been argued (Knight, Meier, Spicq) that Paul specifically includes apostolic writings in the term γραφή in 1 Tim 5:18 and/or 2 Tim 3:16. Swinson’s work aims to give this notion a firmer exegetical ground, making three unique contributions: (1) demonstrating that through 1 and 2 Timothy, Paul uses a number of terms interchangeable with ἡ γραφή; (2) ascertaining that a consistent understanding of γραφή exists in both 1 and 2 Timothy; and (3) using a methodology that makes unnecessary the establishment of a prior, fixed position regarding authorship and background.

Chapter 2 defends the Pauline authorship and unity of the letters. The core of the project, in chapters 3–6, examines each occurrence of γραφή in two ways: first, by tracing the discourse and semantic development of the letter, focusing on the “semantic chain” of which γραφή is a part; second, by arguing for a particular construal of γραφή in its immediate context.

In chapter 3, Swinson finds that “the prevailing concern” of 1 Timothy “consists in retrieving and reinforcing in Ephesus the ‘sound teaching’ of the gospel, and correcting those who teach falsely” (p. 46). He finds a number of expressions to be equivalent to the apostolic gospel message (e.g. “the (sound / good) teaching”) (pp. 82–83), and suggests that two of them, the “word of God” (4:5) and “reading” (4:13), “may indicate the presence and circulation of a written form of this same apostolic message, also designated ἡ γραφή” (p. 83).

Chapter 4 focuses on the immediate context and interpretation of γραφή as used in 1 Tim 5:18. Swinson gives several arguments for a quotation of a written version of Luke’s Gospel in 1 Tim 5:18b: (1) The singular γραφή need not be limited to a single citation of Scripture. (2) Both citations in 1 Tim 5:18 support the previous instruction, and no differentiation is made between them. (3) Within the larger context of 1 Timothy, it is clear that Paul understands his own apostolic teaching to have an authority equivalent to that of the OT, “which in turn raises the

same possibility for the writings of others of the apostolic company” (p. 97). (4) Various features of 1 Timothy suggest familiarity with Luke’s Gospel. (5) A credible case can be made for dating Luke’s Gospel to the 50s. (6) Paul may well be referring to Luke and his written Gospel work in 2 Cor 8:18.

In chapter 5, Swinson finds the primary semantic thread of 2 Timothy to be “securing the apostolic gospel message,” and as in 1 Timothy, this thread includes a number of expressions as equivalent to the apostolic gospel message (p. 115). In chapter 6, he proposes the provocative idea that in 2 Tim 3:16, “*πᾶσα γραφή* serves as a reference to the integration of the apostolic gospel teaching with the OT writings” (p. 159). This is noteworthy in that Swinson is not simply applying the category of “Scripture” to apostolic writings by extension or implication, but argues the point on an exegetical basis. Swinson understands the “the holy writings” (3:15) to be the OT, but contends that Paul also explicitly incorporates into “all Scripture” “what you have learned and have firmly believed” (3:14), a descriptor that his work in chapter 5 has argued is equivalent to the apostolic gospel. By “*all Scripture*” (3:16), then, Paul indicates that the apostolic gospel “holds the very same standing in [his] estimation as . . . the OT Scriptures” (p. 151): *all Scripture* indicates that Scripture includes not just the Law, Prophets, and Writings, but also newer writings grounded in the apostolic gospel. Swinson further supports his argument with an appeal to the rhetorical scheme and overall agenda of the letter. I should note that he seems to overstate his case slightly—or at least to use imprecise language—when he speaks of *πᾶσα γραφή* as joining “two *complete bodies* of instruction,” and indicates that “both *οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης* and *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα* already serve [as] references to *whole collections* of material, as opposed to partial collections” (p. 183, italics mine). This language might be taken to suggest that everything eventually recognized as part of the NT canon had already been written; however, Swinson is not arguing for this, so “distinct” might be better than “complete” or “whole” here.

In chapter 7, Swinson surveys the semantic domain of *γραφὴ* in Philo, Josephus, the LXX, the NT, and the Apostolic Fathers—195 instances—and finds that “every instance surveyed, without exception, pertains to something physically written or drawn” (p. 161). As well, “this same quality attends the corresponding Hebrew term, *כתב*” (p. 178). This survey strongly indicates that Paul has *written* Scripture in mind in 1 Tim 5:18b and 2 Tim 3:16, not oral tradition. Chapter 8 provides a helpful summary and conclusion, and a bibliography and author index complete the monograph. No Scripture index is included, though due to the nature of the project this is not a significant lacuna.

Swinson has provided a meticulously researched, tightly argued, and precisely written case that Paul viewed apostolic writings as Scripture, on par with the OT. Impressively, Swinson’s literature review interacts not only with pertinent sources in English, German, and French, but also with works in Dutch, Italian, and Spanish. Throughout the work, his interaction with both Scripture and secondary literature is thorough, though I was mildly surprised there was no mention of Gerd Häfner, “*Nützlich zur Belehrung*” (2 Tim 3,16): *Die Rolle der Schrift in den Pastoralbriefen im Rahmen der Paulusrezeption* (Freiburg: Herder, 2000). As well, I noted a dearth of second-

ary literature specific to Deut 25:4 as used in 1 Corinthians 9 and 1 Timothy 5, such as the treatments by Instone-Brewer (1992), Smit (2000), Grässer (2006), Verbruggen (2006), and Häfner (2007), but this does not detract materially from Swinson's excellent exegetical work. Untranslated Greek is frequently used in the body of the work; this is not a criticism, as the monograph is aimed at a scholarly audience, but this feature does limit the readership, and a more accessible article-length summary treatment would be welcome.

This work is valuable in a number of ways. Methodologically, Swinson's utilization of semantic chains in conjunction with discourse analysis provides a helpful model of tracing epistolary themes. He does an admirable job integrating this work with an in-depth treatment of the two *γραφῆ* passages. Those interested in the authorship of 1 and 2 Timothy, or Luke's relation to the letters, will find this a helpful resource. The work's primary importance, though, is that envisioned by the author: it connects careful exegetical arguments with important questions of biblical authority and canon, and for that, the author deserves our thanks.

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Commentary on Hebrews. By Thomas R. Schreiner. Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation. Nashville: Holman Reference, 2015, xviii + 539 pp., \$39.99.

The Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation series, edited by T. Desmond Alexander, Andreas J. Köstenberger, and Thomas R. Schreiner, offers a set of commentaries in which biblical theology is understood historically, canonically, and ecclesially: historically, because biblical theology is “the theology expressed by the respective writers of the various biblical books *on their own terms* and *in their own historical contexts*” (p. ix, italics theirs); canonically, because biblical theology is “an exercise in *whole-Bible* theology” (p. ix, italics theirs; thus “the major contribution of each volume . . . is a thorough discussion of the most important themes of the biblical book in relation to the canon as a whole” [p. xi]); and ecclesially, because it takes seriously the study of any given text undertaken by the church in the past (p. x) and because the various volumes in the series unpack the relationship between biblical theology and the “life of the church” (p. xii).

As much as I hate to start off on a critical note about what turns out to be a very solid commentary, it is difficult to miss the fact that this commentary on Hebrews by Schreiner clearly does not meet some of the objectives of the series outlined above. First, Schreiner repeatedly states that the historical context of Hebrews has little bearing on any of his interpretations (e.g. pp. 7, 8, 9; one brief exception regarding persecution of the audience appears on p. 493), given that we simply do not have solid information on those issues. Here Schreiner is comfortably within the majority of Hebrews scholars—we do not know the author, we do not know the date, and we have some hypotheses about the locations of author and audience that ought not be pushed too hard as interpretive guides. So Schreiner is correct to relegate these historical issues to the sidelines; my point is simply that Schreiner has

not done biblical theology, as defined in the series preface, by doing so. The problem, in other words, is perhaps with the definition of biblical theology rather than with the commentary.

Second, again regarding the stated goals of the series preface, Schreiner has almost no interaction with pre-20th century interpretation of Hebrews—a couple of references to typically noted interpreters, up to and including the Reformers, in the introductory section on authorship, and that is all. There is not one reference, that I can find, to the commentaries on Hebrews by John Chrysostom or Thomas Aquinas, nothing from the innumerable homilies of the patristic and medieval eras, nothing, even more surprisingly, from the commentaries of John Calvin and Martin Luther. All we have are a couple of well-placed citations from John Owen and a brief reference to Athanasius's *On the Incarnation*. For a commentary series whose general editors (of whom the author of this volume is one) explicitly say, "In this quest for the Bible's own theology, we will be helped by the inquiries of those who have gone before us in the *history of the church*" (p. x, italics theirs), this lack of interest in the history of Christian interpretation is difficult to understand.

That being said, Schreiner deals admirably with the canonical elements of the biblical theology conversation. Prior to entering into the opening lines of Hebrews, he offers a brilliantly concise summary of the whole biblical story (pp. 20–27) that helps put Hebrews into canonical context. Then, at various points throughout the commentary, he explains how a particular theme in Hebrews can be more fully understood by referring to how that theme appears elsewhere in Scripture (two of my favorites were on sonship vis-à-vis Davidic kingship in Hebrews 1 [pp. 38–40] and on Satan vis-à-vis human dominion over creation [p. 104]). It is in these and other sections on how Hebrews relates to the rest of the canon that Schreiner's contribution appears.

Those particularly interested in Hebrews will probably want to know where Schreiner lands on the warning passages. Let me start with a warning of my own. If you only read the commentary proper, you will not have access to the whole picture. In his comments on 6:1–8, for example, Schreiner argues only that (1) Christians, not almost-Christians or non-Christians, are the anticipated audience of the warning; and (2) damnation, not loss of reward, is the consequence of the depicted apostasy (p. 191). However, at the end of the volume, in the "Biblical and Theological Themes" section, Schreiner returns to the warnings (pp. 480–91) and argues, convincingly, that "the warnings [of Hebrews 2, 3–4, 6, 10, and 12] are always effective in the lives of the elect, and thus the warnings are the means by which believers are preserved in their faith" (p. 482). Thus the warnings are directed at true Christians, the warnings are against apostasy that inevitably results in damnation, and the warnings are (part of) the means by which God keeps those whom he has justified from falling away.

