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BOOK REVIEWS

The Formation and Significance of the Christian Biblical Canon. By Tomas Bokedal. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014, 440 pp., $39.95 paper.

"What is the biblical canon?" This question seems simple and often receives a straightforward historical answer. In this volume, Tomas Bokedal seeks to demonstrate that the question of canon requires the tools of the theologian as well as the craft of the historian. Bokedal begins by arguing that to understand the "complex phenomenon of biblical canonicity" (p. xiii), at least four broad areas must be taken into account: the effective-historical, textual-material, performative, and ideational aspects of canon. According to Bokedal, all four of these dimensions are "equally necessary to grasp the dynamic, multidimensional character of the Christian canon" (p. 20).

Bokedal first delineates the effective-historical (and linguistic) dimension of canon. For Bokedal, the formation of the biblical canon is "at one and the same time" both a "contingent act" and also a "carefully designed literary work of art" (p. 6). The canonical Scriptures can be understood as "a carefully designed, yet spontaneous, literary creation in and for the church, providing textual and theological basis for ecclesial existence" (p. 7). Affirming both the intentional and contingent aspects of the canonical process in his understanding of canon allows Bokedal to draw together historical, hermeneutical, and theological connotations. While historical investigation often dominates the canon discussion, Bokedal maintains that theology is needed in order to capture the wide-ranging function of the canon within the life of the churches. The concept of canon, then, "refers to the Christian Scriptures as a theologically normative intratextual matrix, involving first of all the contents, but, also the textual arrangement, scope and ecclesial function of the scriptural canon" (p. 11).

Bokedal then discusses the textual-material dimension. Several textual features of the canonical collection directly affected the way it was utilized within the believing community. The presence of *nomina sacra* in the earliest manuscripts of the NT points to an almost immediate reverence for Jesus and his teachings (chap. 3). The early preference for the codex format shows a specific concern for the way these particular texts were gathered and collected together (chap. 4). The clear connection between oral and written proclamation of the gospel and the teachings of the apostles highlights that early on these two textual streams function as a "two-fold norm" and cannot be neatly separated (chap. 5). Further, Bokedal draws out the implications of the textuality of the biblical texts (chap. 6). Understanding a "text" to be a "woven texture that holds together" (p. 201), Bokedal notes that the nature of texts is that they express a unified whole (something the *nomina sacra*, the codex format, and the titles of the canonical collections also imply).

Bokedal next examines the "ritual" dimension that provides a framework of meaning for those using and encountering the canon within the Christian commu-

nity (chap. 7). From their inception, the emerging NT writings were read and reread in liturgical contexts. Alongside of but in distinction from the Jewish Scriptures, the four Gospels and the Pauline letters mutually informed one another as they were read in textual and physical proximity.

Finally, Bokedal outlines the ideational dimension of canon by demonstrating the ongoing importance of the rule of faith alongside the developing collection biblical texts (chap. 8). For Bokedal, the rule provides the story, scope, and *scopus* (its gravitational center) of the canonical collection. The "logic of the Christian canon" (pp. 309–10), then, involves the authority of this collection of biblical texts to have a "free power" over its readers. Bokedal also engages the related debate about criteria for canonicity and shows that "apostolicity" is the fountainhead from which the other criteria flow (chap. 9). Bokedal concludes his volume with a helpful conclusion that summarizes the main steps of his argument.

Because Bokedal's study draws together wide-ranging discussions and offers several intriguing proposals, it will inevitably raise questions and prompt readers to reevaluate a number of issues. A central strength of Bokedal's study is the way it demonstrates that these lines of inquiry actually and organically intersect in a study of the biblical canon. For Bokedal, the function of Scripture as canon involves in some ways all of these elements. Synthesizing a multiplicity of approaches can easily become unwieldy. The value of Bokedal's work here is that he architects a blueprint for how some of these scholarly sub-structures fit together to form a durable foundation for constructive analysis of the canonical text.

For example, Bokedal explains that the special abbreviation system related to a select group of "sacred names" (*nomina sacra*) is consistently found in the earliest manuscripts of the NT. This feature appears to stem from the reverence given to the divine name in manuscripts of the Jewish Scriptures. This shared feature has implications for canon formation, as early manuscripts with this particular characteristic can be related and grouped. Bokedal takes this observation about this textual-physical feature of the manuscripts and directly relates it to the theological commitments of the earliest churches. The *nomina sacra* are not random, but rather are remarkably consistent and grouped around the theologically-freighted words "God," "Christ," "Jesus," and "Lord." "Editorially," Bokedal argues, "the presence of *nomina sacra* indicates a unity of the Scriptures and a particular Christian narrative and theological focus" (p. 121). These particular terms also capture the heart of the rule of faith, a theological formulation that ensured a correct understanding of the Bible's big picture in the earliest churches. These theological keywords represent "a condensed telling of the total narrative through which canonical Scripture identifies God and the personal name for the God so specified—the name embracing the narrative, the salvation-historical narrative centering on the Name" (p. 308).

In this way, Bokedal directly connects the emerging NT collection with the embedded textual feature of *nomina sacra*, and then shows how this textual practice and the rule of faith mutually inform one another. As Bokedal asserts, the rule of faith serves the "crucial function of establishing a *Mitte der Schrift* and a textual biblical whole, as well as providing a fundamental framework for the canon formation process" (p. 120). Strategically, then, Bokedal offers actual literary, manuscript, and

historical evidence for some of the salient theological conclusions that must be made about the Christian canon. The author makes similar types of arguments about the unusual Christian preference for the codex format and the relationship between oral and written proclamation in the earliest churches. This tangible textual and paratextual evidence for this theological and hermeneutical perspective on the emerging biblical collection compellingly establishes that the concept of canon was active in the earliest churches long before the fourth- and fifth-century lists of authoritative books began to appear.

One perennial critique of a high view of Scripture is that the distance between the first and the twenty-first centuries can only be tenuously bridged by historical reconstruction (or is even unbridgeable). In response to this type of historical-critical mindset, Bokedal marshals several streams of scholarship that help him articulate the present function of an ancient canonical collection for contemporary readers. For example, from Hans-Georg Gadamer, Bokedal engages a "hermeneutic of tradition" that exposes the way an "understanding" of historical writings unavoidably actualizes the meaning of the past for a present reader (pp. 21–30, p. 46ff). Related to the process of passing on authoritative traditions within a community, Bokedal draws on Brevard Childs's insight that there is an organic connection between the process and product of canon formation (pp. 16–19, 42–54).

Pushing this idea further, Bokedal also draws on semiotic studies to highlight the reality that the final form of the canon and in particular the "concept of canon" (pp. 19–21, 31–35), serves a social function within a community that views it as an authoritative guide for faith and practice. A semiotic definition recognizes that the "canon" relates not only to physical dimension of the collection itself but also to the "early ecclesiastical use and interpretation in which the biblical text and reading emerged" (p. 19). Against the prospect of an "ugly ditch" that needs to be bridged by historical reconstruction, Bokedal argues that the concept of canon and the reality of the canonical collection is in fact what bridges this divide. By means of its textuality and canonical function, then, the ancient Christian canon is able to bear meaning and speak a word in the present tense and to contemporary readers. In other words, the unique textual dimensions that constitute the Christian Scriptures as canon are also what continually establish them as such.

In this way, Bokedal is able to articulate a model of canon studies that includes the process, the product, and the continuing function of the Christian canon within the believing community. To be sure, Bokedal's thought-provoking study deserves careful consideration. Here is a deep interdisciplinary reservoir from which both historians and theologians can profitably draw as they grapple with the reality of the Christian canon.

Ched Spellman
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

Tough Questions about God and His Actions in the OT. By Walter C. Kaiser Jr. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2015, 176 pp. $16.99 paper.

Walter Kaiser is distinguished professor emeritus of OT and president emeritus of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. As an evangelical scholar, he has published and contributed to dozens of books and articles on the OT and archeology. This book offers to resolve apparent inconsistencies found between OT and NT portrayals of the nature and character of God or in his treatment of people in the OT. In revisiting the exegesis of numerous passages of both OT and NT, Kaiser tackles a diverse range of problematic texts. He addresses issues ranging from the status and treatment of women and polygamy, to questions of God's immutable sovereign decrees versus his ability to change his mind.

In dealing with the biblical position on the standing of women, Kaiser challenges some of the most long-standing assumptions held of the original texts. Did God ever initially intend to place women in a subordinate status or role vis-à-vis men? Is it even possible to arrive at a biblically objective point of view on this position? Most definitely "no" to the former, and correspondingly "yes" on the latter, despite the deeply entrenched opinions of post-modernists, argues Kaiser. When one understands עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ correctly, Gen 2:18 states, "And God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make for him a helper with authority equivalent to him.'" Likewise, numerous English versions of 1 Cor 11:10 fail to allow the most direct translation from the Greek due to erroneous presuppositions regarding women's status, but even there Paul was actually referring to her equivalency in authority. Kaiser disregards the LXX's version of the Gen 2:18 account, however, and how understanding the need for having authority on one's head can mean "being in a position of equivalent authority" to men in 1 Cor 11:10 still leaves many questions unanswered.

More convincing is Kaiser's treatment of Gen 3:16, where he finds the subjection of women to be merely an untoward consequence of the curse and never intended as normative for redeemed humanity. In the latter part of that verse he also provides a much needed correction to the very popular but completely mistaken translation of תְּשׁוּקָתֵךְ as "desiring." It really means "turning rom" or "turning to." In this case, Kaiser understands the text as communicating that because the woman has turned away from the Lord and now instead has turned to her husband, she will consequently suffer from his dominion over her in place of the Lord's. Again, this was never meant to be prescriptive but merely one more adverse effect of the curse of which women have borne the brunt. Kaiser then marshals a host of OT texts whose translations were evidently intentionally skewed, whether in Greek, Latin, English translations, or the Rabbinic literature to erroneously portray women in more subservient roles in keeping with the prevailing wisdom of their surrounding pagan cultures.

Kaiser then spends several pages focusing on three NT texts where Paul addresses the role of women in the church: 1 Tim 2:8–15, 1 Cor 14:34–38, and 1 Cor 11:2–16. In the Timothy passage, the Greek *hosautos*, normally translated "likewise" (v. 9), carries much heavier implications regarding the corresponding role of wom-

en to men than what has traditionally been inferred here. There is no difference at all, for example, in reference to public prayer and the lifting up of holy hands. The only reason for the distinction here is because men were prone to angry quarrels while women were being seduced by the approval of others. In 1 Corinthians 11, the idea of their learning in quiet submission was a radical departure from cultural mores of the time in that they were commanded, much less permitted, to learn at all. And only because of their basic need, first of all, to learn was it necessary for them to do so quietly. The submission intended was to be directed not toward their male teacher so much as it was toward God. While the problems surrounding 1 Cor 11:10 may yet need surmounting, the exegesis of these other NT texts appears more defensible.

When coming to OT dietary restrictions, Kaiser's dismissal of the metaphorical possibilities seems a bit premature. He concludes, rather, in favor of regarding the appropriateness of these restrictions for our health and wholeness even today. One metaphorical option he does not mention is the possibility that the suitably sanctified species all did or had two things that added an additional layer of separation from the cursed ground, that is, they chewed the cud and had cloven hoofs, thus guarding against its contamination. That resolves any exegetical dilemma.

These problems notwithstanding, I highly recommend the book.

Kimon Nicolaides III
Honolulu, HI

The God Who Saves: An Introduction to the Message of the OT. By Glenn Pemberton. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2015, vii + 167 pp., $44.99 paper.

Glenn Pemberton, chair of the department of Bible, Missions, and Ministry at Abilene Christian University, has written an introduction to the OT that is targeted at undergraduate students (p. 1). More specifically, Pemberton directs his book at 18–20 year-old students in a "university-wide required" OT course (p. 1). He presents his material based on the assumption that not all students are as eager to learn the OT as other students might be. Pemberton explains that *The God Who Saves* is not a survey of the entire OT; in fact, the author does not cover every book of the OT in his analysis. The author's intention, rather, is to "build a basic framework" and to give the student enough guidance on how to read the OT so the reader will be "able to return alone" and read the remainder of the OT (p. 1).

In a note to instructors who are considering using *The God Who Saves*, Pemberton emphasizes that he follows the narrative of the Hebrew Bible and endeavors to help students hear the message of the OT from ancient Israel's perspective (p. 2). However, the author admits that he "cannot escape" his own commitments to "the Christian tradition" (p. 2). Pemberton goes on to emphasize that he does not write an introduction to the OT's message "with every chapter pointing to the Messiah." Rather, he writes, "the message is so much more complex and richer than any one theme, even the coming Messiah" (p. 2).

In chapter 1, Pemberton starts with the creation account, highlighting that God is king (Genesis 1) and that he responds to human need (Genesis 2; p. 21). In chapter 2, the author walks the reader through the account of the fall, leaving the reader to ask what God will do in response to sin (p. 41). In chapter 3, Pemberton introduces God's promise to Abraham to bring all people and creation back to him, and demonstrates how God upholds his promise in the accounts of the patriarchs (p. 48). In chapters 4–7, Pemberton walks the reader through Israel's deliverance from Egypt, Israel's crises of faith in the wilderness, the giving of the Law at Sinai, a brief synopsis of the book of Leviticus, Israel's failings in the book of Numbers, and Israel's entry into the Promised Land. In chapters 8–13, the author surveys the kingdom of Israel under David and Solomon, the division of Israel, the kings and prophets of the Northern Kingdom, the kings and prophets of Judah, and Israel's return from exile. Pemberton's brief survey of Israel's history is in the context of God's faithfulness to his promise despite Israel's failings. In chapter 14, Pemberton briefly outlines the books of Wisdom—Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes—and the "Lyrical Literature"—Lamentations, Song of Songs (p. 291). Lastly, chapter 15 surveys the books of Psalms.

Pemberton closes *The God Who Saves* with six appendices. Because the author's treatment of the OT is relatively brief compared to other treatments, Pemberton addresses five issues in the appendices that are normally covered in other OT introductions. In the first appendix, Pemberton discusses the canon of the Hebrew Bible. In the second appendix, he introduces the reader to various English translations of the OT and gives guidance on how to choose a translation. In the third appendix, he explains how to understand the unusually old ages in the genealogies of Genesis 1–11. Pemberton concludes the appendices with a discussion of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Appendix 4), the issue of the numerical size of Israel in the wilderness accounts (Appendix 5), and how the reader can begin research of the OT (appendix 6). Appendices 1–5 include a list of suggested readings. The book ends with a glossary of key terms.

Pemberton's *The God Who Saves* is ideally structured for readers unfamiliar with the OT. His presentation is clear and well-written, and he proficiently summarizes the OT. The author begins each chapter with a sidebar that includes reading assignments from passages in the OT relevant to the chapter's material, along with definitions to key terms found in the chapter. In the body of each chapter, Pemberton includes maps, charts, and pictures that aid readers in understanding the passages under review. At the end of each chapter, he includes discussion questions covering the material from the chapter and the assigned biblical passages, a list of key facts from the reading, suggested research topics to help the reader dig deeper into the OT, and a recommended bibliography for further reading. Pemberton also keeps the teacher and student in mind, limiting his book to fifteen chapters so the book can be covered in one semester (p. 2).

Despite its strengths, there are some matters in *The God Who Saves* the reader should note. Pemberton paints a picture of a God who is "conflicted" about what to do with rebellious Israel, a picture not consistent with text of Scripture (e.g., pp. 195, 214). Pemberton often identifies difficulties in the OT—for example, the iden-

tity of Jacob's wrestling partner, reconciling David the righteous king versus David the adulterer and murderer, the canonicity of Esther—but does not offer the reader an explanation (pp. 58, 172, 274). Pemberton's treatment of, or lack thereof, these difficulties can lead to the impression that the OT is unreliable. The author does espouse certain views that are generally not conservative; the date of the exodus is 1290 BC, Satan is not present in the book of Job, the OT canon was set by AD 100, the large numbers of Israelites given in the Pentateuch are not reliable, and more (pp. 196, 288, 325, 351). Pemberton also discusses the theology of the Deuteronomist (p. 134) and appears to give credence to multiple authors for Isaiah (pp. 234, 265). Lastly, the author's presentation is casual; however, the acceptability of his casualness in relating the message of the OT depends on one's taste.

Although *The God Who Saves* is ideally structured to introduce the OT to new students, Pemberton espouses certain views of the OT that are not helpful for students.

Richard C. McDonald
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

Discovering Genesis: Content, Interpretation, Reception. By Iain Provan. Discovering Biblical Texts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016, x + 214 pp., $22.00 paper.

Iain Provan is professor of Biblical Studies at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. His book is the third published in the Discovering Biblical Texts series and offers the reader a succinct overview of many of the key interpretive issues related to Genesis that have plagued scholarship, both past and present. While not a verse-by-verse commentary on Genesis, Provan does offer the reader a plethora of interpretive insights into this foundational biblical book.

Provan's book is divided into eleven chapters, including an Introduction that begins with a discussion of proposed structural patterns for Genesis and is followed by a basic overview of the book of Genesis itself. Chapter 2, titled "Strategies for Reading 1," covers interpretive approaches to Genesis from before AD 476 until the Renaissance, and chapter 3, titled "Strategies for Reading 2," handles hermeneutical strategies from the Renaissance to the present day. Chapter 3 is particularly helpful due to Provan's ability to present, in a concise and lucid way, the rapidly changing hermeneutical grids that have been applied to Genesis especially since modernity began, which Provan suggests was initiated with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 (p. 33). In chapter 4, Provan situates his reader in the ancient Near Eastern historical and religious setting of the book of Genesis. Here he discusses the ancient worldviews that may have influenced the author(s) of Genesis and concludes that the best possible date for the "historical, social and religious context in which the book first came to be" is the sixth or fifth centuries BC (p. 58).

In chapters 5–11, Provan turns his attention to the biblical text and arranges the fifty chapters of Genesis into twelve "Acts." In some cases, Provan handles a number of these Acts per chapter in his book. Provan divides the Acts as follows: Act 1 (1:1–2:25); Act 2 (3:1–4:26); Act 3 (5:1–6:8); Act 4 (6:9–9:29); Act 5 (10:1–

11:9); Act 6 (11:10–26); Acts 7 and 8 (11:27–25:18); Act 9 (25:19–35:29); Acts 10 and 11 (36:1–37:1); and Act 12 (37:2–50:26). As can be seen by these divisions, most follow the natural rhythm of the narratives in Genesis. However, Acts 7 and 8 and Acts 10 and 11 are not clearly defined individually as are the other eight. Within these chapters, Provan discusses the basic interpretive and theological challenges facing modern readers while offering his own insights and those of past interpreters.

Some of the strengths of Provan's work include his ability to offer the reader a solid overview of the basic content and interpretive issues of Genesis in a concise manner while also drawing into the discussion the world of the arts and literature. Almost every section of Genesis addressed by Provan ends with these parallel adaptations and/or interpretations of Genesis (e.g., pp. 71, 84–85, 104–6, 108, 116, 126, 129–30, 140–41, 144–45). Moreover, the inclusion of copious insights from rabbinic commentators and Jewish historians along with contributions by the early church fathers and later Medieval and Reformation interpreters help to round out his analysis of each section. Further, Provan's assessment of secondary literature (e.g., pp. 54, 74 n. 45), while not ubiquitous, does assist the beginning reader in assessing available source material when interpreting Genesis.

Apart from these positive aspects of Provan's work, there are a few concerns I have about his presentation. First, as is common when dealing with any scholar's interpretation of Scripture, there are a number of areas where I, and I am sure others, will depart from Provan's conclusions, especially when dealing with Genesis 1–11. Nevertheless, his insights are helpful in just as many, if not more, areas of this often controversial biblical book. Second, there are a few mistakes in the book that need to be addressed in a second printing.

Another area of concern I had was in Provan's imbalance when handling the general content of Genesis. He devotes 71 pages to the first eleven chapters of Genesis and only 58 pages to chapters 12–50. While I understand that some of this imbalance may be related to the interpretive difficulties of the Primeval History, I did expect a somewhat more balanced approach to the entire book. For example, one would expect a more thorough handling of the interpretive concerns surrounding Genesis 19, especially in light of our postmodern context.

Despite these concerns, there can be no question that Provan's contribution to the study of Genesis will go a long way in aiding the novice and the scholar alike when handling Genesis. I know that I appreciate his inclusion of a number of rabbinic works and the detailed footnoting, which will aid anyone working with the text of Genesis. Furthermore, his concise presentation of the historical critical approaches in chapter 3, especially those found on pages 35–48 (source, form, redaction, rhetorical criticisms, and more), is a superb introduction for students at any level of study. Provan's book will make for an excellent introduction for anyone teaching a class on Genesis, especially if instruction in diverse hermeneutical trends is the focus.

Brian Neil Peterson
Lee University, Cleveland, TN

Judges and Ruth: God in Chaos. Barry G. Webb. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015, 304 pp., $32.99.

As author Barry Webb himself admits, this work is more "a series of sermons" (p. 13) than a conventional verse-by-verse commentary. Barry Webb's subtitle *God in Chaos* is intended to suggest the books of Judges and Ruth are thematically interconnected, which he attempts to clarify as God working, out of "the apparently insoluble problem of Israel's cyclic sin," toward a trajectory of solutions that finds its fulfilment in "the Redeemer-King born in Bethlehem" (p. 278). In a brief preface, the author declares his purpose as one of inspiring the kind of preaching that will lead people to Christ, after laying out his philosophy of preaching, which may be characterized as passionate, confident, and Christocentric.

The commentary itself consists of twenty-one chapters on the book of Judges and four chapters on the book of Ruth. While the latter four chapters coincide with the chapter divisions of the book of Ruth, the chapters devoted to the book of Judges reflect convenient subject divisions and hence the length of text dealt with varies significantly from one chapter to another. For example, Webb's entire chapter 7 is devoted to one verse about Shamgar (Judg 3:31), while Webb's chapters 19 and 21 cover three biblical chapters each (Judges 14–16 and 19–21, respectively). On the other hand, Judges 5, the so-called the song of Deborah, is treated over three book chapters under different subject headings ("Singing," "Mothers," and "Mavericks").

Each chapter follows the pattern of a typical expository sermon. It begins with an introduction of the theme, with or without a concrete illustration, usually from the author's personal experience, and moves on to an exposition of the text in question. Here Webb's mode of exposition is not a verse-by-verse combing through the text, but instead he tends to be selective in his exegesis so as to make the point of his sermon culminate naturally at the end of the chapter. This selectivity is demonstrated most clearly in his exposition on Samson's life. Chapter 19 purports to cover Judg 14:1–16:31, but the author focuses on discussing 16:4 and 16:17 under the headings "Samson's Loving" and "His Secret Desire." As is typical in an expository sermon, each chapter concludes with some application points and an illustration. The author keeps the notes to a minimum at the end of the book and most notes are intended for lay people, not scholars. Three indices conclude the book: Scripture, Subject, and Sermon Illustrations, the last of which highlights the characteristic of this commentary.

One feature that distinguishes this commentary from others is its doctrinal soundness and pastoral wisdom. Webb's theological comments derive from his commitment to sound evangelical doctrines (e.g. the unity and authority of Scripture, limited atonement, God's total sovereignty, and more). He always concludes his chapters with comments about how the OT is fulfilled in Christ. He does not shy away from otherwise offensive terms as "hell" (p. 168) or "the reprobate" (p. 67). Further, he invariably finds the invisible divine hand behind innocent human affairs (e.g. his exposition on Shamgar, chap. 7). In spite of all this, he warns evangelical readers of the danger of absolutizing our theological system "lest we make

the same mistake the Pharisees did" (p. 262), though he does not hesitate from setting limits to some open postures (e.g. homosexuality, p. 279). The author never misses an opportunity to share pastoral wisdom on many practical issues such as marrying an unbeliever (p. 62).

Having said this, the following reservations need to be noted. First, Webb sometimes does not bother to explain controversial issues to the readers. The author simply assumes a particular position and appropriates it to his homiletic purpose. For instance, although Webb admits the possibility of non-chronological arrangement of episodes in the book of Judges (p. 280), he assumes, without much explanation, the chronological arrangement of the episodes, and this assumption plays an important role in his expositions of Tola and Jair. This is understandable since the author characterizes the book as a series of sermons stripped of all scholarly ostentations.

Second, Webb could have been more sensitive to various genres of the text. Although the book of Judges is mostly in the form of a narrative, some portions are not. Judges 5 is one of the oldest poems in the Bible and Jotham's prophecy is a parable. Nevertheless, Webb takes a literal approach to these texts. The author's penchant for literal interpretation is manifest in his hesitation about whether or not the death of Abimelech by a woman in Thebez is the fulfillment of Jotham's prophecy, according to which fire should have come upon him (p. 283). The parabolic nature of Jotham's prophecy makes it unreasonable to expect its literal fulfilment. Another example comes from his exposition of how Barak defeated the stronger and better equipped army of Sisera. Based on the poetic line "Torrent Kishon swept them away" (Judg 5:21), Webb argues that Barak's army was able to defeat the enemy because of a fortuitous storm and the flash flood it caused. But the verse immediately preceding it (v. 20) mentions another circumstance that aids Barak; namely, the stars mobilized to defeat the enemy! As I read them, these are metaphors and are not to be interpreted literally.

Third, in evaluating the heroes' virtues or vices, Webb appears to resort to contemporary Western ethics as the standard. For instance, the author deems Ehud's way of killing Eglon negatively, calling him a devious "man of violence" (p. 85). Though Ehud certainly did resort to trickery in assassinating the Moabite king, this does not make him morally wrong, as the Israelites were living miserably under Eglon's oppressive rule and his action heralds an era of freedom and independence for them. Assassination is often the only mode of resistance available to the oppressed.

All this does not detract from the fact that Webb has done a service to evangelical preachers and lay readers alike by providing a very readable, theologically sound, relevant-to-life, and exegetically dependable commentary on Judges and Ruth. This commentary will help people read the biblical text more closely with an eye to its application, and not to merely scholarly interest.

Koowon Kim
Reformed Theological Seminary, Seoul, Korea

On Biblical Poetry. By F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 624 pp., $74.00.

On Biblical Poetry by F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, a seasoned professor of OT at Princeton Theological Seminary, provides a rich feast on the nature and essence of biblical poetry that is informative, insightful, and thoroughly illustrated from biblical poetry itself. The author brings to bear poetic theory from across an incredibly wide spectrum of traditions and methodologies, especially Walt Whitman's free verse.