Since atonement discussions have dominated the landscape of Hebrews scholarship in recent years, a few comments on Schreiner's engagement with those discussions may be useful to potential readers. Schreiner's opening sentence is informative: "The words of Jesus on the cross, 'It is finished!' (John 19:30), capture the theology of Hebrews" (p. 1). The cross is sufficient; heavenly sanctuary imagery

in Hebrews is symbolic (pp. 284–85) or analogical (p. 464) or metaphorical (p. 283 n. 463). Regarding 9:23, for example (which may say something about heaven itself needing purification), Schreiner says “the author often writes typologically ... and thus the reference to the cleansing of heavenly places should not be understood literally or univocally but analogically” (p. 283). However, he never explains how the presence of God needs cleansing “analogically,” and so the reader is left without sufficient direction for how the cleansing should be understood. He defends his position in some more detail in a lengthy footnoted response to Ben Ribbens on Heb 9:11, but similarly, in the end, he concludes that “the author is probably using analogical language that shouldn’t be pressed to say that Jesus literally brought his blood into a heavenly temple” (pp. 267 n. 430). And, again, this leaves the reader wondering “analogical to *what?*”

Admittedly, it is not the role of a commentary of this sort to make a major contribution to scholarly debates on the intricacies of sacrificial imagery in Hebrews. However, it is the role of a commentary to land on a meaningful interpretation of each particular portion of the biblical text under examination, and within the atonement portions (no small part of Hebrews) some of the texts that push against Schreiner’s broader interpretive perspective are set aside and left essentially uninterpreted. Others, though, are interpreted in ways that push directly against that broader perspective; thus 7:16 clearly (in Schreiner’s view) points to the resurrection (pp. 222–23), but he does not appear to have considered the implication that, if Christ’s appointment as high priest occurred on the basis of his resurrection, it suddenly becomes difficult to say that his death is the *sine qua non* of his priestly work.

The final section of the commentary (“Biblical and Theological Themes”) surveys some of Hebrews’ major theological themes: God, Jesus Christ, New Covenant, the Holy Spirit, assurance, etc. Here Schreiner offers in some cases merely a summary of the commentary proper (e.g. on the humanity of Jesus), while in others he goes into detail beyond that given earlier (e.g. on the warnings vis-à-vis the question of assurance). One topic not discussed here, which I would have found helpful, was Hebrews’ perspective on the biblical canon itself (i.e. the OT). Schreiner discusses the use of OT texts in Hebrews at the relevant points in the commentary, but a synthesis of that material in the “Biblical and Theological Themes” section would have been much appreciated.

In the end, Schreiner has offered us a commentary on the text of Hebrews that rarely differs in the details from what one finds in other commentaries with evangelical leanings (e.g. Lane, O’Brien, Allen), albeit perhaps with a more Reformed bent. It goes beyond those commentaries, however, in offering serious engagement with thematic connections within Hebrews and between Hebrews and the rest of the canon. For those wrestling (for example) with how the soteriology of Scripture as a whole meshes with the warning passages of Hebrews, or how the Davidic sonship of Jesus in Hebrews 1 emerges from a canonical trajectory involving God’s promises to Israel in the Psalms and elsewhere, this commentary offers valuable insights. In addition, for those trying to grasp the big picture of what Hebrews itself says about topics like the atonement, eternal security, or the humanity

and deity of Christ, the “Biblical and Theological Themes” section will be easier to navigate than most commentaries, wherein one is forced to scan the whole commentary to glean insights from individual texts.

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A Theology of James, Peter, and Jude: Living in the Light of the Coming King. By Peter H. Davids. Biblical Theology of the NT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014, 340 pp., \$39.99.

Peter Davids, Visiting Professor in Christianity at Houston Baptist University and Visiting Professor of Bible and Applied Theology at Houston Graduate School of Theology, as well as veteran scholar of the notoriously undervalued “books in the back” of the NT, has authored the third volume in the Biblical Theology of the NT series, edited by Andreas Köstenberger. The series produces a textbook-quality classroom resource aimed at upper-division undergraduate students and entry-level graduate students. Empty of the multiple charts, images, and sidebars in the Zondervan survey series, these pages contain linear text but also ample space between lines and in margins to write notes. In this series, the paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the NT text is necessarily basic, with the newer material to ponder mostly coming in the theological sections of the volumes.

Davids is an excellent choice to write this volume on James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude. No one has put more time into research, work, and production of commentaries and articles in this outpost of NT studies than Davids, beginning with his Ph.D. thesis on James at the University of Manchester, followed by his commentary on James (NIGTC), his commentary on 1 Peter (NICNT), and his commentary and handbook on 2 Peter and Jude (PNTC; Baylor Handbook on the Greek NT). His work in this current volume displays his deep knowledge of these books, both individually and interactively, his irenic nature as he handles controversial aspects of them, and—surprising but refreshing in an academic volume—his love of Christ and his church.

The volume begins with an interesting chapter that attempts to link these four NT books of James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude together beyond their being grouped in back of the NT as the “other letters.” Davids identifies and elaborates on some interesting commonalities of the four books: a Greco-Roman background, with similar views of God, Christ, the source of sin, and eschatology (pp. 23–29). They all depend on Greek translations of the OT. They believe in the God of the Hebrew Scriptures. They believe in Jesus’s gospel, that he is presently exalted, and that he will return. The source of sin is human desire. The final day is coming. In addition, the implied authors of these books are early leaders in the Jerusalem community of Jesus, and, in the view of many in academic studies, these books are pseudonymous in some sense or other.

The following chapters cover each book and follow the same pattern: general introduction, bibliography, recent scholarship, introductory issues, a literary-

theological reading, important theological themes, and canonical contribution. Introductory issues include subsections on date, authorship, historical context, and literary form (including an outline of the book). For James, Davids gingerly moves through the arguments to the view that the author was an associate of James, the brother of Jesus, who summed up James's message in this document in AD 61 soon after his death (p. 41). For Davids, it is the quality of the document's Greek that ultimately decides the issue against James, but he does not rule against the historic James as possible, summarizing the position of Scot McKnight.

This is typically how Davids approaches matters of opinion; he looks at the evidence in moving toward his own conclusion, leaving a window open to another conclusion. For 1 Peter, he concludes that either the historical Peter, using an amanuensis, wrote during the early Nero reign, or an author in the Flavian period who was inspired by Peter's teaching wrote the book (p. 121). For 2 Peter, someone writing a testament in Peter's name is the author long after his death, perhaps with an attempt to deceive or perhaps with a genuine sense of inspiration from the historic Peter (p. 195). For Jude, after much deliberation, Davids concludes that the author is likely Jude in some sense, with or without some help (p. 257).

This approach seems healthy and mature to me, particularly for a textbook. It allows students not to feel like simpletons if they are not convinced of Davids's ultimate position, and they can feel it is acceptable to favor a more conservative or a more radical approach than Davids, even though he nearly always states his preference and why. For these four epistles, there just is not much to go on historically to help form firm decisions on these matters, and too many scholars unnecessarily come to hard and fast conclusions. Thankfully, many tough issues throughout the volume are approached in this fashion by Davids.

The literary-theological reading sections move through each book passage by passage, with some comments offering just general summary. At key points, however, Davids zeroes in on the meaning of a word or text that has implications toward theology. These insights will often appear as grounding for positions taken in the theological themes section that follows. So, for Jas 1:18, he focuses on the metaphor of birth from God via "the word of truth" as sperm, an interpretation with which I agree (p. 53). Later, this point will come back as a part of his conclusion in the theological section that God for James is not only the God of wisdom and creation; he gives all good things, including life (pp. 72–73).

Davids does a masterful job throughout this volume of showing the connection between his careful and selective exegesis and his reflection on the theological themes for each of the four books, with the result that he demonstrates how these themes are truly from these books rather than from elsewhere in the NT (e.g. Paul) and laid over them. These books have been under-handled and mishandled theologically since the beginning of the critical period. Davids is only too aware of all this sad history, and he does a masterful job of carefully correcting this injustice.

Davids also does a good job of connecting verbally to the intended student audience for this series by at times choosing strikingly common ways of saying things. For example, in his discussion of hearing and doing (Jas 1:19–27), he compares the point to someone saying "Good sermon; it spoke to me," but then mak-

ing no life changes (p. 55). Later, when describing the relationship between faith and deeds, he compares faith with no works to an “elephant in the room;” the faith may be there and indeed rich and deep but it must be let loose in order for anyone to see it (p. 59). When describing the scoffers of 2 Peter 3 mocking God coming in divine judgment, Davids avers, “I guess that is what Noah’s contemporaries thought before God sent them swimming” (p. 227).

I applaud many of the positions Davids takes on passages. The law of neighbor love noted in Jas 2:8 is authoritative and “royal” because it is the teaching of Jesus (p. 58). In Jas 2:26, Rahab is declared just based only on her actions (p. 60). The reference to the readers killing in Jas 4:3 is hyperbolic for verbal character assassination, or slander, not literal murder (p. 63). Wives in 1 Pet 4:7 are being referred to as physically weaker and socially weaker and in need of public honor (and, I would add, protection) by their husbands (p. 145). The imprisoned spirits in 1 Pet 3:18–22 derive from 1 Enoch’s “watchers” regarding the sexual abominations of those in Genesis 6 (as do the angels of 2 Pet 2:4) over whom Jesus declared victory upon his resurrection (p. 149). The waters of 2 Pet 3:5 derive from the ancient model of the world with water beneath and water above the world, nicely depicted in an illustration (p. 227). God is always a positive and caring father, and Jesus is underplayed theologically in Jude, as little more than “God’s agent” through whom God is Savior (p. 283).

Davids’s methodology, as already noted, leads him to discover and describe some intriguingly different categories than most studies of this sort. So, for James, in addition to the routine theological theme of wisdom, law, and eschatology, Davids discusses God, Jesus, humanity, the good news, opposition to human welfare and God’s plan, and community. For the canonical contribution of James, Davids discusses a great deal more than for the other three books: the role of Jesus, theology of suffering, theology of healing, the meaning of commitment to Jesus, and the ethical importance of speech and money.