While Dobbs-Allsopp acknowledges that he is not presenting a "comprehensive statement on the nature and art of biblical poetry" (p. 13), he does discuss four topics in four lengthy chapters: line, rhythm, the lyrical nature of biblical poetry, and orality/textuality. These four theoretical chapters are followed by an implementation of his theory in a close reading of Psalm 133. This book is not a quick read, but one that should be savored.

The first chapter is "Verse, Properly So Called," a title garnered from Lowth's work on Isaiah. In this chapter, Dobbs-Allsopp asserts that any understanding of Hebrew poetry must begin with the line as the basic unit. He carefully defines poetry in a way that gives the reader a healthy definitional dose of the meta-terminology needed to describe the line (stich, colon [Greek], verse [Latin], and line [English]) and notes that the line is what distinguishes poetry as poetry. He reviews a history of the line in various chirographic manuscript traditions beginning with line spacing in the Dead Sea Scrolls of Psalms, which had three different ways of formatting poetic texts. He compares and contrasts those to the diverse ways in which the Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Masoretic text wrote poetic lines that were varied and not always lineated. He concludes, "It simply does not follow that verse will inevitably be distinguished in writing, let alone lined out" (p. 36) using spacing techniques of various sorts. Such graphic lineation is for the eye, whereas the original poems were performed orally for the ear. The line is influenced syntactically as sentences are the hallmark of oral art forms. Lines are not always neat and tidy. The author discusses parallelism, but not in the traditional categories of synonymous, antithetic, synthetic, or in an "A, what's more B" sense. Instead, he sees parallelism as one feature among others that sets the boundaries of the line (syntax, semantic, formulaic expressions, acrostics, anaphora, sound play, and more; see pp. 68–74).

The second chapter, "Free Rhythms of Biblical Hebrew Poetry," is where Dobbs-Allsopp really unleashes his inner Whitman. Here he exposes the mania of trying to find meter in Hebrew poetry–a pursuit that dominated scholarship for centuries. Hrushovski proposes free verse rhythm rather than meter as the base for Hebrew prosody. Meter is highly-patterned that often counts stresses. Rhythm, on the other hand, is much more flexible and diverse, heightening through a myriad of less regulated means (sounds, syntax, morphology, phrasing, meaning, and even parallelism). The result is poetry with the feeling of rhythmically breaking waves. Rhythm is patterned, but not strictly or countably so. An analogy is drawn between the free rhythm of written poetry and a music score that is a guide awaiting actual performance. Dobbs-Allsopp also explores examples of how rhythmic patterns are

implemented in anaphora (Psalm 13) and acrostics (Psalm 119; Proverbs 31). The function of rhythm "can heighten language, project forward movement, elaborate a sense of design and control, underscore closure, effect memorability and mimetic and emotional suggestiveness" (p. 107). The author then illustrates rhythm in Psalm 1, with the "tree" manifesting long lines and the "chaff" having short lines.

Dobbs-Allsopp highlights rhythm in the syntax of Psalm 19's Torah section, where the repetition of perfect verbs oscillates with verbless clauses. Lamentations 2:1–8 has clause after clause with verbs depicting Yahweh's devastating destruction of Jerusalem, while Song of Songs 4:1–7 has verbless clauses describing the lad's admiring gaze. Parallelism itself can be harnessed by rhythm. He illustrates its use in Proverbs 7 where the young man is described with parallelism that disappears when the "strange" woman appears, thus rhythmically miming "the woman's unruly . . . behavior" (p. 146). With an ear to orality, the author highlights sound play as an underappreciated dimension of biblical poetics.

In his third chapter, Dobbs-Allsopp argues that much of biblical poetry should be understood as lyric as opposed to epic or drama. Lyric comes in a variety of modes such as song, supplication, pronouncement, lament, and prayer, among others, but was originally connected to music. The author cites examples of biblical poetry and links them to songs via the appellation *shir* (song) or *mizmor* (psalm) as well as through the musical instruments so often referenced in the Psalms.

Next, Dobbs-Allsopp examines many features of lyric poetry, beginning with lyric as non-narrative (lacking plot, character development). It is ordered rather by features such as chiasms, refrains, patterned repetitions, parallelisms, and inclusios, and is more topicalized. Lyric is often an utterance of a first-person voice that encourages it to be re-uttered and universalized in ritual expressions. Lyric features an emotional aspect exposing the inner lives of its speakers (e.g. Song of Songs), and is also highly troped with word play, personification, apostrophe, and especially hyperbole or extravagance with an extensive use of metaphor. Dobbs-Allsopp succeeds in his attempt to (re)introduce the notion of "lyric" into our critical understanding of the inner workings of biblical poetry; yet, he is also aware of gnomic and prophetic poetry, though that is outside the scope of this present work.

The book's fourth chapter is "An Informing Orality," wherein the author describes the emergence of textuality and its continuing relationship to orality. He discusses the intersection of orality, literacy, and textuality with great insight, and contrasts non-narrative biblical poetry to the formulaic orality employed by the Parry-Lord paradigm. The "informing orality" is not only tracing bits of performative contexts into the written texts but also how the oral environment is still retained even after a poem is written down (pp. 232, 236, 298–300). Many of the features of biblical poetic style (e.g. short lines, simple clause structure, parataxis, parallelism, and rhythmicity) are characteristic of oral verbal art. Dobbs-Allsopp illustrates his informing orality in Jeremiah 36, where Baruch copies down the oral words of Jeremiah (cf. Ps 45:2). Evangelicals such as John Walton and Brent Sandy (*The Lost World of Scripture*) are also helping to introduce these nascent concepts of orality.

On Biblical Poetry concludes with a delightful chapter in which Dobbs-Allsopp applies his poetic theory to Psalm 133. In this short poem, he provides a rich model for how biblical poetry is to be read.

The only criticisms I have do not reflect on the substance of this book at all. They are: (1) the book uses endnotes that force the reader to flip back and forth to get the fullness of what was being said; (2) the graphic images used to confirm points about how early poetry was written were often too small and ill placed (p. 233); and (3) the text used transliteration rather than Hebrew letters; my preference is to see the Hebrew characters.

In sum, this is a rewarding, scholarly book that invites the reader into the delightful depths of biblical poetry. I cannot recommend it highly enough as it furthers the discussions begun by giants such as Lowth, O'Connor, and others who have made significant contributions (e.g. Berlin, Kugel, Cooper, and Alter). It is heavy plowing but definitely worth the effort. F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp's *On Biblical Poetry* is perhaps the best book written on biblical poetry in a generation.

Ted Hildebrandt
Gordon College, Wenham, MA

The Cultural Life Setting of the Proverbs. By John J. Pilch. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016, xiv + 234 pp., $29.00 paper.

John J. Pilch has provided a very practical volume aimed at offering insights upon Scripture from the social sciences, in the vein of his co-authored six-volume *Social Science Commentary on the NT* (1992–2013). In this volume on the book of Proverbs, Pilch's approach incorporates the findings of disciplines like anthropology, social psychology, sociolinguistics, and so forth, to approximate the "most culturally plausible interpretation" of Proverbs (p. vii). The concern is thus to "discover what the proverbs were expressing within the social setting of their society by examining the typical circum-Mediterranean [sic] social behaviors witnessed to in these aphorisms" (p. viii).

Pilch has formatted the volume into two mutually-informing sections. These consist first of the "Outline of the Book of Proverbs" with what Pilch calls "Textual Notes," and, second, the "Reading Scenarios for the Book of Proverbs" section that is more for reference. The bulk of the volume consists of the commentary-style "Outline" section. Here, Pilch presents the English text (NRSV with minor modifications) of the entire book of Proverbs, organized by chapter and interspersed with his Textual Notes. The outline is as follows:

I.	Proverbs 1–9	(pp. 1–30)
II.	Proverbs 10:1–22:16	(pp. 31–115)
III.	Proverbs 22:17–24:22	(pp. 115–28)
IV.	Proverbs 24:23–34	(pp. 128–30)
V.	Proverbs 25–29	(pp. 131–60)
VI.	Proverbs 30:1–31:9	(pp. 161–68)
VII.	Proverbs 31:10–31	(pp. 168–71)

Because he is focused upon those proverbs that stand to benefit from sociocultural background information, the Textual Notes of Pilch's commentary are selective, and do not treat every verse. Furthermore, throughout the commentary, the ► symbol appears, paired with boldfaced terms or phrases that key to the second part of the volume, where they are alphabetically organized as headwords. Thus, the Reading Scenario headings ►**Hospitality**, ►**Patronage**, and ►**Evil Eye**, for example, appear throughout the first section and are expanded upon in the second section. In this way, the Textual Notes and the Reading Scenario headwords are meant to function in tandem to "help the modern reader develop a considerate posture towards the ancient author" from a sociocultural point of view (p. ix).

The Reading Scenario headwords found in the second section of the volume are drawn from the *Social Science Commentary on the NT*. Each heading receives fairly brief discussion, between one and five pages in length, with some references to Scripture (including the NT) and secondary literature. Pilch employs a total of twenty-two Reading Scenario headwords, which are indexed on pages 225–26. The most common include Lying (22×), Agonism (21×), Rich and Poor (18×), and Honor and Shame (17×). By far the most frequent, however, is what Pilch terms "Three-Zone Personality" (66×). Pilch explains Three-Zone Personality as an emic psychological feature that disallows intimate self-knowledge. Rather, the human person is understood externally through three symbolic "zones." These zones include the three concepts (and their related terminology): (1) *Heart and Eyes*, the zone of purposeful observation and thinking; (2) *Mouth and Ears*, the zone of self-expressive speech; and (3) *Hands and Feet*, the zone of purposeful activity. Because it appears so frequently, this concept supplies a significant framework for the volume.

Certain features of this book deserve some critique. While it is not meant to be a thoroughgoing academic volume, Pilch's citation and discussion of relevant literature is unfortunately sparse. Those unfamiliar with the social sciences – presumably most readers – will find virtually no introductory material to help understand the discipline, nor Pilch's angle within it. The social sciences are extremely methodologically diverse. So far as I can tell, the only way to discover precisely how the conclusions that Pilch so deftly summarizes were reached is to read the secondary literature for oneself. Even if one were to do so, questionable aspects of applying a social-scientific approach to ancient literature would remain. Since the social sciences are grounded upon observations made and methodology developed within the modern context, one wonders whether their application to Scripture occasionally amounts to a more academically rigorous exercise in eisegesis.

The most problematic feature of this volume is the Three-Zone Personality concept, which treads into the hazardous terrain of applying abstract social psychology to the ancient authors of Scripture, who Pilch occasionally calls "the Semites" (p. 222). This psychological model appears to depend entirely upon the work of the mid-20th-century Belgian scholar Bernard de Géradon, who promoted the notion of a "Semitic view" of the human person. According to both Pilch and de Géradon, "people in the biblical world focused *concretely on the body*. They were *not*

at all introspective" (p. 218, emphasis added). Somewhat astonishingly, it is this psychology that Pilch finds in "practically all" of the very proverbs that have nonetheless generated millennia of personal introspection and theological reflection (p. xiii).

These drawbacks are navigable with the right awareness. Overall, Pilch is to be commended for his desire and effort to help modern readers avoid imposing culturally incompatible interpretations upon the proverbs. While many interpreters are busy undertaking, for example, postcolonial or transgender "readings" of Scripture, it is refreshing to see concern for the ancient historical context directed towards accurate textual understanding. All the more so it is good when it appears at an accessible level that will benefit pastors and the concerned layperson, aware of the danger of unwitting eisegesis born simply of unfamiliarity with the very cultural and social factors Pilch discusses. Accordingly, there is much to be gleaned from this volume that will at least flag issues for further critical reflection and historical research. To that extent, Pilch has produced a useful resource that will assist those reading and expounding the pithy yet profound wisdom in the book of Proverbs.

William A. Ross
University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Time in the Book of Ecclesiastes. By Mette Bundvad. Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 211 pp., $110.

Time in the Book of Ecclesiastes explores time in terms of the past, present, and future. Mette Bundvad argues that Qoheleth has a thesis about time—a thesis that, when all is said and done, is decidedly unenthusiastic about the human project of making sense out of our location in time. Qoheleth investigates time, the basic dimension of human existence, and discovers a dimension inaccessible to the human mind. Bundvad sets out to follow Qoheleth's wrestling with time in Ecclesiastes.

After investigating the framing poems (Eccl 1:4–11; 12:1–7) in chapter 3, Bundvad claims that time is *the* basic condition for human life (p. 72). Furthermore, the framing poems expose a clash for humans in their experience of time: there is a tension between what is repetitive in the cosmological order of things and the finite, linear motion of humans through time. The upshot is that in the first poem, we learn not to expect a meaningful sense of human continuity in life; while in the second, owing to the inevitable threat of death, Qoheleth's quest for some permanent gain in life is futile (p. 73). Not only are there no temporal points of orientation available in life, humans are, in the final analysis, unable to understand the character of the time that fences us in. Bundvad affirms that this last point emerges repeatedly in Qoheleth's thinking: "How will the author engage with the temporal conditions of humanity after having singled them out both as all important to his quest for meaning in human life *and* as fundamentally inaccessible to the human mind?" (p. 74).