For 1 Peter, Davids, in addition to revelation, salvation (which includes the new birth metaphor), and eschatology, discusses God (in all three persons) and the community. For 2 Peter, Davids discusses theology, cosmology, soteriology, eschatology, ecclesiology, and Scripture. For Jude, the theological themes discussed are God, humanity, ethics, divine messengers, eschatology, and community. Davids is less elaborate on canonical contributions for 1 and 2 Peter, but with Jude, again, like James, he dwells on some themes: reading the story (of Israel), the roles of God and of Jesus, the tension of standing and falling, and the struggle of differentiation.

Davids writes in the conclusion, “If he [Paul] has at times dominated more than Jesus, he has virtually obscured the writers of the General Epistles, who were major leaders in his day” (p. 300). This volume throughout and particularly in its theological sections provides a compelling case for the essential value of James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude to NT thought. If used effectively in classrooms, his volume

should do a great deal to accomplish the worthy and far overdue goal of making certain that these NT voices are heard. I commend it highly.

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The Significance of Exemplars for the Interpretation of the Letter of James. By Robert J. Foster. *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 2/376. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014, x + 233 pp., €74.00 paper.

This revised Ph.D. dissertation, initially written for the University of Birmingham, endeavors “to analyze the Letter of James on its own terms” (p. v). Foster recognizes that he, like any other interpreter, is influenced by his faith perspective, and he declares up front his adherence to the English evangelical tradition. However, he also makes it perfectly clear that he “does not assume” that James “adheres to the kerygma of the Book of Acts and/or ‘gospel’ of the apostle Paul,” that he “has no desire to try and prove” that James “was in agreement with Paul” concerning the relationship of faith and works, and finally that he has “not consciously tried to impose” his confessional opinions “on the text” (pp. v–vi). Essentially Foster answers this question: what was the function of the four named exemplars (Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah) from Jewish history and tradition in the Letter of James, namely their implications for binding together the letter, their links that may throw light on the purpose of the letter, and their significance for interpreting the letter (p. 5)?

The book is divided into eight chapters; the first two tackle introductory issues. Whereas chapter 1 confronts the historical tragedy of interpreting James through Pauline lenses (pp. 1–7), chapter 2 concentrates on genre, structure, date, and authorship (pp. 8–24). In the former chapter, Foster admits that “the pervasive influence of Pauline theology can make it difficult for scholars to take an objective step backwards when seeking to interpret the Letter of James” (p. 3). In the latter chapter, Foster describes the genre of the book as an “encyclical” (p. 14). While selectively citing some of the problems surrounding date and authorship, in the end Foster assumes the authorial claims of the letter and thereby accepts a 40–62 CE dating of the letter, since it was written sometime during the lifetime of James, the leader of the Jerusalem church (p. 24). Yet Foster leaves at least this reader scratching his head when he later concludes that “an audience comprising one or more groups in Syria-Palestine shortly before the Jewish revolt of 66–74 C.E. seems as good an option as any” (p. 203).

Chapter 3, “James 1 as an Introduction to the Book’s Themes” (pp. 25–58), provides a list (p. 27) and then a brief discussion of eight themes in James that frame the book: the purpose of trials (vv. 2–4; pp. 30–34), the need for wisdom and trust in God (vv. 5–8; pp. 34–36), the great reversal of the poor and the wealthy (vv. 9–11; pp. 36–38), trials and the true source of temptation (vv. 12–16; pp. 38–40), the generous life-giving God (vv. 17–18; pp. 40–42), the response to the gift of the *λόγος ἀληθείας* (vv. 19–21; pp. 42–44), doers and hearers of the word contrasted

(vv. 22–25; pp. 44–45), and finally empty and true religion contrasted (vv. 26–27; pp. 45–48). Similar to most scholars, Foster believes the structure of James 1 introduces the book's composition and James 2–5 functions as the main body of the book (p. 6–7). Thus while observing the author's introduction to the themes of testing and faith whereby the overcoming of such testing moves believers toward maturity, Foster admits that James has “no single overarching theme in mind” (pp. 48, 200). Nevertheless, Foster will eventually argue that the author comes close to a predominant theme by way of five catchwords (*πειρασμός*, *πίστις*, *ἔργον*, *ὑπομονή*, and *τέλειος*) that appear throughout the letter and how they interact. More specifically he demonstrates how “Abraham, Rahab, Job and Elijah are all fine examples of how these five catchwords can come together” to provide for an all-encompassing theme for the letter (p. 200).

Foster, however, does not limit chapter 3 to the letter's potential for a principle theme. He also directs attention to (1) the eschatological lenses through which James interacts with themes (pp. 49–51); (2) the noticeable link with Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, which is nicely enhanced with a chart (pp. 51–55); and (3) the word (*λόγος*) and the law (*νόμος*) whereby he concludes the *νόμος* is “the new Torah which Jesus taught, quite possibly reinterpreted by the Author for his own messianic audience” (pp. 55–57). Ultimately the eight themes in the first chapter of James underpins “the messianic community's praxis in daily life such that its members must seek to live peaceably with each other, control both speech and internal cravings, and demonstrate the reality of their new status as a ‘kind of first fruits’ of God's word of truth as they actively minister to the needs of the vulnerable, whilst at the same time eschewing the values of the world” (p. 58).

The heart of the book, however, is found in chapters 4 through 7 where Foster directs attention to each exemplar and James's use of his five catchwords: chapter 4, “Abraham” (pp. 59–103); chapter 5, “Rahab” (pp. 104–27); chapter 6, “Job” (pp. 128–64); and chapter 7, “Elijah” (pp. 165–92). To do so, Foster engages not only Hebrew Scriptures for each exemplar (Abraham: pp. 60–62; Rahab: pp. 104–7; Job: pp. 129–34; Elijah: pp. 166–71), but he also interacts with what non-canonical works (Abraham: pp. 62–75; Rahab: pp. 108–10; Job: pp. 134–36; Elijah: pp. 171–74) as well as the canonical writings of the NT (Abraham: pp. 75–80; Rahab: pp. 111–13; Elijah: pp. 174–75) say about each exemplar before evaluating their significant appearance in James (Abraham: pp. 80–103; Rahab: pp. 113–27; Job: pp. 136–64; Elijah: pp. 175–91). Admittedly, there are times non-canonical retellings are sparse, as in the case of Rahab. Foster relegates his searches to a few rabbinic sources (*b. Meg.* 14b–15a; *b. Zeb.* 116b) with a brief reference to Josephus (*Ant.* 5.1.2) and *1 Clem.* 12:3, and he makes several appeals to Cohen's article on Rahab in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Nevertheless, Foster traces every exemplar in canonical and non-canonical Jewish works before examining them in the Letter of James.

Foster's concluding chapter, “Four Exemplars—A Unity of Purpose?” (pp. 192–204), restates the threefold common thread that links Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah together in James. First, they have a whole-hearted commitment to God (pp. 193–95). Second, they are presented as outsiders (pp. 195–96). Finally, they face their tests of faith alone (pp. 196–97). Ultimately, “all four exemplars over-

came their faith tests, showed their wisdom and single-minded commitment to God, cared for those in need, spoke God's word or the right words about God and proved themselves to be true doers of the implanted word" (p. 197) and thereby proved themselves to be friends of God (p. 204).

The exceptional contribution Foster makes to the study of James is his demonstration of how non-canonical Jewish texts assist in understanding James's use of exemplars in his developing argument. While similar to Kurt Anders Richardson's "Job as Exemplar in the Epistle of James" in *Hearing the OT in the NT* ([Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], pp. 213–29), Foster's work has improved Richardson's discussion due the interaction with non-canonical material. For instance, concerning the presentation of Job in Hebrew Scripture, Foster underscores how "the Hebrew Bible depicts Job as a paragon of righteousness both within the Book of Job and in the prophecy of Ezekiel" but not as a paragon of patience (p. 134). In the same way, 11Q^gJob and rabbinic traditions draw similar conclusions. Only in *Testament of Job* 2:1–4:8 and possibly Sirach is Job's patience celebrated. While Foster makes no claims as to the author's awareness of these traditions (p. 135), "patience" (or what he argues should be called "steadfast endurance") is what James underscores with rather exceedingly revealing significance in Jas 5:7–11.

Another example is Abraham. Unlike most non-canonical Jewish literature, the NT (excluding James at this point) argues for a new understanding of Abraham, namely "redefining the scope of those who would inherit the patriarch's posterity" (pp. 75–80). Yet James "has essentially followed Jewish tradition in his use of Abraham as an exemplar," and he views "the patriarch's faithworks earning merit in the accounting books of heaven" (as in *Jub.* 19:8–9; 30:21). Therefore, while "the patriarch is declared righteous by God, such declaration of righteousness is based on his whole-hearted faithful commitment to God as proved by his faithworks rather than on some form of forensic justification" (p. 101). In fact, Foster considers it possible that James "address[es] some misguided form of Paulinism" (p. 100).

Thus the praiseworthy point of Foster's book is the procedure he takes in evaluating each exemplar throughout James. He first reveals the depth of Jewish understanding for each of these exemplars; second, he highlights the different ways various authors of Jewish literature (canonical and non-canonical works) framed the events surrounding each exemplar; and then and only then he directs attention to how James structured his discussion in a way that exposes the theological contributions each exemplar makes to his letter. Foster offers compelling arguments for both how and why the author of James retells the stories for each exemplar, based upon James's historical situation, to address the needs of James's messianic community and to underscore five catchwords that provide a possible faithworks theme for the letter. Foster's work is an excellent read that offers a compelling reason for why the letter of James and the author's appeals to Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah should be read on James's terms and in isolation from Paul.

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Reading Philo: A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria. Edited by Torrey Seland. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014, xvi + 345 pp., \$45.00 paper.

For decades, the only real introductions to Philo in English were those by E. R. Goodenough (1940) and Samuel Sandmel (1979). Then in 1997, Peder Borgen ventured once again into the field, giving us an introduction that delved rather thickly into the minutiae of Philo's exegetical method (*Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time* [Leiden: Brill, 1997]). Now, in the last ten years, three more general introductions have emerged in a flood. I wrote an overview of Philo for the beginner, *A Brief Guide to Philo* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005). Adam Kamesar and a team of Philo experts gave us a more advanced introduction to Philo, *The Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Now we have Torrey Seland's edited volume, *Reading Philo*, which is the subject of this review.