The author reads Ecclesiastes as affirming that present time is intensely problematic for humans. There are reasons behind this, which she explores in chapter 4.

On one hand, Qoheleth affirms that humans have no real connection with the past and the future. On the other hand, the present, as a temporal dimension, is more or less available to humans; however, owing to the fact that we are cut off from both the past and the future, we find ourselves on shaky grounds even in the present (p. 105). That is, our temporal uncertainties severely hamper the all too human project of orienting ourselves meaningfully in our day-to-day existence. Bundvad writes, "While we are free to act, we have no idea when it would be appropriate to do so, and we are unable to understand the larger temporal framework within which we live" (p. 113). Finally, the author affirms that God has set up these temporal structures that ultimately shield us from understanding our temporal framework and "he maintains them so as to keep us in the dark" (p. 113).

Finally, Bundvad affirms that, having lost access to both the past and the future and living in a tentative present, there are wider consequences, which she unpacks in chapter 5. That is, Qoheleth proposes a breakdown in deed-consequence thinking. Normally, humans tend to connect their present with their past and with their future; this makes for a reasonably stable relationship between a human and time. However, Qoheleth's insistence on our isolation in a tentative present cut off from the past and future makes deed-consequence thinking irrational; retribution collapses, and justice is unpredictable at best: "It is quite possible that God works according to some retributive ideal, but we cannot understand it and it does not match our own experience" (p. 153).

Mette Bundvad has written a well-argued book on time in Ecclesiastes. Researchers who interact with time in Qoheleth, or perhaps even time in the Hebrew Bible, will have to consult this work. However, readers will have to weigh and consider her major premise.

I suspect that Bundvad's major premise is wide of the mark. That is, she would have us believe that Qoheleth presents time as the basic condition for human life. Conveniently, she dismisses Eccl 12:13–14 as the work of a Hasidic redactor (p. 10); however, in doing so, she shelves Qoheleth's major premise: Qoheleth is wrestling with some deep human and philosophic issues conditioned by a universe in which God, not time, is in control. The role of God as the basic condition for human life is implicit in Ecclesiastes, not time.

Loren Lineberry
Bryson City, NC

Understanding Prophecy: A Biblical Theological Approach. By Alan S. Bandy and Benjamin L. Merkle. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2015, 264 pp., $21.99 paper.

Understanding Prophecy by Alan Bandy and Benjamin Merkle guides people to read OT and NT prophecy with greater biblical theological aptitude. Each of the authors holds to a different view of the millennium. Bandy, a professor at Oklahoma Baptist University, takes a historic premillennial view and Merkle, a professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, holds to the amillennial view. Nevertheless, throughout the book the authors speak as one voice (only in the opening

paragraph of chap. 10 does one author give a personal reflection). The result is that these two different systems of interpretation have huge amounts of material upon which they agree. It is only in the two appendixes that each interprets issues separately.

Part 1 introduces biblical prophecy and starting points for understanding prophecy (chap. 1), its nature (chap. 2), and four presuppositions about prophecy and theology (chap. 3). Part 2 treats large issues of OT prophecy: fulfillment and conditionality (chap. 4), passages dealing with the restoration of Israel (chap. 5), and messianic prophecies (chap. 6). Part 3 covers issues of NT prophecy: passages discussing the first coming of Jesus in the Gospel accounts and Acts, primarily the Olivet Discourse (chap. 7), and then three chapters on the return of Christ (chaps. 8–10) from the Gospel accounts and Acts, the epistles, and Revelation, respectively. A concluding chapter summarizes what the church can expect to happen in the future and how Christians can apply lessons from biblical prophecy to daily life (pp. 241–5). Finally, the book concludes with two appendices in which each author explains his perspective on the meaning of "all Israel" in Romans 11:26 and on the nature of the millennium.

The authors hold firmly to the Scriptures as being from God and that prophecy is a real phenomenon (pp. 64–65, and passim). They lean towards a Calvinistic determinism (p. 40), but this tendency does not dominate the book.

In the introductory section, Bandy and Merkle explain that the essence of prophecy is its being revelation from God (pp. 17, 21). They also emphasize that prophecy must be viewed Christocentrically (p. 20), which does not demand that all passages are predictive of Christ in a narrow sense (p. 30). They also discuss "eschatology," showing that it is rather all-encompassing in Scripture and theology. A proper biblical theological perspective, including Christology, can help avoid errors found in "many popular prophecy experts" (p. 20).

The authors describe and model sound exegesis throughout. One key theme throughout the entire work is the demonstration of the inadequacy of literalism. Bandy and Merkle distinguish literal interpretation from literalism. The former basically is understood as interpretation true to the author's intention; the latter holds that symbols and metaphors are the prophet's attempt to put into his own language things he sees that will exist in the future (pp. 58–59). Bandy and Merkle argue that to interpret figures in a literalistic manner is to misinterpret them. The result is that in many OT prophecies, the first coming of Christ is ignored, when instead it is central (pp. 119–23, cf. pp. 25–29).

The covenant of Abraham is discussed under the rubrics of literalness and conditionality. Whereas literalism makes the covenant yet to be fulfilled, a literal interpretation views it as fulfilled long ago (pp. 98–101). Also, the Abrahamic covenant is among the promises in the OT that are "unconditional," not in that there are no requirements, but in that God guarantees that the agreement will be kept along with its conditions (p. 89, and n. 15). That God's will cannot be thwarted is a teaching of Scripture (pp. 40–41, 127–28).

Another key theme is the possibility that Christ may return at any time (pp. 203–9). On the one hand, the authors show convincing evidence that the Parousia

might happen at any time, but at the same time Scripture mentions four precursors to that event: (1) the gospel preached to all nations; (2) the conversion of "all Israel"; (3) the great tribulation and the great apostasy; and (4) the coming of the Antichrist. Dealing with the first one will demonstrate the authors' approach. The notion that the gospel shall be preached to all nations comes from Matt 24:14. Many missiologists and Bible translators, appealing also to Rev 14:6–7, reason that their efforts hasten the day of Christ's return. However, this interpretation depends on unfounded assumptions about the meaning of the word *nations*, the response of the evangelized, the change over time of a nation away from Christ, and more. The authors conclude that these things are simply not knowable and that other passages that teach that Jesus may return at any time are quite clear.

Bandy and Merkle are well read, referencing works both ancient and modern. They are accommodating of other views; e.g. the authors rightly point out that different views on the millennium may be held by faithful believers who hold to the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures (p. 236). The text is readable and the arrangement logical and easy to follow. Hebrew and Greek words are always given in transliteration, except when embedded in a quoted work. Some small recommendations might be made here. The editing is excellent, though minor errors exist as in any full-length work, such as mistransliteration of words (e.g., p. 199 n. 28), but these are extremely rare. Indexes of topics and Scriptures, especially passages treated in detail, would make the book even more useful.

This book is suitable for upper-level undergraduates or seminarians. It might easily be assigned in a theology course on prophecy or advanced hermeneutics. The section on interpreting symbols (especially in Revelation) is quite instructive (pp. 216–20). Exegesis courses might use parts as supplemental reading. The structure and content of Revelation are treated fully (pp. 220–39). Church preachers and teachers should definitely read it and develop lessons for church people based on this work (see especially the conclusion on application, pp. 243–45). *Understanding Prophecy* can help the church interpret and apply God's word more accurately and faithfully.

Lee M. Fields
Mid Atlantic Christian University, Elizabeth City, NC

A Chorus of Prophetic Voices: Introducing the Prophetic Literature of Ancient Israel. By Mark McEntire. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015, xix + 253 pp., $30.00 paper.

As described in the subtitle, this book is an introduction to the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible viewed as collected messages in four scrolls known as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve. These are the Latter Prophets of the Masoretic text. The introduction seeks to be both diachronic and synchronic by addressing each of the scrolls in four dimensions: the moment in time addressed in the writing; the literary character of the prophet presented in the literature; the viewpoint of the narrator responsible for the scrolls; and the complementary function of the scrolls addressing the same basic questions. McEntire seeks to "explore

the idea of the prophetic scrolls within the canon functioning together as a chorus" (p. 7). The scrolls all end in the same place: they seek to understand life after national defeat and at the beginning of a difficult recovery.

McEntire also provides an introduction in the sense that he assumes readers have no prior knowledge of the prophetic literature. The plan of the book is to review the prophetic writings in terms of the three great crises in Israel, namely the Assyrian crisis, the Babylonian crisis, and the Restoration crisis. These are addressed in chronological order, with timelines for the major events of each crisis. A chapter is devoted to the way in which each scroll addresses each of the crises (p. 21). The Assyrian crisis is addressed only in the scroll of Isaiah and the Twelve; the Babylonian crisis and the crisis of the Restoration are subsequently addressed in each of the scrolls in their canonical order. Each scroll is described comprehensively before the portions of the scroll relating to the particular crisis is reviewed.

In relation to the crisis of the eighth century, McEntire develops most of the first half of Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Micah, and Nahum. There is a general review of the individual prophetic books of the Twelve, but they are discussed in terms of themes such as judgment of Israel, oracles against the nations, and the day of the LORD. All four scrolls are discussed in relation to the Babylonian crisis and are introduced again in relation to the crisis of the restoration. Isaiah 1–5, 24–27, and 56–66 are considered as addressing this period and the material relevant to the new covenant section of Jeremiah. The restoration in Ezekiel begins after the announcement of the fall of Jerusalem in 33:21–22, when the prophet is again allowed to speak. The defeat of Gog and Magog are interpreted as the "mythic defeat of Israel's enemies for all time" (p. 180), providing a transition to the section of the return of the glory of the Lord in the temple vision.

McEntire writes in the style of a pedagogue methodically leading a class through new subject matter. The book has 25 discussion boxes inserted within the introductions to each book; these take up significant relevant questions such as disability in prophetic literature, children, marriage, meteorology, sexual assault, mental illness, post-colonialism, and other more biblical theological topics as the use of Isa 6:9–10 or 7:14 in Christian interpretation. There are also 35 tables that list a variety of items such as major events, major components or divisions of a scroll, oracles against the nations, confessions of Jeremiah, or tables of repeated themes such as former things and new things in Isaiah. Instructors will find this book very useful for a foundations course in seminary studies as it is informative and lucidly written.

The book is also valuable because it provides an awareness of the many different positions that have been taken on the development of prophetic literature and the various topics that have been taken up within them. Representative authors are provided in the text and notes; resources for further research are included at the end of each chapter. There is no general bibliography, but there is an index of modern authors that is most useful for those using this book as a text.

This introduction does not discuss the thorny questions of prophetic process of composition, but it convincingly makes the reader aware of the issues. It is impossible to discuss the structure of a book like Isaiah without dealing with the func-

tion of Isaiah 34–35, which is closely related to 40–55 but is separated from them by the death of Jerusalem in the Hezekiah story (pp. 30–31). These chapters must be regarded as part of an expansion of the book near the end of the Babylonian captivity, an expansion that addresses the question of divine judgment. This book will serve evangelical scholars well in introducing students to the Hebrew prophets. It is comprehensive in introducing each of the scrolls, making it possible for readers to draw their own conclusions on complex questions.

August H. Konkel
McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, ON

The Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus: Texts and Commentary. By David W. Chapman and Eckhard J. Schnabel. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 344. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015, xxiv + 867 pp., €89.00 paper.

This work comes from the combined editorial efforts of David Chapman, professor of NT and Archeology at Covenant Theological Seminary, and Eckhard Schnabel, Mary French Rockefeller Distinguished Professor of NT Studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Before this volume, both authors had respectively established themselves as noted historians in the background of the NT, Chapman by his dissertation on perceptions of crucifixion in the first century (*Ancient Jewish and Christian Perceptions of Crucifixion* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008]) and Schnabel by his two-volume *Early Christian Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004). This present volume will surely further establish these two men as authorities in the field.

As the editors point out, Jesus's death is clearly significant in the eyes of the authors of the Gospels and Acts, as well as the apostle Paul, which can be recognized simply by virtue of the amount of space devoted to it in their works. While Christian art, theology, and piety has mimicked such devotion, as the authors point out, one can say with steady confidence that similar devotion has been lacking in the investigation into the primary source information about crucifixion and trials, that is, into documents from the ANE, Greco-Roman, and Jewish milieu that would in various ways directly inform the nature of practices at the time of Jesus. Attention to primary sources is what makes this volume, first of all, distinguished.

Before I read this volume, I once heard one of the editors refer to it as a "source book." However, as the observant reader will quickly see, it is much more than that, and this comment was probably an unnecessarily humble self-evaluation of what the editors have actually accomplished for those in biblical studies. In fact, the contents of this book provide a wealth of information. Throughout the three sections, the editors present the original text of relevant primary sources in Hebrew (some pointed and other selections unpointed, depending on the source), Greek, Latin, or other language; a translation of each primary source; and a brief commentary for each selection. Overall, the primary sources are selected by the editors by their relation to the question of the legal proceedings in Jesus's trial. Additionally, the editors say that they give privilege to sources that have been cited in other

scholarly literature in reference to Jesus's trial and crucifixion and have caused salient debate within scholarship.