If I may invoke the imagery of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Seland's "handbook" is just right for the beginning graduate student. It is neither for the complete beginner nor for the Philo scholar. "The intended readership is M.A. and Ph.D. students who are just embarking on a study of Philo" (p. 3). The book hits this target extremely well. The project originated in Scandinavia, with four of the key authors in the volume, and then branched out to include well-known Philo researchers from the English-speaking world. The result is perhaps the best current introduction to Philo for individuals who already have a basic knowledge of the first-century Mediterranean world.

While there is a chapter or two where the book becomes a little more demanding, the majority of the book is written with outstanding clarity. It is truly impressive that a team of such advanced scholars has been able to present the complex life and work of Philo in such a clear, concise, and comprehensive way. Most of the chapters suggest possible avenues for future research—a key goal of this book. We thus not only gain a sense of where scholarly discussion stands currently, but also where a student of Philo might take that discussion going forward. This feature of the book, perhaps more than any other, makes it commendable to the person considering scholarly engagement with Philo in the future.

The book is divided into two parts. After an introduction by Torrey Seland, the first five chapters overview Philo in his overlapping identities: Philo the Jew, Philo the citizen, Philo the exegete, Philo and classical education, and Philo the philosopher. Then the remaining five chapters examine Philo from the perspective of contemporary disciplines of study. Seland leads off this second half as well with the basic question of how and why to study Philo in general. Then follow chapters on Philo and social history, Philo and Judaism, Philo and the NT, and finally Philo in relation to the patristic tradition.

Seland's introduction to the entire book gives us a good overall sense of who Philo was as a person and where he stood against the backdrop of his world. Then in the first content chapter, Karl-Gustav Sandelin expands on "Philo as a Jew," a chapter that is also clearly written. For the student of the NT, this chapter gives us a sense of how a prominent Diaspora Jew viewed the Jewish Law on topics like

circumcision, Sabbath observance, dietary laws, sexuality, and biblical canon. Philo thus gives us a possible benchmark against which to compare Paul as a Jew from the Diaspora. I do question Sandelin's presentation when he follows Burton Mack in associating wisdom with a higher realm than the Logos. It seems to me that Mack and Sandelin here are systematizing imagery from different parts of Philo that should not be combined.

Seland himself next gives us an extremely well-written chapter on Philo's context: "Philo as a Citizen: *Homo politicus*." He is judicious in presenting the spectrum of positions on the state among Jews in Alexandria at the time of Philo, which may provide some insights into Paul's Roman political context. He does lean quite heavily on the very old work of E. R. Goodenough. Some more recent sources are mentioned at the end, but Seland does not engage them greatly.

Peder Borgen writes the third context chapter: "Philo—An Interpreter of the Laws of Moses." This chapter focuses primarily on the exegetical techniques, forms, and hermeneutical assumptions Philo uses in his exegetical treatises (as opposed to his historical or apologetic treatises). Borgen's style tends to be very "in the weeds," and so his chapter is one that may require more effort for the typical student. Nevertheless, it provides the reader with a helpful collection of exegetical "tastes" from Philo.

The chapter by Erkki Koskenniemi on "Philo and Classical Education" is a great surprise and very well written. It draws into question some older assumptions about education in the Greco-Roman world. As such, it is potentially important reading for anyone whose study intersects with either the form or the content of Greco-Roman education at the time of the NT. Then Gregory Sterling ends the first half of the book with a chapter entitled, "'The Jewish Philosophy': Reading Moses via Hellenistic Philosophy according to Philo." Sterling does not disappoint with another chapter written with great clarity that covers all the essential features of Philo in relation to Hellenistic philosophy, including his antecedents in Alexandria and the various philosophical schools with which he engaged.

The second half of the book engages Philo from a disciplinary standpoint. Seland himself begins this second half with the basic "why" to study Philo. In a short space, he brings the modern researcher of Philo into the twenty-first century. We not only receive an introduction to key books to begin the study of Philo, but we are introduced to electronic resources and sources available on the web. He suggests a helpful order in which to read through Philo's works.

Adele Reinhartz next gives us another well-written surprise titled, "Philo's *Exposition of the Law* and Social History: Methodological Considerations." She sets out a possible method for using Philo's writings to infer information about the social issues of his world, dipping briefly into questions of infanticide and orphaned daughters as sample probes. This chapter is of potential interest because such studies might provide background to the world of the NT.

Ellen Birnbaum did the chapter on "Philo's Relevance for the Study of Jews and Judaism in Antiquity." In the chapter, she ably addresses what we might learn from Philo of Jewish practices, beliefs, and community institutions, as well as Philo's own specific interactions and attitudes with both Jews and non-Jews. This

chapter again gives us relevant background toward understanding the Jewish matrix from which Christianity emerged.

The last two chapters of the book are the ones from which an evangelical audience might hope to gain the most. First, Per Jarle Bekken addresses “Philo’s Relevance for the Study of the New Testament.” While there are several insights scattered throughout this longest of chapters, the comparisons that Bekken makes are mostly formal and perhaps at times superficial. In the tradition of Borgen, he mostly looks at exegetical parallels between Philo and John, with some similar engagement with Paul. He does not engage potential ideological similarities or differences to a great extent. For example, a comparison between Hebrews and Philo or between Philo’s *Logos* and NT Christology is glaringly absent. Like the chapter by Borgen, this one is very much “in the weeds,” much less of an introduction and more like a collection of potential articles by an individual scholar.

In the final chapter, David Runia gives us a catalog of the explicit mentions of Philo in Christian literature up to 1000 CE. Runia has written extensively on the subject of Philo and patristic Christianity elsewhere, so he makes only brief remarks here. He does, however, indicate the significant impact that Philo had on Christianity in its first few centuries and reminds us that we would not have Philo’s works today if Christians had not preserved them.

On the whole, this handbook by Seland and these other authors is a great success. It is clearly written and effectively introduces a reader to the person and writings of this important Jewish figure from the time of Christ. The book is of great potential value as a resource for evangelical scholars, and it will surely become a standard text for graduate seminars on Philo for years to come.

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The Text of Marcion’s Gospel. By Dieter T. Roth. NT Tools, Studies and Documents 49. Leiden: Brill, 2015, x + 491 pp., \$220.00.

The Text of Marcion’s Gospel is a revision of Dieter T. Roth’s 2009 Ph.D. thesis written under the supervision of Larry Hurtado at the University of Edinburgh. Roth painstakingly reconstructs Marcion’s Gospel—as much as it can be reconstructed—based on citations in several early sources. Roth is clear that “there is no attempt here to reconstruct any supposed ‘original text’ of Marcion’s Gospel,” but that his work “seeks to offer the *best attainable text for Marcion’s Gospel according to the sources*” (p. 4, italics his).

Roth begins his tome with a history of research on Marcion’s Gospel. There have been previous reconstructions of Marcion’s Gospel—most notably Adolf von Harnack’s text published over ninety years ago (*Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* [2nd ed.; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1924]). Because of problems with Harnack’s edition and scholarly advances in the critical editions for the sources of the text of Marcion’s Gospel, Roth rises to the challenge of producing a new edition. *The Text of Marcion’s Gospel* generally follows Ulrich Schmid’s reconstruction of Marcion’s

Apostolos as a model, both in method and in presentation (*Marcion und sein Apostolos: Rekonstruktion und historische Einordnung der marcionitischen Paulusbriefausgabe* [ANTF 25; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995]).

After a brief introduction, a thorough literature review of past scholarship on Marcion's Gospel, and a discussion of sources and method, the bulk of Roth's work lies in his analysis of quotations of Marcion's Gospel as found in the extant patristic sources in chapters 4–8 of the book. Two chapters are devoted to Tertullian: Roth discusses citations of Marcion's Gospel that appear both in Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem* and also elsewhere in Tertullian's extant writings (chap. 4), and he discusses citations found only in *Adversus Marcionem* (chap. 5). After Tertullian, Roth presents the evidence of Marcion's Gospel from the extant writings of Epiphanius (chap. 6). In chap. 7, Roth discusses both the Greek text and Rufinus's Latin translation of the *Adamantius Dialogue*. Then, Roth considers evidence for Marcion's Gospel from a variety of additional, minor sources (chap. 8).

Finally, the goal of the book is realized in chapter 9: Roth's reconstruction of Marcion's Gospel text. Roth presents the text in small sections verse-by-verse and uses a system of text presentation (i.e. bold, italics, parentheses, etc.) to indicate levels of relative certainty or uncertainty in his reconstruction. For each section, Roth gives references to the locations of his discussions of that section in chaps. 4–8, where he considers the evidence and gives his reasons for his textual decisions and reconstruction of Marcion's Gospel.

Roth's work is highly specialized and technical. The primary sources from which Roth works are Latin and Greek fathers, and Roth reproduces the Greek and Latin text of these sources according to critical editions. Since the evaluation of a source depends on the precise way it is quoted, Roth's discussions are quite technical, and he translates none of these sources into modern languages. Only in chapter 8 ("Additional Sources") does Roth reproduce any sources in modern languages, and those are translations from the critical editions of the Syriac and Armenian texts of (Pseudo-)Ephrem and Eznik. Quotations from French and German scholarship, of which there are many, are never translated into English.

In light of the aim of the book to reconstruct a Greek text from sources primarily in Latin, this work would have benefitted from more interaction with works on Latin translation technique. Roth does include Philip Burton's (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) in his bibliography, but his interaction with it is limited to one footnote (p. 96 n. 57). Burton's insights might prove helpful to shed more light on a few uncertainties. For example, when reconstructing Marcion's text of Luke 12:8, Roth notes, "uncertainty in the manuscript tradition of *Adversus Marcionem* renders a decision between the reading $\mu\acute{\epsilon}$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\iota$ impossible" (p. 423). The issue, however, might be one of Latin translation (whether $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\iota$ can be translated as either *in me* or *me*), not of textual variation in Marcion's Gospel (whether the *me/in me* variation in the manuscript tradition is due to a difference in Marcion's Greek text). According to the four sources Roth used (von Soden, Tischendorf's 8th ed., the IGNTP volumes on Luke, and NA²⁸), the reading $\mu\acute{\epsilon}$ is unknown among Greek manuscripts, and the reading $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\iota$ (lacking the preposition) is singular to $\delta 59$. Burton deals with Jerome's treatment of this verse specifically, concluding

that *in me* is likely a translational choice due to influence from the Greek preposition (Burton, *Old Latin Gospels*, p. 197). If Burton's assessment can be expanded beyond Jerome, perhaps one can be more confident that Marcion's Gospel had ἐν ἐμοί at Luke 12:8.