The three major sections that make up this volume include sources that (1) concern Jesus before the Sanhedrin; (2) concern Jesus on trial before Pontius Pilate; and (3) deal with the method of crucifixion as a form of execution in the ancient world. Under these three sections, 462 total texts are categorized, in most cases chronologically within each respective section. The translation work for these selected texts results in fluent, easy-to-understand English, even with the typically difficult-to-translate Rabbinic Hebrew texts. Finally, the editors also provide the reader with extensive bibliographies and footnotes to explore the texts further as interests and needs arise.

The commentary to each text provides a helpful orientation to the background of the source text. These notes will no doubt become a standard reference text for each of these sources. Some may want to brush up on their languages, since in some cases the commentary quotes secondary sources in their untranslated form (in most cases German). As I read the commentary, it was interesting to see how texts from varied historical milieus connected at integral points to give greater clarity on debated topics concerning ancient trial and execution practices. A helpful example of this is where Chapman marshals together a diverse collection of texts to gain clarity on the origin of Ancient Near Eastern practices of bodily suspension as a form of execution. The texts he appeals to extend from biblical texts such as Ezra 6 and Esther 6 to Greek writers like Herodotus to numerous selections from lesser known and fragmentary ancient authors like Ctesias. On this point, Chapman, contrary to Kyle's work (who regards the practice to be of Persian origin), suggests that the sources do not clearly indicate the origins of the practice of bodily suspension since its practice, according to these sources, appears to be widespread and since the sources attest to the practice with such multifarious language (p. 323).

With regard to a work of this magnitude and what it took to produce it, it seems a shame to offer up any complaint. However, a few small things I would mention are as follows: First, the editors could have tied the commentary more clearly to the NT. Either periodic summaries at the end of each section or an overall summary at the conclusion of the volume may have helped the reader relate the sources to the NT and would have more clearly spelled out the "pay-off" of the collection of these texts under one heading.

Second, greater emphasis could be given to where the investigation of a primary source challenged a held consensus. An example is where the editors' commentary explains that Josephus's account (*Ant.* 20.199–202) of the execution of James the brother of Jesus shows that the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem did not have jurisdiction over capital cases (p. 15). This claim appears to contradict the consensus noted in the introduction at §1.2 that the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem had jurisdiction in capital cases (pp. 22–23). What the primary source text says about the consensus is not connected to the stated consensus.

Third, some minor repetitions of historical background can be found, as in the case of the rule and removal of Archelaos on pages 23–24 and then again on page 28. Finally, minor text and spelling errata are present including occasions of

missing spaces between words (cf. p. 39), as well as other oversights concerning dating (cf. p. 42). However, again, in the grand scheme of this volume, these matters are quite small.

In the end, simply put, this volume is one that will matter! It will make a difference in the field of biblical studies and will quickly become a standard reference volume concerning the history and background for the study of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. The editors of this volume are exceptional examples of evangelical scholars concerned to uncover the truth by thorough and balanced textual and historical investigation. While there may be "sticker shock" associated with the price of this volume, I would say that biblical scholars may feel their shelves a bit bare without it and may want to figure out a way to buy a copy. Chapman and Schnabel should receive due praise for the tireless hours they undoubtedly spent compiling this volume. It is one that places them into a rare stratum of distinguished historians.

Aaron W. White
Faith Presbyterian Church (EPC), Quincy, IL
Trinity College, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

A Theology of Mark's Gospel: Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. By David E. Garland. Biblical Theology of the NT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015, 651 pp., $44.99.

As the fourth volume in Zondervan's Biblical Theology of the NT series, edited by Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of Mark's Gospel* endeavors to study the Gospel of Mark thoroughly, hearing its distinct contribution to the "interrelated themes in Scripture in a holistic, context-sensitive, and spiritually nurturing manner" (p. 23). David Garland succeeds in this endeavor laudably by providing an engaging reference work on the Gospel of Mark.

In the first chapter, Garland lays out his presuppositions about the text of Mark's Gospel. He acknowledges his place in history leads him to see Mark as a coherent, intentionally organized narrative (p. 41), and his evangelical commitments are evident in his belief that this narrative is historically rooted in apostolic and eyewitness memory. Historical fact becomes "Mark's theology . . . unfurled through narrative development" (p. 42). He affirms Markan priority (p. 43), an orthodox Christology ("Mark's narrative reveals that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine" [p. 42]), and a purpose for the Gospel aimed at discipleship. In sum, "Mark's vivid storytelling is intended to draw the audience into the story so that they have the same experiences as the disciples, as the mystery about Jesus is revealed paradoxically through secrets" (p. 43).

The first chapter also orients the reader to what is to come throughout the book. Chapter 2 provides a thorough literary reading of the entire narrative. This is the most "commentary-like" section in which Garland aims to give readers a sense of the whole by discussing the text from chapters 1 to 16 but also by circling back around to some passages more than once in order to attend to Mark's "kaleido-

scopic" quality and to "draw out fully Mark's theological message" (p. 44). The third chapter analyzes Mark 1:1–13 in depth because, according to Garland, this section "unveil[s] Mark's theology, and in particular his Christology" (p. 44). Christology takes center stage in both chapters 4 and 5, where Garland first discusses Christological titles, but dissatisfied with the extent of what these reveal he turns to "enacted Christology" in the next chapter, a fitting diptych of both Christ's person and work. Because of his assessment that in Mark "one can only know God fully through Jesus" (p. 317), theology proper, a study of God in Mark, follows the presentation of Christology. Mark assumes and builds upon the revelation of God in Israel's Scriptures, and these "find their fulfillment in history in the coming of Jesus as God's Son" (p. 45). This fulfillment in Mark, however, does not negate the mystery of God. It demands the eyes of faith to see God's work in the paradoxes of Jesus, and even then, the eyes of faith cannot take in the full understanding of God revealed in Christ. He closes with a powerful quote from Markan scholar Laura Sweat: "Understanding God is more than Mark's audience can manage, and indeed, more than its author can pen" (p. 334).

The seventh chapter focuses on the theme of Jesus's preaching, the kingdom of God. Garland adheres to an inaugurated eschatology, with a heavy emphasis on the inaugurated. While he recognizes the coming eschatological banquet, for instance (p. 364, concerning Mark 14:25), he sees the kingdom experienced through "the preaching and miracles of Jesus" (p. 45) realized in a deep way in the transfiguration and especially in the death and resurrection (pp. 362–63).

Secrecy in Mark and discipleship comprise the focus of the following four chapters. Chapter 9 follows through the narrative those whom Jesus calls to be his disciples, noting their successes, and more frequently, their failures. Chapter 10 turns to the cost of discipleship, analyzing what Jesus asks of the twelve and all those who would express faith in him. Finally, chapter 13 turns to the mission of the disciples and Jesus, while also focusing on the inclusion of the Gentiles. Two classic theological loci round out the next chapters, atonement/salvation and eschatology, and in the final chapter, Garland affirms that the manuscript evidence supports the Gospel ending at 16:8 and that Mark intended to do so. An extensive bibliography and a very detailed table of contents bookend the text, allowing students to navigate this large text easily as well as the secondary literature on Mark.

The first chapter also presents information on background questions about the Second Gospel: authorship, audience, provenance, date, and genre. While Garland gives the reader an orientation to the debate and support for his particular assessments (often with recognition of places where a firm answer is impossible), he also provides insight into well-worn discussions. For example, the fact that this text does not have an explicit author stems from the reality that he was following the conventions of biblical historians and was probably well known to his intended audience. Garland adds another helpful consideration. According to him, Mark may have had an appropriate sense of humility, not a false desire to be drawn out into the open, but one motivated by his Christological convictions: "it is unlikely that an author would attach his own name to a narrative about Jesus, as if to say that this narrative about Jesus Christ is 'my gospel'" (p. 47).

I initially puzzled over an element of Garland's portrayal of the key theme of discipleship, namely, if "success in discipleship . . . 'is ultimately God's act'" (quoting Michael Trainor, p. 46), then what responsibility do followers of Christ have to grow as disciples? He begins to answer the question in the chapter on discipleship. When discussing Jesus's call of the disciples, he states, "this calling is an act of grace that simultaneously imposes an enormous demand" (p. 390). In his subsequent treatment of the disciples, with special focus on the twelve, however, other questions emerge: to what degree are their shortfalls instructive for future followers if their failures arise from their position before the resurrection? And, to return to the theological question again, if their "future renewal and success as disciples are assured" (p. 404), if "the disciples eventually will be healed" (p. 416), and if "they cannot rely on their own strength, resolve, or tenacity" (p. 433), then do they need to *do* anything?

The answer Garland provides in the next chapter on the cost of discipleship is a resounding "yes." To the first question, Garland asserts that the pre-cross/post-resurrection distinction fades when Mark is read: "What is required of the disciples in the narrative will be required of all those in his audience who seek to follow Jesus" (p. 439). He then traces everything Jesus could potentially call all his followers to do: leave possessions behind, sever family ties, deny oneself, live in community, forgive, and pray, to name several. Moreover, Judas provides the example of what disciples should *not* do. If he, in the inner circle of Jesus, gave him up, then because Mark provides no explanation of this decision, "it leads the audience to conclude . . . any follower of Jesus could potentially do the same thing" (p. 427). *A Theology of Mark's Gospel* does put heavy emphasis on the trustworthy promises and prophecies of Jesus that will come to fruition. It consistently appeals to the great hope the resurrection brings and to the sovereign call of God, but it also allows the intense call of discipleship to sound forth, urging followers to be on watch and depend upon God's strength against the weakness of the flesh (p. 454).

This work would serve as an ideal textbook in a class on the Gospel of Mark. Students will naturally consult commentaries in such courses, and this book could not replace the verse-by-verse detailed exegesis of the text. Commentaries, however, do not usually make for good bedside reading, but Garland's text does. His clear prose with frequent lovely turns of phrase coupled with a well-organized study of the major themes of Mark's Gospel would keep students reading his text and the biblical text he interprets, although they might balk at such a weighty (literally!) book. Moreover, because he provides a thorough orientation to the "historical framework" of the Gospel, extensive bibliographies in each chapter, and constant engagement with scholars of Mark, classic and rising, readers are asked to engage with Garland's interpretation of Mark's theology and much more. Köstenberger desired books in this series "to make a methodological contribution, showing how Biblical Theology ought to be conducted" (p. 23). Garland's text does just that. It

reads the text closely—historically, linguistically, narratively—to hear what God communicates to his people (past and present) in this word.

Amy Peeler
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Jesus and the Thoughts of Many Hearts: Implicit Christology and Jesus' Knowledge in the Gospel of Luke. By Collin Blake Bullard. Library of NT Studies 530. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015, xviii + 210 pp., $112.00.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the groundbreaking research of Hans Conzelmann has influenced the way scholars have read and analyzed the Gospel of Luke. Conzelmann applied redaction-criticism to Luke's Gospel and concluded, against the current stream of Lukan scholarship in his day, that Luke was more than a mere receiver and transmitter of the early church's *kerygma*—he was also its interpreter. For Conzelmann, Luke was both a historian and theologian, but modern scholarship had neglected the latter with its exclusive emphasis on the former. In response, Conzelmann proposed that an analysis of the literary framework into which Luke incorporated the *kerygma* would allow one to uncover the theology of Luke himself. Conzelmann's method inaugurated a new a phase in Lukan studies as scholars sought to apply redaction, literary, and, eventually, narrative criticism to Luke's Gospel for the sake of discovering Luke's theology.

However, it was not merely Conzelmann's method that refocused Lukan scholarship; his conclusions regarding Luke's Christology also became standard among scholars. For example, although he is better known for his *Heilsgeschichte* framework, Conzelmann's conclusion that Luke presents Jesus's relation to God in purely *subordinistic* terms has deeply influenced Lukan scholarship. For many decades following Conzelmann, the idea of a "subordinistic Christology" was the standard view among Lukan scholars, who argued, or took for granted, that there is no "divine Christology" in Luke's Gospel. Luke focuses exclusively on Jesus's humanity and his subordinate relationship to God suggests that Luke did not view Jesus as also divine.

Nevertheless, recent studies on Luke's narrative Christology have begun to erode the once-established conclusion that Luke's Gospel lacks a divine Christology. For example, monographs by H. Douglas Buckwalter (*The Character and Purpose of Luke's Christology* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996]) and C. Kavin Rowe (*Early Narrative Christology* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006]) have offered alternative accounts of Luke's Christology through narrative and intertextual analyses of key motifs. These scholars conclude that Luke's Christology is much more complex than has generally been recognized and that the categories "subordinistic," "prophetic," and/or "humanity" do not do justice to the full scope of Luke's portrayal of Jesus. Both Buckwalter and Rowe have demonstrated the presence of a divine Christology in Luke's Gospel.

The publication of Collin Bullard's 2013 Cambridge doctoral dissertation (supervised by Simon Gathercole) is one of the latest contributions to the field of

Lukan Christology. Examining Bullard's work against the backdrop of the history of Lukan Christology is necessary for appreciating the significance of his research. Bullard analyzes the prominent motif of Jesus as the knower of internal thoughts and argues that Luke develops this motif in a way that *implies* a divine Christology. In so doing, Bullard adds significant weight to the conclusions of recent Lukan scholars who have argued for a more complex picture of Lukan Christology; a picture which includes a divine identity. For the sake of full disclosure, I should mention that my own 2013 dissertation follows in this stream established by Buckwalter and Rowe by arguing for a divine Christology in Luke's Gospel (and Acts).