On the other hand, Roth and the editors are to be commended for a meticulously edited work, which is evident when one spot-checks Roth's citations against the critical editions he uses. Braun's *Sources chrétiennes* edition of *Contra Marcion* does not distinguish between *u* as a vowel and as a consonant (*v*), but Roth converts the consonantal-*u* for the benefit of his readers. In the several places spot-checked against, Roth misses only a single instance in converting the many instances of consonantal-*u* to *v*. For the amount of Latin text Roth quotes, this rate of error—or, more appropriately the relative lack thereof—is impressive.

Roth's accuracy in Greek quotations is equally impressive. Like Roth's Latin quotations, several Greek quotations were spot-checked against the critical editions, and some of them quite large. Not a single letter was wrong in any of the test passages. There were, however, a very small number of errors of accenting in which Roth has a *grave* (`) that should be an *acute* (´) or *vice versa*. None of these accenting errors affects his argument in any way, and they are very few in number. Opening to a page at random with a *medium* amount of Greek text (p. 304), there are 132 accents/breathing marks and thus 132 opportunities for error *in the accents alone* (in addition to the letter-by-letter text in Greek). Considering that after a careful search of several test passages with an eye for *any* accenting errors involving a *grave* (`) that should be an *acute* (´) in Roth's discussions, and that I could find less than ten accenting errors in a 500-page work and zero significant errors involving words or letters that could potentially affect his argument, Roth's precision is remarkable.

One of the most helpful aspects of the work is Roth's reference system in his reconstruction of Marcion's Gospel (chap. 9). Since most readers will likely use the book as a reference, Roth's system removes much of the difficulty in finding his discussions for each passage of Marcion's Gospel. One may simply open the book to chapter 9, turn to the relevant passage and see Roth's reconstruction of Marcion's text and reference(s) to elsewhere in the book. Suppose a reader is curious why there is some uncertainty in the reconstruction of one part of the verse but not of another part. Instead of going to the index and "trying" every page number containing a reference to the verse until finding the correct discussion(s), it is possible simply to find Roth's technical discussion(s) immediately by turning to the reference given at the section in question in the reconstruction.

Another strength of *The Text of Marcion's Gospel* is Roth's appropriate caution. When reconstructing Marcion's Greek from Tertullian's Latin, Roth is frequently hesitant or unwilling to make a firm decision regarding Marcion's Gospel text. Roth is always mindful of Tertullian's citation habits, particularly his propensity to harmonize to or to quote from Matthew's Gospel and even of his inclination to translate verbs in the Greek present into the Latin future (e.g. see his discussion of *beatificis* as a translation of μακάριοι ἔστε on p. 101). Roth is also aware that the copies of Marcion's Gospel available to Tertullian and Epiphanius might not have been identical and that textual variation among those manuscripts could account for

some difficulties in reconstructing Marcion's Gospel text (e.g. see the discussion of Luke 6:23 on p. 293). Additionally, Roth is careful to distinguish between "unattested" passages about which Marcion's early critics simply did not comment (e.g. Luke 22:42–46) and passages "attested as not present" (e.g. Luke 1:1–2:52 or 11:30–32)—passages either actively added to canonical Luke or actively omitted from Marcion's Gospel, depending on which book was written first (Roth is neutral on the issue).

In summary, Dieter T. Roth is to be commended for his reconstruction of Marcion's Gospel. His meticulous citation habits, knowledge of his sources, and cautious discussion engender trust for his textual decisions. Although it is a book for specialists, *The Text of Marcion's Gospel* is sure to be a standard reference work for those studying Marcion, textual criticism, and second-century Christianity for many years.

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Papias and the NT. By Monte A. Shanks. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013, xiv + 309 pp., \$36.00 paper.

When it comes to the transmission of early Jesus tradition and the development of the NT canon—topics which have occasioned a tremendous amount of attention from scholars in recent years—the figure of Papias inevitably takes center stage. Not only was Papias the influential bishop of Hierapolis and one of the earliest extant Christian writers (c. 125), but he expressly addresses the origins of numerous books that would find their way into the NT canon. Even more than this, Papias informs us that he is receiving his information not just from investigations in his own day but from an even earlier source who knew Jesus himself, the mysterious "elder" named John.

As a result of Papias's critical historical position, scholars have disagreed widely over his significance. While some see him as closely connected to the apostles and an example of an early canonical consciousness, others see him as distantly removed from the apostles and evidence of the continued dominance of oral tradition. Unfortunately, this custody battle over Papias has proven to be quite complex, touching on a variety of different scholarly disciplines and spanning numerous generations of biblical and patristic scholars. What has been needed, and has been lacking for some time, is an up-to-date and comprehensive account of these debates, along with a fresh assessment of the person of Papias—all in a single volume.

For these reasons, I am thankful for this recent volume by Monte Shanks, *Papias and the NT*. Shanks has done a real service to both biblical and patristic studies by culling together a mountain of historical data, not to mention prior scholarship, to assess the importance of this critical Christian figure.

I begin with overall or general contributions that are noteworthy and to some extent even unique. There are four to mention here briefly.

(1) *History of research.* Of particular help was the opening chapter on the history of research on Papias. For those interested in scholarship on Papias, this sort of survey is an invaluable resource to have in a single location. Shanks not only covers primary literature, in both English and German, but even some selected secondary works. My only suggestion here is that a bit too much time was given to Bauckham's volume, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*. While that work should be given serious attention, I might have enjoyed seeing some other works get noticed, such as Samuel Byrskog's volume, *Story as History—History as Story* (Brill, 2002), who provides quite a useful assessment of Papias's historical value set within the larger context of ancient historiography. Regardless, no survey can be exhaustive, and this section of the book still remains a critical contribution.

(2) *Role of Eusebius.* Even though most of our data about Papias comes from Eusebius, few scholars have taken the time to analyze (at least at length) his reliability and his consistency in reporting the facts about Papias. In the appendix, Shanks dives into this critical issue, recognizing that Eusebius's negative assessment of Papias's intellectual abilities and the historian's insistence that Papias did not know the apostle John were no doubt affected by his rejection of Papias's chiliastic eschatology. While there is every reason to think that Shanks is correct about this observation, the appendix may have strayed a bit too far at points in its criticism of Eusebius. At one point Shanks states, "Given . . . the glaring bias that Eusebius displayed in his treatment of Papias, it is a wonder that anyone considers him a credible source with respect to Papias and his value as a witness to the church's history in the last quarter of the first century" (p. 291). This is a bit overstated and runs the danger of implying that Eusebius is unreliable about much more than Papias's connection to the apostle John. If that is the case, we might have very little reliable historical data remaining because Eusebius provides the bulk of our information about Papias—especially the critical portion on Mark and Matthew in *Historia ecclesiastica* (3.39). Regardless, Shanks's criticisms of Eusebius certainly lead to one important implication: Eusebius should not be our only source for what we know of Papias.

(3) *Other Papias fragments.* Accordingly, Shanks's volume presses scholars to consider additional fragments of historical data about Papias that go beyond those provided by Eusebius. These fragments, many of which have been prematurely dismissed by some scholars, allow new voices into the discussion (e.g. Jerome, Philip of Side, Andrew of Caesarea). Of course, Shanks acknowledges the late date for some of these fragments and the possibility that they may not always contain reliable information. Nevertheless, they still provide a fresh window into the world of Papias that has typically been dominated by references to Eusebius and Irenaeus. In the end, Shanks surveys twenty-seven different fragments, the importance of which becomes evident later when the discussion turns to Papias's relationship with the apostle John. While Eusebius argues that Papias did not know John, he is in the vast minority. In addition to Irenaeus, many of these fragments acknowledge that Papias was a disciple of the apostle himself (e.g. fragments 17, 18, 19, and 22).

(4) *Life of Papias.* Shanks also does what few other scholars have done as he explores, at length, the biographical details of Papias, including his education, eth-

nicity, city, and role as a bishop. Particularly helpful was the discussion of Papias's contemporaries, the most notable of whom was Polycarp. The discussion of Papias's death and martyrdom also shed new light on the influence and importance of Papias in the second century.

In terms of key scholarly flashpoints, I will treat two major disagreements:

(1) *Did Papias know the apostle John?* The center of most debates about Papias center upon his historical situation and the identity of the mysterious "elder" from whom he received his information. Is this "elder" the apostle John, or is he the "other" John as Eusebius and many critical scholars maintain? Shanks does an admirable job of defending the idea that Papias knew the apostle John himself. Here are the various threads of Shanks's argument:

(a) Irenaeus and the majority of other fragments affirm that Papias knew John the apostle. Irenaeus's testimony is particularly weighty given that he is even earlier than Eusebius and plainly states that Papias was a "hearer of John" (*Haer.* 5.33.4).

(b) Despite Eusebius's confident declaration that Papias did not know the apostle (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39), in his earlier work *Chronicle* he actually affirms that Papias knew John.

(c) Papias seems to state plainly that he was a follower of the apostles when he declares that there were many things that he "learned from the elders" (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.3). Shank argues that this sentence implies that Papias learned from these "elders" personally; thus, it constitutes evidence that Papias knew John personally.

(d) Papias was a colleague and contemporary of Polycarp. Because Polycarp knew John, it is quite likely that Papias would have as well.

(e) Eusebius's idea of a second "John" in Ephesus is based on the faulty conclusions drawn by Dionysius of Alexandria and fueled by his prejudice against Papias's chiliastic eschatology.

(f) When Papias mentions the name John a second time, it is best understood as a reference back to the apostle John due to the fact that both are called "elder" and the anaphoric use of the article, which points back to the prior John.