The book begins with an introductory chapter explaining the topic, history of research, and thesis. Bullard observes that there are numerous episodes "where the narrator depicts Jesus' words and actions as addressing the inner motives, attitudes, or questions of characters" (p. 2). He then provides a brief overview of the key passages in order to show that, in comparison with Matthew and Mark, it is evident that Luke has more thoroughly integrated this motif within his specific narrative themes. Luke's emphasis on Jesus's ability to know and reveal the hidden thoughts and attitudes of others is not due to his dependence on Mark, but reflects his own narrative Christology. Luke's unique interpretation of this motif is revealed in the way in which he has adopted and adapted it into his narrative (p. 23).

Scholars have interpreted Jesus's knowledge of thoughts as (1) an extraordinary human ability; (2) an act of prophetic discernment; or (3) a divine ability, which belongs particularly to Yahweh in the OT or to the Greco-Roman gods (p. 10). Yet despite the importance of this motif for the Lukan narrative, Bullard's history of research demonstrates that previous scholarship has not given sufficient attention to its Christological significance. Bullard then states his thesis as follows: "we will argue that the ancient context . . . and narrative function . . . of the motif of Jesus' knowledge of thoughts of the heart in the Gospel of Luke indicate that Luke understood Jesus' knowledge to be a divine ability which he possessed by virtue of his identity as Lord" (p. 25).

In chapter 1, Bullard seeks to determine the possible source of Luke's knower-of-thoughts motif by searching for parallels in the OT, Second Temple Judaism (STJ), Greco-Roman literature, and rabbinic literature. Although some scholars have suggested a Hellenistic background for Luke's motif, Bullard demonstrates that such dependence is unlikely (pp. 42–45). The focus then shifts to the OT and Second Temple Jewish literature that depict prophets as demonstrating extraordinary knowledge. While granting that some prophets are endowed with various forms of extraordinary knowledge (e.g. Samuel, Elisha), Bullard argues that Luke's development of the motif differs from what is depicted of the prophets. First, "knowledge of unspoken thoughts is unattested among prophets in the OT or STJ" (p. 54), whereas Luke emphasizes Jesus's ability to know unspoken thoughts. Second, Luke employs this motif in connection with the theme of judgment, which differs from depictions of prophetic knowledge elsewhere (p. 55). After ruling out Hellenistic and prophetic parallels, Bullard focuses on the depictions of Yahweh as the one who searches and knows the heart. This ability is in fact most commonly associated with Yahweh and is often juxtaposed with his divine identity as the

righteous judge (p. 55). Bullard concludes that "expressions of divine knowledge in the OT and STJ provide not only the most prevalent, but also the closest literary parallels to Jesus' knowledge of thoughts in Luke" (p. 63).

Chapter 2 focuses on Simeon's oracle (2:34–35) and its programmatic function for Luke's subsequent development of the knower-of-thoughts motif. Simeon prophesies that Jesus will expose the hidden motives and thoughts of many within Israel, and this is precisely what the narrator reveals as the story unfolds. In fact, as chapter 3 demonstrates, Luke often redacts his material so that it alludes to Simeon's prophecy, thus guiding the reader to interpret Jesus' ability to perceive interior attitudes and thoughts as the fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy (cf. 2:35; 5:22; 6:8; 9:46–47; 24:38).

Chapter 3 is the heart of the book as Bullard analyzes each of the key passages that develop the motif (5:17–26; 6:6–11; 7:36–50; 9:46–50; 11:14–32, 37–54; 24:36–43; Acts 1:24), as well as some additional passages in which Jesus's words and actions address interior responses even though the narrator does not directly highlight Jesus' perception of these responses (4:16–30; 10:25–37; 14:1–6; 16:14–15; 20:20–26). Bullard states that his aim is to offer "a full articulation of the motif in its narrative context while also providing a sense of Luke's understanding of the motif as he adopted and adapted traditional material for his own purposes" (p. 82). To do this, Bullard organizes his analysis of each passage around four steps: first, the presentation of Jesus's knowledge in the passage (i.e. what does Jesus actually know?); second, Luke's redaction of his source material (i.e. how has Luke adapted his material to fit his own narrative purposes?); third, the resonance with Simeon's oracle (i.e. how does Luke's redaction resonate with Simeon's prophecy?); and fourth, the implied Christology in the passage (i.e. how does Jesus' knowledge shape his identity?). Bullard's analyses are carefully researched, clearly presented, and, in my view, reasonably argued. I found his four-step framework extremely helpful for following his complex and comprehensive analysis of each passage and believe it could be adopted and adapted in order to analyze other key motifs. In addition, this framework also helps the reader appreciate the cumulative weight of the evidence in support of his thesis. In chapter 4, Bullard summarizes his conclusions and notes a few of their implications for the field of Lukan Christology.

In conclusion, Bullard soundly argues that Luke develops the knower-of-thoughts motif in a way that implies a divine Christology and makes a substantial contribution to the developing field of Lukan Christology. In accord with Simeon's prophecy, Luke links Jesus's ability to know hidden thoughts with his role as judge and identity as Lord, a link that parallels the descriptions of Yahweh as the knower of thoughts in the OT and Second Temple Judaism. Furthermore, Luke presents Israel's God as the one who knows the hidden thoughts and attitudes of all people and will one-day exercise judgment accordingly (12:1–3; 16:15). Therefore, within the narrative itself, there is a parallel between God's ability to know and judge and Jesus's ability to know and judge. Thus, "The narrative portrayal of Jesus as one who reveals thoughts . . . suggests that God's revealing action (2:35; 12:2–3) is em

bodied in the ministry of Jesus, so that, with respect to revealing and judging that which is secret, Jesus' action represents God's action" (p. 135).

Matthew Godshall
William Jessup University, Rocklin, CA

The Kingdom according to Luke and Acts: A Social, Literary, and Theological Introduction. By Karl Allen Kuhn. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015, xxiii + 310 pp., $28.99 paper.

Karl Allen Kuhn, Associate Professor of Religion at Lakeland College in Wisconsin, begins this monograph by outlining three prominent features of the Gospel that Luke narrates in his two-volume NT work. First, the message about God's accomplishment through Jesus is meant to be world-defying. Second, life in Luke's day was viewed much more holistically than it is today, and this affected how one would receive the message about Jesus as King. Third, the all-encompassing and paradigm-shifting message about Jesus naturally elicits highly impassioned reaction. These three features inspire the content (if not also the outline) of Kuhn's study, which the subtitle of the book indicates is an introduction to Luke-Acts that uses social, literary, and theological ideas to focus on Luke's "urgent call [for his readers] to embrace Jesus and the Kingdom of God" (p. xv).

Kuhn readily acknowledges his indebtedness to social-scientific analysis of the NT. He places Luke's (and the early Christians') understanding of the "Kingdom of God" in its historical social Israelite context. This is the focus of part 1: "Luke and His World" (chaps. 1–3). Here Kuhn describes the first-century geo-political world and places much of the NT in the realm of anti-Rome rhetoric (e.g. Paul's letters, the Gospel of Mark, and subsequently Luke–Acts). Along with many other Lukan scholars, Kuhn dates the writing of Luke-Acts to the years 70–90; this post-fall of Jerusalem dating (possibly for Mark too) enhances the anti-Rome posture of Luke. In keeping with the traditional view, Kuhn is content to refer to the author of Luke-Acts as "Luke," the sometime ministry companion of Paul, as reflected in the "we-sections" of Acts. More uniquely, however, Kuhn understands the man Luke to be a member of the first-century social elite and offers "informed speculation" that Luke was an Israelite and not a Gentile. Despite the fact that Luke's writings are separated in this volume's title (i.e. "Luke and Acts"), Kuhn readily accepts the common notion that Luke's two-part work is a single literary entity, and he regularly employs the common hyphenated reference to "Luke-Acts." He views this unified story as an example of Greco-Roman historiography (not biography) with many similarities to Israelite historiography.

In analyzing Luke's writing, Kuhn—while open to using a variety of interpretive methods—is clear that he regards "the pursuit of authorial intent as the chief aim of biblical interpretation" (p. 73). Thus, his self-described eclectic interpretive paradigm engages in literary, historical, social-scientific, and rhetorical studies, all aimed at understanding Luke's intentions for the narrative of Luke-Acts. This becomes the specific focus of part 2: "Luke's Narrative Artistry" (chaps. 4–8), exam-

ining various literary techniques and conventions. Chapter 8, "The Power and Prominence of Luke's Pathos," pulls together the various observations about Luke's narrative artistry to explore—in perhaps the volume's more ingenious contribution to the field of Luke-Acts studies—how Luke, in addition to portraying the emotional experiences of people within his narrative, also engaged in employing passionate narration as a tool to move his readers to understand the importance of accepting Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

In part 3: "Luke's Kingdom Story" (chaps. 9, 10, and conclusion), Kuhn brings together the first two parts so that Luke's rhetorical emphases are highlighted against Luke's own social background. In this manner Kuhn argues against the idea that Luke was hoping to convince Rome that Christianity was politically and socially safe and worthy to be included in the *religio licita* status (whether official or otherwise) afforded to Judaism in the first century. On the contrary, Kuhn sides with those who see Luke as promoting resistance of all earthly power claims in order to pledge allegiance to the reign of God alone.

For some readers, Kuhn's analysis of Luke-Acts will be overly dependent upon the empire criticism of recent scholarly approaches to NT studies. While Luke clearly promotes Jesus as King (of all of life and history as the Son of God, à la Acts 14 and 17), this does not necessitate that Caesar is not king (in the human ruler sense, à la Romans 13). Even as Kuhn wants to argue that Luke is subtly and implicitly challenging Roman rule over humanity, it can equally be argued that Luke is subtly and implicitly challenging his readers to expect God's rule in their lives to be of a different kind than the Roman political rule they were enduring. Perhaps in addition to aligning Luke's writing with the political entailments of the views expressed by Mark and Paul (which Kuhn treats), the views expressed by John and Peter should be accounted for as well (which Kuhn does not treat). While not denying the eventual political ramifications of Jesus's kingship (cf. Acts 1), Luke seems to fit well with these other NT writers in acknowledging that Jesus's rule is of a qualitatively different kind and expression in the present age.

In the wake of the recent empire studies of the NT, Kuhn's analysis of Luke-Acts is nonetheless a welcome contribution from someone prepared by his previous work for bringing such a conversation to bear more specifically on this portion of the Christian Scriptures. While the background section (chaps. 1–3) is helpful (perhaps somewhat reminiscent of texts on NT history), this volume may still be too narrowly focused to use as a textbook in general courses on the NT. Courses specializing in Luke-Acts, however, may find it a useful text for discussing the relevant and intertwined introductory issues as well as for examining the specific theological matters of some (and yet sometimes neglected) importance to Luke. In addition to its sketch of NT socio-political background, the book exhibits several other more general strengths. Kuhn has a fine discussion of first-century narrative techniques (chaps. 4–7), draws an appreciable distinction between "patterns" and "parallels" (see esp. p. 105), and shows thematic connections between Luke-Acts and Israelite tradition (see esp. pp. 115–25).

The book also suffers from a few weaknesses. There is an occasional vocabulary mismatch between some of Kuhn's introductory lists of topics and the subse-

quent corresponding subsections of his discussion (e.g. compare the list at the top of p. 247 and the subsections on pp. 247–52), and some might feel overwhelmed with the quantity of numbered lists, wondering why some subheadings are numbered and some are not. The somewhat unique—and no less interesting—chapter 8 on "The Power and Prominence of Luke's Pathos" seems tangential to Kuhn's main argument. An inconsistency occurs where, despite his aversion to dividing Luke's perspective on salvation history into overly distinct epochs (à la Conzelmann), Kuhn still draws a rather firm border between eras at Jesus's conception; but this seems too firm, given Luke's apparent exclusion of John the Baptist from the inaugurated kingdom (Luke 7:28; 16:16). Some readers will sense a greater emphasis on identifying and explicating Lukan themes and patterns in the Gospel of Luke than on spelling out how those themes and patterns continue to unfold in the book of Acts. Of course, no book can do everything.

Likewise, while no author can read everything, with Kuhn's theological focus on the kingdom in Luke-Acts, readers might find it odd that missing from his discussion (and bibliography) is any interaction with Alan J. Thompson's kingdom-oriented structural analysis of Acts in *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke's Account of God's Unfolding Plan* (NSBT; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011). Similar to Thompson's book, Kuhn's volume is not a mere tracing of a biblical theology theme. In fact, readers would likely be more satisfied in looking elsewhere if they desire a tracing of kingdom-related terms and ideas in Luke-Acts. Kuhn has different goals than such a study.

Indeed, Kuhn very clearly argues for what he understands to be one of Luke's main purposes for writing: "One of Luke's primary aims was to challenge Theophilus and others to leave behind their lives and stations as elites, to acknowledge Jesus, not Caesar, as Lord of all, and to embrace the reality and values of the Kingdom of God, rather than the ways of Rome, by entering into community with other believers" (p. 264). In my judgment, this little volume would make an excellent textbook for a course on Luke-Acts or Lukan theology. It covers historical background information, analyzes Luke's literary techniques and theological connections to the OT and Israelite tradition, and makes a case for the goals of this portion of the NT with appreciable nods to those who have differing proposals. This is a worthwhile purchase for anyone interested in the discussion of Luke's theological and literary emphases.