As a whole, Shanks makes a persuasive case that Papias would have directly known the apostle John—a case that will be of great help to contemporary scholars—though I do not find each of the arguments equally persuasive.

(2) *What does Papias tell us about the Gospels?* One of the other major flashpoints pertains to what we learn about the origins of the Gospels, particularly Mark and Matthew. Shanks raises a number of useful points:

(a) Despite the claims of some scholars, Papias does not exclusively prefer oral tradition over and against the written word. Shanks provides a brief but helpful survey of the debate over Papias's connection to oral tradition and shows that there is no evidence that Papias had adopted a Platonic aversion to writing—after all, he was busy writing his own book! Byrskog's work might have been a particularly useful addition to this discussion as he explores the connection between Papias's preferences for eyewitness testimony and its relationship to ancient historiography.

(b) In regard to Mark, Shanks points out the connection to the apostle Peter, who should be viewed as Mark's "translator" instead of "interpreter." Moreover, Shanks argues that this was the canonical Mark, which would have included both

the deeds and sayings of Jesus (pp. 186-87). Given that Papias is the first in a long line of patristic witnesses that connect Mark and Peter, it would have been interesting to see how Papias's version differs from some of the later ones (e.g. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen).

(c) In regard to Matthew, Shanks breaks stride with many scholars and argues that Papias is *not* referring to the canonical Matthew but to a different gospel written in Aramaic (presumably still by Matthew). This is not a "Q" gospel, in Shanks's view, but an entirely separate narrative gospel of Jesus. Thus, he takes the statement that Matthew wrote in a Hebrew dialect not as a reference to a Hebrew "style" (as Gundry and others maintain), but as a literal reference to the fact that Matthew wrote in Aramaic. While I appreciate Shanks's willingness to take Papias's words at face value, I find this particular explanation more difficult than the alternatives. It leads us to affirm that there were in fact two gospels circulating in early Christianity, both written by Matthew and both bearing the title Matthew, yet they were not the same gospel. It would be simpler just to suggest that Papias was mistaken in this regard. It is not hard to imagine why early Christians might have come to believe that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew given that it was understood to be written for the Jews.

(d) While Shanks deals with Mark and Matthew individually, I might have wished for more discussion on how Papias helps us understand the relationship *between* them. Shanks is certainly right that the chronology of Eusebius's statements—quoting Papias on Mark before quoting him on Matthew—does not, in and of itself, prove Markan priority. But the fact that Matthew seems to have been written to solve arrangement problems in Mark at least raises this possibility.

(e) Additional attention could also have been given to the way in which Papias's testimony corresponds to the prologue of Luke (1:1-4). Luke clearly values the same sort of characteristics in his Gospel as Papias's elder did, namely eyewitness testimony, an orderly account, and leaving nothing out. Thus, both accounts are committed to the same standards of what counts for good history. Moreover, it should be noticed that Luke's insistence on orderliness is implicitly contrasted to the other Gospels that have already come before him. This may be yet another similarity between Luke and Papias: just as Luke presents his Gospel as more orderly than prior ones, it seems that Papias's elder regards Matthew's Gospel as more orderly than Mark's. Both writers—Luke and Papias's elder—appear to be dealing with the same problem: how to explain the differences between the Gospels.

(f) In addition, Shanks could have spent more time on Papias's knowledge of Luke and John. Although he affirms that Papias knew both of these Gospels, there is little sustained argument to support this claim. The volume would have benefited from a substantive interaction with Charles Hill's arguments that Eusebius did in fact discuss Papias's view of John in an earlier section (*Hist. eccl.* 3.24.5-13), albeit without mentioning Papias's name explicitly. If Hill is correct that Papias knew John (and Hill is not alone), then Papias is our earliest witness to the existence of a fourfold gospel—a significant piece of data for our understanding of the develop-

ment of the NT canon. This would show that the fourfold gospel of Irenaeus and of Justin Martyr actually has its roots as far back as Papias.

By way of conclusion, Shanks has provided a helpful resource for scholars today in their study of Papias. In addition to a review of prior literature, a critical assessment of Eusebius, and additional Papian fragments, Shanks has opened up a fresh dialogue on key areas of disagreement such as Papias's relationship to John and his information about the NT canon. Consequently, Papias emerges as a strategic link between the time of the apostles and the time of the infant church in the second century.

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The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology. By Annette G. Aubert. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, xii + 402 pp., \$74.00.

Scholars often acknowledge the influence of German Protestant thought on nineteenth-century American theology, but detailed studies are few and far between. Annette Aubert's *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* provides a refreshing exception to this rule. Aubert limits the scope of her work, on the German side, to what was known as "mediating theology" (*Vermittlungstheologie*); on the American side, she concentrates on the prominent Reformed theologians Emanuel Gerhart of "Mercersburg Theology" (centered at Marshall College in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania) and Charles Hodge of Princeton Seminary. Aubert takes her task to be the probing of mediating theology's influence on the theological method and atonement theory of these two American theologians.

The first chapter surveys the complex relationship between American and German thought during the nineteenth-century. Aubert points out the numerous links between American and German scholarship during this time period. American scholars were particularly attracted to Romanticism (via Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Coleridge) and the idealistic philosophy of Hegel (via Friedrich Augustus Rauch). Conceding the generally recognized influence of Baconian empiricism and common sense realism on the theological method of Hodge, Aubert highlights Hodge's interaction with German natural science. Hodge's studies at the University of Berlin introduced him to Alexander von Humboldt's (brother of Wilhelm). Later, at Princeton Seminary, Hodge collaborated with the Berlin-educated Arnold Guyot, professor of geography and geology at the College of New Jersey. In this way Aubert subverts the reductionist thesis that Francis Bacon and Thomas Reid were the source of Hodge's theological empiricism *simpliciter*.

Chapters two and three address the German side of the study; Friedrich Schleiermacher becomes the focus of chapter two while the German school of mediating theology is considered in chapter three. Aubert notes that American theologians John Williamson Nevin, Emanuel Gerhart, Henry Boynton Smith, Charles Hodge, and William G. T. Shedd interacted positively and negatively both with Schleiermacher's dogmatic positions and his methodology. Schleiermacher left be-

hind the prevailing “loci” approach of earlier Protestant theologies and initiated the “central dogma” method. For him, Christ must be that dogma out of which the other dogmas of Christian theology flow. He adopted the German principle of the unity of knowledge (*Wissenschaft*) and made it one key to his theological method. Scripture and the Protestant confessions—while retaining some authoritative role—were effectively made subordinate; dogma became the explication of communal Christian consciousness. Aubert explains that for Schleiermacher’s doctrine of atonement, Christ’s incarnation took the place that the death of Christ retained within older Protestant divinity. The epicenter of redemption remained Christ but was no longer the cross.

After acknowledging significant debate about the term, Aubert describes “mediating theology” in chapter three as that method which constructed theology in continuity with the church’s tradition but from the standpoint of modern *Wissenschaft*. Mediating theologians drew both from Schleiermacher’s new perspective on theology as well as the speculative idealism of Georg Hegel. As such, their method attempted to mediate between “Christianity and science, supernaturalism and naturalism, and faith and reason” (p. 93). This theological trajectory entailed a focus on “life” over “doctrine,” embraced the Schleiermacherian emphasis on “feeling” over “doing” and “thinking,” and continued Schleiermacher’s use of the “central dogma” method over the scholastic “loci” method.

Chapters four and five treat the impact of mediating theology on Emanuel Gerhart’s theological method and atonement theology, respectively. Aubert justifies her selection of Gerhart because he was the first to produce a “comprehensive theological system aligned with continental mediating theology but written for American Reformed theologians” (p. 98). Gerhart’s theological method was dependent on Schleiermacher by way of the mediating school of theologians. Moving away from what he perceived as an overemphasis on the divine decrees in scholastic Reformed theology, Gerhart embraced the person and work of Christ as the central dogma and fundamental principle of systematic theology. Consequently, Christ replaced the Bible as the principal source for theology; the latter is a derivative source belonging to objective revelation as it reflects Christ, the primary source. Gerhart did not reject Christian consciousness as a source of theology, a view prominent among the mediating theologians. But he materially reduced the role Christian consciousness played as a source of theology from what he saw in Schleiermacher and the mediating theologians. In other respects Gerhart did follow mediating theology. For instance, he acknowledged that the dogma of any age reflected the progressive development of the ecclesial consciousness of the divine-human Christ. And, like Schleiermacher and the mediating theologian Isaak August Dörner, Gerhart rejected a metaphysical explanation of the union of the divine and human in Christ for an ethical explanation. In this respect, Gerhart became an important conduit for the reception of the ethical interpretation of Christ’s divine-human union among American theologians.

Aubert continues her analysis of Gerhart in chapter five with a consideration of his atonement theory. The continuity between God’s original creation of humanity in Adam and the new creation in Christ is significant. Only in Christ is human

nature complete. In this sense, the incarnation would have been necessary to complete humanity even without a fall. In many respects, Gerhart was willing to revise the theology of the Reformed confessions (particularly the Canons of Dort and the Heidelberg Catechism) in his articulation of the atonement. He accused Reformed scholastic theology of making the divine decree of predestination central to theology rather than Christ. Instead of atonement theory rooted in the work of Christ, Gerhart proposed—in contrast to juridical, governmental, or moral theories—that the atonement involved Christ’s divine-human person as much as his work. Yet he did retain vicarious satisfaction for the punishment of sin (unlike Schleiermacher or Gerhart’s contemporary, Horace Bushnell). Gerhart’s formula, which Aubert labels “organic,” integrated incarnation and satisfaction, divine love and divine wrath, old creation and new creation, Christ’s divine-human personhood and work, and his death and resurrection. This composite atonement theory bore direct relation to the theology of redemption in Schleiermacher and the mediating theologians without completely severing connections with the scholastic Reformed formulae of preceding centuries.