Douglas S. Huffman
Talbot School of Theology at Biola University, La Mirada, CA

Herod as a Composite Character in Luke-Acts. By Frank Dicken. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/375. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014, xii + 210 pp., €74.00 paper.

This work by Frank Dicken, assistant professor of NT at Lincoln Christian College, was written under the supervision of Helen Bond at the University of Edinburgh. Dicken's argument is both novel and simple. In short, Dicken argues that

Luke presents Herod as a single composite character who "embodies Satanic opposition toward [the early Christians'] efforts to preach the good news to the end of the earth" (p. 7). While there are obviously multiple historical Herods that stand behind Luke's use of the name "Herod," within Luke's two-volume narrative "Herod" function as "an amalgamation of multiple historic people that appears as a single character in a literary work" (p. 2).

Dicken lays out his method in chapter 3 which is indebted to narrative readings of Luke-Acts and is particularly concerned with literary characterization. While composite characters are not especially frequent, Dicken does note that within biblical literature certain names like "Pharaoh" and "Nebuchadnezzar" often conflate historical personages and use the name to construct an image of an enemy of God. Again, Dicken emphasizes that the presence of a composite character in a literary work does not mean it is impossible to identify the various historical individuals that comprise the composite character.

In chapter 4, Dicken provides succinct and thorough character sketches of the Herodian rulers that allows him "to compare and contrast what we know about the historical individuals behind Luke's narrative with the narrative of Luke-Acts in order to understand 'Herod' as a composite character" (p. 45). Dicken's argument depends upon two Lukan anomalies and the inability of scholars to provide a satisfying historical explanation for these two difficulties. First, it is not clear which Herod is being referenced where Luke speaks of "Herod, King of Judaea" (Luke 1:5). The difficulty of resolving Luke's chronology in Luke 2:1–2, along with the fact that there is no other external attestation that Herod was ever referred to as King of Judaea makes identifying this figure incredibly difficult. Dicken distinguishes "King of the Jews" (which is predicated of Herod the Great) from "King of Judaea" (which is not). Both of these problems suggest the possibility that Luke has conflated Herod the Great and Archelaus. This lends support to the possibility of viewing "Herod, King of Judaea" as a composite character. The second anomaly is simpler: Acts 12 presents the only known source of any kind to use the name "Herod" for Agrippa I. Dicken rightly points to current scholarship that provides a literary explanation for this anomaly, namely, that Luke intends for the reader to understand Agrippa's persecution of the church to parallel Herod Antipas's persecution of John the Baptist and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. Dicken suggests, therefore, that "what we find in Luke-Acts with the title 'King of Judaea' at Luke 1:5 and the name 'Herod' for Agrippa I in Acts 12 are distinctive, unique features that, in light of the entire narrative portrayal of the Herods in Luke-Acts, can be interpreted as a composite character, 'Herod'" (p. 70).

In chapter 5, Dicken examines every occurrence of Herod (except the two anomalous uses previously mentioned) to see if he can support his claim that Luke-Acts treats Herod as a single literary character. What he finds is that Luke's use of Herod is "consistently centered on this character's antagonism toward Luke's protagonists, evidenced in actions that seek to eliminate the leaders of the nascent Jesus movement" (p. 72). Dicken attends most closely to Acts 4:23–31, which provides a programmatic statement about Herod as it both recalls Herod's hostility to John the Baptist and Jesus and foreshadows Herod's persecution of the Jerusalem

church in Acts 12. In Acts 4:25–27 Herod plays the role of the representative king and ruler who is a hostile enemy of God and the Messiah. This sets off a showdown throughout Luke-Acts between King Herod and the one who is the true king. The mention of Herod in Luke 1:5 and in 3:18–20 creates an inclusio for John's ministry and provides an ominous backdrop for John's proclamation. This conflict continues in the book of Acts as the messianic community continues to receive the hostility and opposition that was faced by Jesus in Luke's passion narrative.

In chapter 6, Dicken argues that Herod is not simply one who is hostile to the protagonists of Luke-Acts but is actually an embodiment of Satanic opposition to the agents of the gospel. Dicken makes the non-controversial claim that Luke's protagonists (John, Jesus, the early church) consistently proclaim the good news and receive hostility from various Herods. It is Satan, however, who stands behind the opposition. Dicken points to Luke 4:5–6 as a key text where the devil is portrayed as having authority over the kingdoms of the world, particularly the Roman Empire. Thus, Luke understands Herod's authority to be derivative from the authority and rule of Satan. Just as Satan opposes the spread of the gospel, so also Herod is one of Luke's prime antagonists toward those who proclaim the gospel. Dicken notes that when God strikes down Herod for his persecution of the church and self-deifying claims, the result is that "the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:24). It is somewhat ironic, then, that part of Paul's message to Agrippa II is that he has been called to turn people from Satan's power to God (Acts 26:18).

Dicken has written a succinct and readable treatment of the literary function of Herod within Luke-Acts. His monograph not only provides helpful historical sketches of the various Herods, which as he rightly notes, many readers conflate and confuse, but he has also clearly demonstrated that the various Herods have a common literary function within Luke-Acts. I find here nothing of substance with which to disagree. Yet this is not where Dicken's primary contribution lies, as others have also provided a similar scholarly service. Rather, Dicken sets forth a "unique literary solution that helps account for those distinctive" historical anomalies related to Herod in Luke 1:5 and Acts 12. If Dicken is right, a somewhat ironic and surprising result would be contributing to resolving the problematic Lukan chronology in Luke 2. While I have some remaining questions regarding the likelihood of Luke's use of the literary technique of composite characterization, Dicken's thesis demonstrates the continued fruitfulness of employing both historical and literary methods to understand Luke-Acts.

Joshua W. Jipp
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Apprehension of Jesus in the Gospel of John. By Josaphat C. Tam. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/399. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015, xvii + 265 pp., €79.00 paper.

John 17:3 says, "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (ESV). NT scholars have long wrestled with

the question of what the writer of the Fourth Gospel means by "knowing" in this and other Johannine texts. For example, Rudolf Bultmann, in his important *TDNT* entry on *ginōskō* (1:689–719), drew a sharp distinction between the Hebrew and the Greek concepts of knowing. In addition, Bultmann argued that John's Gospel ought to be interpreted in a Greek context, primarily as influenced by Mandaean Gnosticism. C. H. Dodd's classic work *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953) essentially concurred with Bultmann's distinction between Hebrew and Greek knowing, although not necessarily with his Mandaean interpretation of John's Gospel. Subsequent to the work of Bultmann and Dodd, scholarship has challenged the Hebrew/Greek distinction of knowing and the interpretive trajectory it represents. However, many of those studies on knowing in the Gospel of John, according to Josaphat C. Tam, focused in a limited way on only certain isolated word studies. For that reason Tam argues that more work needs to be done in order to understand what it means to know in the Fourth Gospel.

Tam, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Evangel Seminary (Hong Kong), in his published doctoral dissertation (supervised by Larry Hurtado at the University of Edinburgh), analyzes instead a cluster of Greek words used in the Gospel of John, which he designates as "apprehension vocabulary." Based on his analysis of the Johannine apprehension vocabulary, Tam proposes that the author of the Fourth Gospel organized his work into four sections, which correspond to four phases of apprehension through which the Gospel writer intended to move his readers in order to persuade them toward either initial faith in Jesus or a deepening of already existing faith in Jesus.

After an initial chapter, which serves as a summary of previous scholarship related to knowing in the Gospel of John and an attempt to point out the limitations of those previous studies, Tam in chapter 2 presents his methodology for studying John's apprehension vocabulary. The words that he identifies for analysis include Greek terms related to seeing (pp. 34–36), hearing (p. 36), knowing (pp. 36–37), witnessing (pp. 37–38), remembering (p. 38), and believing (p. 39). An appendix to the book includes further analysis of each occurrence of the apprehension vocabulary (p. 216).

The next four chapters of Tam's book explore what he believes to be four phases of apprehension that the author of the Fourth Gospel uses to present his story of Jesus. Chapter 3 analyzes the first four chapters of John's Gospel. John 1–4, which Tam titles "Phase I: Initial Encounters," uses apprehension vocabulary to indicate "generally positive and sincere" (p. 30) receptions of Jesus on the part of key characters. This section begins the process of explaining what a favorable apprehension of Jesus looks like. John 5–12, which Tam labels as "Phase II: Subsequent Encounters," serves as a counterweight to Phase I. In John 5–12, most of the encounters with Jesus on the part of the characters located in this phase are of a negative quality. Individuals (and even groups) are characterized using negated forms of the apprehension vocabulary (i.e. instead of seeing, people are blind; instead of hearing, people are deaf; etc.). John 13–17, which Tam describes as "Phase III: Deepening Encounters," uses apprehension vocabulary to highlight the deeply

personal response that the characters make to Jesus, highlighted by the intimacy of Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17. The last section of the Fourth Gospel, "Phase IV: Heightened and Climactic Encounters," which covers John 18–21, concludes with even deeper intimacy between Jesus and major Johannine characters, reaching its penultimate climax in John's purpose statement in John 20:30–31 ("These things were written that you might believe").

In the seventh and final chapter, Tam summarizes his findings and relates them to broader Johannine scholarship. In particular, Tam relates his findings to the impact that the four-phase rhetorical structure of John's Gospel might have had upon the original readers in the first century AD. More specifically, the four-phase rhetorical structure, using the apprehension vocabulary, forms a "strategy of progressive engagement" (p. 203) meant to move the reader with increasing intensity through the four phases and ultimately to faith in Christ. As Tam writes, "With the strategy of progressive engagement, these different readers are invited to join in the story and to feel the forcefulness of the narratives" (p. 203). However, the effect does not end there for Tam. He suggests that there is an ongoing aspect to the Gospel of John that goes well beyond the first-century AD reader. He states that "the story of encountering Jesus is 're-enacted' through the on-going readings of GJohn. With these re-enactments, readers of newer generations 'repeat' what happened in the narrative" (p. 203).

There is indeed much of interest in this study. Tam's linguistic examination of the key apprehension vocabulary in their Johannine context is quite helpful. Many will find his insights to be clarifying. There is at least one linguistic blind spot in his study, however. It is interesting that in a dissertation meant to explore apprehension in the Gospel of John there is no exploration of the misunderstanding theme in the Fourth Gospel. The monograph's subject index does not even include the term "misunderstanding." Also, the bibliography of this text does not even list D. A. Carson's important, even classic, essay on misunderstanding in John's Gospel (*Tyndale Bulletin* 33 [1982]: 59–91). Some nod to this theme and to Carson's important work is needed. In addition, there are some minor editorial mistakes at points, which make certain sustained arguments difficult to decipher. However, the style of Tam's work is generally easy to follow.

One way in which Tam deviates from some of the more recent scholarship on John's Gospel has to do with his conclusions regarding the relationship between signs and faith. Tam shows appreciation for the work of Marianne Meye Thompson who has taken to task those who see signs-faith in John's Gospel as an insufficient form of faith that must be overcome in order to come to true faith (*BBR* 1 [1991]: 89–108). Tam argues, based on Thomas's interaction with Jesus in John 20, that signs-faith need not be viewed negatively but rather that signs and faith have a certain interdependency in John's Gospel. Tam argues that the resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate sign and must be believed (p. 192). The purpose of the Thomas scene in John 20 is not to present signs-faith as a denigrated form of faith but rather to highlight the centrality of the resurrection sign and to provide for the subsequent reader a sure and certain testimony to the veracity of the resurrection (i.e. that testimony being Thomas's and by extension the apostle John's as author of the Gos-

pel of John). In fact, Tam argues that "the Thomas pericope predominantly functions to strengthen believers who lack faith in this sign of resurrection" (p. 192).

By way of conclusion, this published dissertation may not find its way onto every pastor's bookshelf due to the technical nature of its analysis. However, it would be wise for seminary acquisitions librarians to include it in their collection of Johannine monographs. Its content will be necessary data to include in most serious research done on the Gospel of John.

C. Scott Shidemantle
Geneva College, Beaver Falls, PA

Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates. By N. T. Wright. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015, xxiii + 379 pp., $39.00 paper.

This state-of-the-question report by a leading contributor bubbles along with verve. Conceived as a unit of *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (2 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), it overswells its space. It plugs a gap in Wright's sprawling Paul project, comprising of *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, two essay collections (*Pauline Perspectives* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013, which includes Wright's programmatic Tyndale House lecture from 1978] and *Climax of the Covenant* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992]), two preliminary outlines (*What St Paul Really Said* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997] and *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005]), and an answer to criticisms (*Justification* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009]), not to mention commentaries on most NT books and a strewing of other miscellanies. No wonder Wright so often refers to what he has said "elsewhere."

That the book is for those "coming fresh to the study of Paul" (p. xx; cf. p. xvii) may overestimate greenhorns. To be concise, it gives less exposition than a novice needs. In addition, Wright is not just another debater on level ground; we view others through his eye. This prism—after all, any historian grinds an ax (p. 130), which here is his own construction of Paul—enables seasoned academics to observe how Wright positions himself. As always, he is penetrating, with dashes of wit.