The theological methodology (chapter six) and atonement theory (chapter seven) of Charles Hodge becomes Aubert’s next focus. Hodge’s studies in Germany (1827–28) at the Universities of Halle (under the mediating theologian August Tholuck) and Berlin (under Wilhelm Hengstenberg and Friedrich Schleiermacher) put him in direct contact with key lights in Protestant theology there. Aubert points out that Hodge remained in contact with German theologians the rest of his life, corresponding with Tholuck, serving as American correspondent for a German journal, and interacting with German exegetical and theological scholars in his many works. Though strongly influenced by his exegetical method, Hodge was wary of Tholuck’s predilection for Pietism and the mediating approach. But it was in Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, with his adherence to biblical authority and the Protestant confessions, that Hodge found a kindred spirit.

Aubert’s analysis of Hodge’s theological method is impressive. Acknowledging his deep indebtedness to Scottish common sense realism, she clarifies that Hodge emphatically believed he was rejecting philosophy by following a method of theology built upon biblical induction. He believed mediating theology was being misled by philosophy and he was determined to avoid that error; indeed, Hodge rejected applying a speculative or mystical approach to theology in the pattern of mediating theology. While utilizing exegetical methods that he learned from Germany, he nonetheless argued that theology must be built on an induction of the facts of revelation from the Bible. He did believe that this inductive approach was “scientific” after the pattern of natural science. In this Hodge was influenced by Tholuck, who insisted that theology was the arrangement of facts provided by experience. The history of Hodge’s academic career reinforced this inductive method for him. The courses he taught and the writings he produced in his early decades predominately involved biblical exegesis. Only in his latter decades at Princeton did he shift his focus from exegesis to systematic theology.

Hodge’s atonement theory, as described by Aubert, exemplifies his inductive theological method. Facts were collected by way of exegesis, interpreted with the

help of the Holy Spirit, then correlated with other biblical facts and doctrines. She insightfully notices that Hodge's *Systematic Theology* connects the theological method of Schleiermacher and the German mediating theologians to their flawed view of the atonement. In contrast to the emphasis of Schleiermacher and mediating theology on Christ as humanity completed, Hodge insisted that Adam was complete and perfect in his pre-fall state. With regard to the doctrine of sin, Aubert contends that Hodge's primary interlocutors were not the New England theologians as we might expect but Schleiermacher and the German mediating theologians. His continued interaction with German theology is seen in his treatment of the imputation of Adamic sin. Though following the scholastic Reformed exposition in all essential respects, Hodge nonetheless adopted German terminology to distinguish "liability to guilt (*reatus culpa*) and liability to punishment (*reatus poenae*)" (pp. 201–2). He took issue with the tendency of mediating theology to substitute Christ's incarnation in the place of his death as the central principle of redemption. Against Schleiermacher and Tholuck, Hodge insisted that the atonement reflects divine justice as much as it does divine love. Consequently, he retained the indispensability of Christ's death as penal satisfaction against mediating theology.

Aubert's volume is a significant contribution to the study of the nineteenth century German-American theological dialogue. Her awareness of the era's theological landscape allows her to "connect the dots" between what was going on in Germany and the work of her two American subjects, Emanuel Gerhart and Charles Hodge. The analysis is astute and the documentation detailed. It is regrettable yet understandable (given the length of this work) that she limits herself only to these two theologians and only to these two facets of their theological thought.

I can take issue with remarkably few points of this fine book. But I will mention several. Her description of Schleiermacher as "more concerned" with retaining continuity with orthodox Christology than was Kant (p. 51) says nothing about Schleiermacher; Kant had no concern with such continuity at all. Despite recent defenses of Schleiermacher's (relatively) orthodox Christology, I remain unpersuaded that loyalty to Christological tradition was in any material sense "his intention" (p. 51), particularly when Christ's deity is reduced to the perfection of his God-consciousness.

Further, Aubert's view that Gerhart "did not go as far as Schleiermacher and claim that theology is derived from philosophy" (p. 123) is unfair to the latter for two reasons. First, in the quote he cites, Schleiermacher spoke of "philosophical theology" (*philosophische Theologie*) not "philosophy." Second, this statement should be understood in light of his general discussion in the *Kurze Darstellung* that philosophical theology identifies the pure expression of the idea of Christianity from deviations. A better reading of Schleiermacher sees him denying that theology is derived from philosophy at all. Arguably Schleiermacher was wrong and his theology really was derived from philosophy (as Aubert notes was Hodge's accusation against Schleiermacher). But Schleiermacher would not have admitted as much.

Additionally, Aubert suggests that Gerhart's notion of incarnation as a continuation of creation derived from Georg Hegel (p. 129). But Gerhart could just as easily have found it in Schleiermacher, both in his *Glaubenslehre* and in his essay,

“On the Doctrine of Election.” In addition, she speaks of the theological method of Schleiermacher and the mediating theologians as “subjective” (pp. 41–42, 94, 161, 167, 194). Her discussion and notes do not evidence that this conclusion is disputed. My inclination to agree with her interpretation does not obviate the fact that some recognition of this debate should have been acknowledged. In addition, the support of Eino Murtorinne’s work (p. 245 n. 123) for Aubert’s statement on page 28 is less than evident.

These minor blemishes aside, Annette Aubert’s study is an outstanding contribution to an area that is just now attracting significant attention. I especially appreciated the correction her work provides to the oversimplification that Charles Hodge uncritically adopted Scottish common sense realism. Her volume helps to mitigate a significant lacuna in studies of nineteenth century Protestant theology. Scholars on both sides of the pond owe Aubert their profound thanks.

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The Collected Works of James Wm. McClendon, Jr., vol. 1. Edited by Ryan Andrew Newson and Andrew C. Wright. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014, xiv + 341 pp., \$69.95.

The Collected Works of James Wm. McClendon, Jr., vol. 2. Edited by Ryan Andrew Newson and Andrew C. Wright. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014, xiv + 406 pp., \$69.95.

The Baptist scholarly tradition is better known for producing biblical scholars and practical theologians than systematic or constructive theologians. Even when one considers the most famous theologians in the Baptist tradition—Thomas Grantham, John Gill, Andrew Fuller, Charles Spurgeon—most of these men (they are almost always men) until recently were pastor-theologians rather than scholars teaching in academic institutions. Nevertheless, the twentieth century produced a number of well-known academic theologians ranging from the more conservative (Carl F. H. Henry, Charles Ryrie, James Leo Garrett, Millard Erickson), to the mediating (E. Y. Mullins, W. T. Conner, Clark Pinnock), to the progressive (Harvey Cox, J. Deotis Roberts, Dale Moody). Perhaps the most creative Baptist theologian of the previous generation was James Wm. McClendon. Until recently, McClendon remained largely unknown beyond certain progressive Baptist and Anabaptist circles and among scholars of postmodern theologies. That is beginning to change.

Like many Baptist theologians, McClendon began his career as a pastor before becoming a professor at Southern Baptist-related Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. However, his progressive views on race relations and the Vietnam War landed him in hot water in SBC circles, so McClendon gravitated to teaching posts in mainline seminaries and divinity schools before finishing his career as a semi-retired writer-in-residence at Fuller Theological Seminary, where his wife, philosopher Nancey Murphy, serves on the faculty. Along the way, McClendon’s theology evolved from an early mixture of evangelicalism and neo-orthodoxy,

which was common among post-World War II Southern Baptist theologians, to a form of postliberalism. Unlike scholars associated with the so-called Yale School of postliberalism, McClendon never became as famous, perhaps because he was part of a more conservative ecclesial tradition (Southern Baptist until the mid-1990s, when he became a Mennonite) and taught at smaller institutions on the West Coast rather than prestigious divinity schools on the East Coast.

McClendon wrote broadly in the fields of systematic theology, philosophical theology, and ethics. He also wrote periodically about Baptist identity, a topic of perennial interest among Baptists in North America. His most notable books include *Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today's Theology* (Abingdon, 1974); *Convictions: Defusing Religious Relativism* (Trinity, 1975), co-authored with atheist philosopher James M. Smith; and his three-volume systematic theology: *Ethics* (Abingdon, 1986; revised 2002), *Doctrine* (Abingdon, 1994), and *Witness* (Abingdon, 2000); Baylor University Press recently republished the latter work in 2012 with an introduction by Curtis Freeman. In all these books, McClendon articulated what he came to call a *baptist* (lower-case “b”) vision of theology and the Christian life influenced by a combination of speech-act theory, postfoundationalist narrative theology, communitarian approaches to virtue ethics, ecumenism, and the Anabaptist tradition as interpreted through McClendon’s contemporary and sometime collaborator John Howard Yoder.

Throughout his career, which ranged from the late 1950s until his death in 2000, McClendon also wrote dozens of journal articles and book chapters, as well as spoke frequently at professional conferences and lectured widely in academic institutions. In *The Collected Works of James Wm. McClendon, Jr.*, Ryan Newson and Andrew Wright bring together most of McClendon’s published and unpublished lectures and essays to show the development of his thought and complement his increasingly appreciated books. They present McClendon as a theological pacesetter who gradually transcended the theological divide left among Baptists in the wake of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies, inspiring a generation of theologians who came of age in the twilight of McClendon’s career and afterwards. According to the editors, their goal is “to introduce students (old and new) to McClendon’s work (especially some of his unpublished and obscurely published material), to provide multiple access points into his complex theological standpoint, and to provide a tool by which those interesting in assessing or debating McClendon’s significance are able to do so intelligibly and charitably” (p. 1:14).

The editors concede that their division of McClendon’s work is somewhat arbitrary, in part because he wrote on a wide variety of topics and his views evolved considerably during the years after he stopped teaching in a Southern Baptist context. His earliest essays in the 1960s reflected a fairly standard progressive Baptist interpretation of theological loci, though he was ahead of his time in some of his theological emphases. In “Some Reflections on the Future of Trinitarianism” (1966), McClendon joined in the still-nascent recovery of emphasis on the Trinity among theologians. His “Baptism as a Performative Sign” (1966) anticipated the later emphasis on Baptist sacramentalism, then increasingly popular in England but still a generation away from North American discussions. His “What is a Southern

Baptist Ecumenism” (1968) commended a deeper sense of catholicity to Baptists. Each of these three emphases was picked up by a later generation of progressive Baptist scholars.

In the early 1970s, McClendon read Yoder’s *The Politics of Jesus*, claiming in a later biographical essay, “That book changed my life” (p. 1:22). McClendon began to formulate his baptist vision of theology and ethics through engagement with the Radical Reformation, interpreting its legacy through postliberal and communitarian lenses. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, while he was beginning work on his systematic theology, McClendon developed his ideas in a series of essays and lectures. One programmatic essay, “What is a ‘baptist’ Theology?” (1982), argued that an authentically baptist theological program had been co-opted by other traditions that are often incompatible with baptistic emphases, whether Catholic or Reformed understandings of authority or American (hyper-) individualism. He also offered his first definition of baptist theology: “the baptist vision is none other than the shared awareness of the present Christian community as the primitive community and eschatological community” (p. 1:103). For McClendon, baptists, whether they call themselves by that name or not, are contextual restorationists who are attempting to live as the NT church in contemporary contexts. He developed this concept in later essays such as “The Concept of Authority: A Baptist View” (1988); “Primitive, Present, Future: A Vision for the Church in the Modern World” (1991); “The Mennonite and Baptist Vision” (1993); and “The Voluntary Church in the Twenty-First Century” (1998), as well as in his systematic theology.

In working from his distinctively baptist perspective, McClendon advocated an ecclesiology that understood local churches as gathered bodies characterized by specific “practices” more than doctrinal propositions. While some of these practices are true of all Christian churches—worship, evangelism, and service—others are distinctive (if not exclusive) to the free church (baptist) tradition, including conversionism, communal rule, the importance of discipline and reconciliation, and identification with the marginalized. In addition to some of the aforementioned chapters in the preceding paragraph, McClendon expounds upon his view of practices in “Christian Practices and the Postmodern Philosophical Task” (1991), also discussed below, and applies them to congregations in “Toward a Conversionist Spirituality” (1994) and “A New Way to Read the Bible” (1995). In the former, McClendon argues that spiritual transformation animates authentic Christian practices, while the latter commends communal, multivalent readings of Scripture, anticipating the theological interpretation of Scripture movement (TIS) by a decade.

Though committed to the free church tradition, McClendon continued to attempt to reconcile restorationism with catholicity. In 1990, he co-authored an essay with Yoder titled “Christian Identity in Ecumenical Perspective,” and the following year McClendon pointed to the Swiss Brethren theologian Balthasar Hubmaier as a representative “Catholic Anabaptist.” In a 1993 essay that was later revised into the introduction to his co-edited book *Baptist Roots: A Reader in the Theology of a Christian People* (Judson, 1999), McClendon argued the coming century would provide more opportunities for baptists to commend their vision of the faith without the persecutions and molestations of earlier centuries because baptists offered a timely, biblical

word that was increasingly appreciated by other Christian traditions. It is debatable whether this has proven to be the case.

While McClendon used the term “baptist” to describe his theological agenda, he was very clear that his understanding of theology was informed by philosophy and issued forth in ethics. Before Yoder helped McClendon solidify his radical baptist convictions, the works of J. L. Austin, which McClendon studied during a sabbatical year at Oxford University in 1962–1963, helped McClendon incorporate speech-act theory into his theological method. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, McClendon wrote over a dozen articles that engaged speech-act theory, Wittgenstein’s theory of language, and other postmodern philosophical concepts. Some of these essays were later incorporated into the 1975 book *Defining Religious Convictions*. Years later, McClendon revisited these themes in several short essays, including “Distinguishing Modern and Postmodern Theologies” (1989), co-authored with his fellow postfoundationalist scholar (and wife) Nancy Murphy; the aforementioned “Christian Practices and the Postmodern Philosophical Task” (1991), which drew upon the baptist vision to challenge Alvin Plantinga’s Reformed philosophical paradigm; and “‘Convictions’ after ‘Twenty Years’” (1995), which conceded that McClendon and Smith’s earlier work on religious convictions should be refined in light of Alasdair MacIntyre’s work on narrative ethics.

For twenty years, from 1978 until 1998, McClendon combined his philosophical convictions with a baptist interpretation of MacIntyre’s and Hauerwas’s respective versions of virtue ethics to delineate his own understanding of narrative ethics. “Three Strands of Christian Ethics” (1978) argues that various approaches to moral theology are complementary and, when combined, create a pluriform witness to Christian ethics that is lived out prior to the articulation of doctrine. This programmatic essay helped inspire McClendon’s approach to his systematic theology, which began with a volume dedicated to ethics rather than doctrine. Much of McClendon’s ethical work overlapped with the postliberal pacifism of Hauerwas and especially John Howard Yoder, as evidenced in a number of essays in the 1980s and 1990s dedicated to social ethics for “radical” Christians, the quest for a “peaceable” culture, and the importance of forgiveness in Christian ethics.

McClendon’s first important book was his *Biography as Theology* (1975), in which he argued that authentic Christian living helps validate doctrine. In many ways, his growing emphasis upon the relationship between doctrine and ethics first come together in this work. McClendon’s case studies included the Swedish diplomat and Nobel Prize winner Dag Hammarskjöld, Baptist minister-scholars and civil rights activists Martin Luther King Jr. and Clarence Jordan, and the liberal Protestant composer Charles Ives. Several of McClendon’s essays touch upon this theme, including “Biography as Theology” (1971) and “Story, Sainthood, and Truth: *Biography as Theology* Revisited” (1982). Others regularly reference his biographical heroes. McClendon later built upon his biographical method in his systematic theology, including additional figures such as Roger Williams, Jonathan and Sarah Edwards, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Dorothy Day.

In some of his essays, McClendon himself speaks biographically, framing the development of his thought and commending his understanding of baptist theo-

gy. In 1969 and again in 1978, McClendon stopped to reflect upon how his early neo-orthodoxy developed into a baptist postliberalism through some of the figures and ideas he encountered, most of which have already been referenced in this review. A 1989 classroom lecture titled “Ten Theses on the Task of Today’s Theology” briefly summarized McClendon’s baptist vision of doctrine and ethics. In 2000, in the final year of his life, McClendon wrote an essay summing up his work, “The Radical Road One Baptist Took,” and consented to a brief interview titled “Embodying the Great Story: An Interview with James Wm. McClendon, Jr.” Along with the editors’ introduction and Nancey Murphy’s brief foreword, these essays help to situate McClendon’s thought in its historical and intellectual contexts as they evolved over time.

In his last years, McClendon emerged as the primary theological guiding light of the so-called Bapto-Catholic movement that has become popular among many progressive Baptist theologians in North America over the past two decades. The Baptist-Catholics have adopted McClendon’s emphases on catholicity, postliberalism, an appreciation for the Radical Reformation, and a more communitarian understanding of ethics and congregational practices. Though not officially a co-author, McClendon lent his signature to the document that helped launch the Bapto-Catholic agenda, “Re-Envisioning Baptist Identity: A Manifesto for Baptist Communities in North America” (1997). In recent years, Bapto-Catholic theologians, writing in the aftermath of the inerrancy controversy in Southern Baptist life, have continued to advance McClendon’s postmodern baptist agenda as a more fruitful alternative to conservative and mainstream “moderate” (progressive) Baptist life, seeing both as too-deeply rooted in Enlightenment foundationalism.

The Collected Works of James Wm. McClendon, Jr. is an important work for theologians interested in postliberalism, postmodern philosophy, and/or narrative ethics. But this is especially true for Baptist scholars who have these interests. McClendon offers a uniquely Baptist (baptist?) version of these traditions that is adapted to a low church, congregationalist understanding of ecclesiology, worship, and the sacraments. The emphasis on the importance of narrative should be welcomed by a tradition that historically has valued the place of conversion, testimony, religious freedom, and congregational rule. Furthermore, one does not have to explicitly identify modern Baptists with sixteenth-century Anabaptists like McClendon does to appreciate the existence of a broader free church tradition of which Baptists are a part. There is some validity to advocating a baptist (or, perhaps better, “baptistic”) vision of theology and spirituality, even if one articulates it in ways that differ at points from McClendon. His emphasis on what we would now call TIS, undertaken communally, will be welcomed by many evangelicals, myself included, so long as our interpretations are framed by the analogy of Scripture, communal readings do not completely negate the place for individual interpretations, and some confessional boundaries are established to help adjudicate orthodoxy from heterodoxy. The robust catholicity, less common among Baptists than among Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican communions, is a needed corrective for an oft-sectarian tradition. McClendon rightly suggests Baptists need to embrace a more explicit Trinitarianism; revisit our theology of the sacraments, which is more often

a form of denominational apologetics rather than a constructive account of biblical practices; and evidence greater openness to at least certain forms of ecumenism. McClendon shows that Baptists can consider these emphases from *within* their tradition rather than borrowing from other traditions, as is so often the case.

However, for most evangelical theologians, including those who are Baptists, while McClendon offers numerous helpful insights, his overall program is flawed. His embrace of postliberalism, while better in many ways than the older evangelical neo-orthodoxy of most progressive Baptist theologians, is still not deeply rooted enough in an objective view of a fully truthful Scripture that is authoritative in a way that transcends communal practices. His aversion to confessionalism, his commitment to pacifism, and his advocacy for gender egalitarianism arise from left-wing understandings of Baptist identity that, for many, will undermine his overall arguments. His particular approach to virtue ethics seems to leave little place for normative biblical commands in the Christian life, reflecting more progressive understandings of virtue. His restorationism, which is arguably difficult to reconcile with his catholicity, seems a bit overworked. However, this might reflect his location as a Baptist theologian as much as it does peculiarities in McClendon's thought. Baptists have arguably never arrived at a coherent consensus on the relationship between attempts to embody NT Christianity while also self-consciously identifying with the church universal.

On the whole, what is most lacking in McClendon's paradigm is an emphasis on reformational doctrines filtered through evangelical priorities. In his essays, McClendon has little to say about justification by faith alone, substitutionary atonement, the importance of repentance and faith, and the priority of evangelism and missions. His roots in progressive theological trends, coupled with his close identification with the Radical Reformation, leave him bereft of some of the key theological tools that would enable him to offer a more fulsome—and consistently evangelical—account of baptistic theology and spirituality. Evangelical Baptists interested in the questions McClendon raised might best consider him a fellow traveler and stimulating dialog partner rather than one who offers a workable paradigm for doing theology and church from a convictionally baptistic perspective.

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