The survey overlaps with Wright's revision of Stephen Neill's *Interpretation of the NT 1861–1986* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) and brings Pauline studies up to date. His thesis: several uncoordinated Anglo-American movements launched in the latter twentieth century, each reacting to historical criticism from Baur to Bultmann's disciples, generated insights that have, when synthesized, great explanatory power (pp. 6–7). History-of-religions scholars focused too narrowly on Paul's "religion" split off from the whole of cultural life; were controlled hermeneutically by longstanding concerns about personal salvation ("justification"), imposing late-medieval questions on first-century sources; underplayed the biblical narrative, owing largely to the Lutheran devaluation of law over against gospel; and harbored a sinister anti-Judaistic bias. Wright organizes responses into three categories around the "pillars" of Sanders, Martyn, and Meeks (pp. 7, 284): Sanders because of his "new perspective" on Judaism with implications for Paul,

developed differently by Wright, Dunn, and Hays; Martyn because of the renewed stress on Paul's "apocalypticism" that grew from Käsemann through Beker to the "Union School" formed around Martyn; and Meeks because of the broad group of social scientific approaches founded on Geertz, Berger, and Luckmann, and then spearheaded in the NT field by Meeks, setting Paul in his social fabric. These advances clear the way for Wright's ringing affirmation: Paul's gospel centered on God who, to bless the world through Abraham, has begun to manifest his awaited righteousness by exalting the crucified Jesus as Israel's Christ and Lord of creation—an eschatological event that calls for a thoroughgoing Christological/pneumatological reformulation of the OT tenets of one God, one people, one final reign of God.

What distinguishes Wright's reading of Paul is his accent on the OT saga as the vehicle of the worldview/mindset that frames Paul's theology, and on God's particular dealing with the world through Abraham's family: "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom 1:16). Wright arranged the 1,500 pages of *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* to drive home those points. Now he tells us he learned more from Meeks than from Sanders (pp. xiii, 274). A theme running through Wright's critiques is others' failures to reckon with the biblical narrative: Bultmann ignored it; Cullmann, though advocating *Heilsgeschichte*, hardly explored it; Käsemann, trumpeting God's righteousness toward the *kosmos*, sidelined it; Sanders, comparing patterns of religion via the dehistoricized outlook of the rabbis, had no narrative on the table; Martyn, defining "apocalyptic" as God acting from above, neutralized it. Positively, Cranfield saw the Mosaic law as fulfilled by Christ, and Ridderbos earthed Paul's thought in the Hebrew Scriptures. Any fair appreciation of Wright must start with this program, not with his iconoclasm toward the Protestant Reformers.

During the century up to the Second World War, German NT criticism sought Christian origins in Hellenism. Almost singlehandedly Schweitzer challenged this *faux pas* by rooting Jesus and Paul in Jewish apocalypticism; after the Qumran discoveries, scholars from Davies to those of the new perspective concentrated on Paul's Jewish matrix. However, Schweitzer had introduced a dichotomy between Paul's juridic language (e.g. Romans 2–4) and "mysticism" (e.g. Romans 6). Most since have struggled to integrate "justification" (championed by *evangelische* scholars) with "participation" or "being-in-Christ" (taken up by Sanders and the new perspective). Wright wants to fuse the two poles by positing that God vindicates ("justifies"), now and in the end, those who belong to ("participate in") Christ's covenant community (pp. 83, 101–2)—a twist on justification without imputation of Christ's *iustitia aliena*.

One thing that has never changed is Wright's endorsement of Sanders, who portrayed Judaism as a religion not of grim works-righteousness but of joyful Torah-piety founded on God's gracious election. (See the following representative quotes: "We must pay attention" [1978: p. 79]; "in this bright post-Sanders epoch, we are all Rabbinic sympathizers" [1988: p. 372; cf. 1992: p. 335]; "certainly his point is proved. . . . he makes the case" [2015: pp. 72, 75, cf. p. 76]). This unwavering judgment now sits alongside a concession, wrung out by Avemarie's solid re-

search in the rabbinic corpus: "Sanders greatly oversimplified and indeed oversystematized the massive and complicated Jewish evidence" (p. 109). Even be it true that Carson's *Variegated Nomism* collaboration (2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001–2004) ended up giving "qualified support to Sanders" (p. 109; cf. p. 76 n. 31), it is "qualified." Aye, there's the rub. Did Sanders make his case hands down, or not quite? Can we be so sure that "works" and "righteousness" in, say, Rom 9:30–10:8 denote Jewish distinctives, and not—to avoid the anachronistic term "Pelagianism"—nomistic optimism? Second Temple passages (Sir 15:14–17; *Pss. Sol.* 9:4–5; *2 Bar.* 54:15–19) jive with Bavli *Kiddushin* 30b, "As long as you occupy yourselves with the Torah, the *yetzer* will not rule over you," and with Marmorstein's epitome of Judaism: "Men and women can rise by positive deeds to such a height of moral beauty, virtue, and accomplishment, in spite of their natural shortcomings and innate faults, that they are regarded as meritorious before God" (*Doctrine of Merits in Old Rabbinic Literature* [London: Oxford University Press, 1920], p. 3). Wright's bibliography passes over T. Laato's comparison of Jewish anthropology with Paul's. How many Pauline passages might be colored by a more nuanced appraisal of Sanders?

How does Wright meet criticisms of the new perspective? That our task is to read Scripture more closely in its historical milieu, not reflexively to defend past symbols of faith that are *semper reformanda*, is a given (although some contenders for the Westminster Standards need reminding!). Yet do Carson, Gathercole, Hagner, Hengel, Stuhlmacher, or Westerholm really suppose salvation puts souls in heaven rather than resurrected saints in a new creation (pp. 109–10, 112)? Likewise Wright's constantly repeated countercharge that the old perspective presses a Western, individualistic grid is overdrawn; in fact, first-century people asked how to attain eternal life, whether Jews (R. Hillel: "If a man . . . has gained for himself words of the Law he has gained for himself life in the world to come," *m. Abot* 2.7; cf. Luke 10:25; 18:18) or Gentiles (Acts 16:30). Wright's accusation that opponents of the new perspective want no narrative whatsoever (p. 111) is aimed at exactly whom? Especially it fails to stick to John Piper, whose *Justification of God* on Romans 9 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)—absent from all Wright's bibliographies—gives ample attention to how God keeps promises to the elect.

Lutheran and Reformed traditionalists will be disinclined to jump ship until the new perspective engages with their finest representatives. Wright barely mentions the Lutheran A. Andrew Das (p. 108). Yet Das's proposal makes sense: that the Torah-devotion that Paul rejects is neither Weber's caricature nor Sanders's covenantal nomism according to rabbinic self-definition, but the fatal pursuit of a *nuda lex* that Paul himself insists is left to any who will not submit to God's Christocentric order. Exegetically acute, historically plausible, requiring no wrenching paradigm shift—how would Wright respond?

On the Reformed side, generations of Paulinists at the old Princeton and Westminster seminaries (Hodge, Vos, Murray, Gaffin; with only the last two named by Wright, secondarily on p. 119) laid the groundwork of much present inertia toward the new perspective among American evangelicals. This venerable tradition was mature before the new perspective was born; like Ridderbos, it has always been

conversant with currents in Europe, even while they snubbed it (p. 61); it wrestled with all the problems as they arose, and found solutions to them preserving continuity with the Reformation heritage. Here Paul's gospel is situated in the sweep of revelation from Moses to Christ (see Vos's *Biblical Theology* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948] and *Pauline Eschatology* [Princeton, 1930]). Jesus's role as Israel's Messiah points to his universality as the Last Adam. Instead of playing off "justification" and "participation" against each other, this tradition makes "union with Christ" by faith the mode by which believers participate both in Christ's forensic status as righteous and in his resurrection life bringing forth the fruit of righteous deeds. To gain a hearing for his novel hypotheses Wright must explain what they have in common with or how they might conceivably improve upon—if they can—this widely accepted model.

How did Wright identify the fundamental beliefs of Judaism, into which he so insightfully slots his account of Paul's theology? Earlier publications gave few clues (2005: pp. 83–86; 2013: pp. 609–12). Now it comes out: "Monotheism and election, redrawn around the Messiah: the central argument of my own recent work was sketched by Meeks thirty years earlier" (2015: p. 274). Yet the sixth chapter of *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983) merely traced some correlations between the communal life of Paul's churches and their beliefs; Meeks never meant it to be comprehensive. Schechter in his rounded treatment of Judaism, which Wright cites (1991: p. 1; 1992: p. 244) but follows selectively, devotes a chapter to God, two to Israel's election, three to God's kingdom, and eleven to "the Law" and related topics (*Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*). So also in the sources. The nearest thing to a creed in Judaism, the *Shema*, contains, to be sure, monotheism and God's covenant with Israel: "The LORD our God, the LORD is one." To Torah it goes straight on: "And you shall love the LORD your God." This is logical. What binds the one God to his special people is the covenant that outlines his promises and their duties. Therefore the pre-rabbinic author of *2 Baruch* intones, in clauses that remind us of the quasi-creedal unities of Eph 4:4–6, "For we are all *a people* of the Name, we, who received *one Law* from *the One*" (48:23b–24a); "there is *one Law* by *One*, *one world and an end* for all those who exist" (85:14). Both summaries include Torah.

Could Wright have miscalculated structurally from the ground up? Where he has three Jewish principles, ought there to be four? What becomes of our picture of Paul, if the Judaism that nurtured him, which he reinterpreted in the light of Christ, had one God, one people, one Torah, and one final theocracy? Torah would then be released from under the rubric of "election/people" and would lay down their path to the coming age. The predicate "righteous" would describe, not someone who is a covenant member *per se*, but one who treads precisely that path (Deut 6:25; Ezek 18:5–9). For God to "justify" would be to declare, not only that people belong, but that their walking reflects his ways, his glory—indeed, "God's righteousness." "Works of Torah" would denote Adam's progeny undertaking to perform the commandments without Christ or Christ's Spirit, and "faith" would be, not a "sign" (p. 73) or "badge" (p. 93 n. 19) marking out God's people, but the instrument, the tenacious embrace by which sinners hearing the gospel cleave to Christ

(hence "faith *in* Christ"), who alone finished the path well. All of which would land us back at square one.

Wright's *Recent Interpreters,* together with *Paul and the Faithfulness of God,* confronts distortions in German Protestant exegesis created by successive waves of Hegelianism, *Religionsgeschichte*, existentialism, and reactions to Naziism. It insists on reading Paul on Paul's terms, in the light of our best knowledge of contemporary Judaism. As dialogue continues about details, we cannot but recognize that Wright's vision is vast, his goal noble, his method sophisticated, his industry assiduous, his achievement rarefied.

Paul A. Rainbow
Sioux Falls Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD

Philippians. By Joseph H. Hellerman. Exegetical Guide to the Greek NT. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015, xxix + 297 pp., $29.99 paper.

In this new installment of the EGGNT series, Joe Hellerman has provided an important resource for both the academic and pastoral study of Philippians. Although necessarily concise due to the specific aim of the commentary series, his grammatical analysis is elucidating, while his exegetical insights are brief but incisive.

The commentary series, originally conceived by Murray J. Harris and modeled on his work on Colossians and Philemon, "aims to close the gap between the Greek text and the available tools" (p. xvi). Thus, while not meant to be a "full-scale commentary" (p. xvi), it does provide an analysis "of each phrase of the passage with discussion of relevant vocabulary, significant textual variants, and detailed grammatical analysis, including parsing" (p. xvii). Far more than other grammatical analyses of the NT (e.g. Zerwick/Grosvenor, or both Sumney and Loh/Nida on Philippians), however, the EGGNT includes interaction with the theological ideas of the text, as well as with the relevant socio-historical background.

Hellerman's commentary provides an excellent example of how this broad aim plays out upon a specific text. For every phrase in the epistle, he explains the basic syntactical elements that occur, along with his judgment of specific functions assumed by each particular element, whether the case of a noun, tense of a verb, or use of a preposition/particle, etc. Whenever such a judgment might be questioned, he presents each option (clearly laid out in easy-to-follow numbered sections), giving the arguments for and against each side, and then describes why he chooses one over the other(s). In such cases (and they are numerous throughout the commentary), Hellerman consistently displays a fair hand in his presentation, avoiding any skewing of the data to fit his own particular view and supporting his decisions by constant interaction with the standard grammars and linguistic works (e.g. Wallace, Porter, BDF, Robertson, Runge, Thompson). Even those who disagree with his final decision on any particular point of interpretation will benefit enormously by Hellerman's work of filtering the numerous scholars into the various possible positions on any one phrase in the text.

Hellerman's commentary also provides theological interpretations arising from situating Paul's words within the broader theology of the NT as well as within the wider Greco-Roman world. His background in classical Roman history enables him to bring in material that helps to elucidate Paul's ideas. By doing so, he is able to demonstrate when the apostle might be intentionally challenging the ideology of Roman Philippi, such as in Phil 2:3, where he describes the sentiment of considering others better than yourself as "revolutionary, for Paul is essentially charging a church member with Roman citizen status . . . thus directly subverting the pride of honors that marked social life in the colony" (p. 102). At other times, Hellerman's expertise in Roman history enables him to portray how Paul describes aspects of the Christian life using terms or ideas easily understood by the Philippian believers (such as his discussion of the Stoic virtue lists when commenting on Phil 4:8 on p. 245). Thus, while his comments often entail a sifting through the major commentaries available on Philippians (e.g. O'Brien, Reumann, Hawthorne-Martin, Fee, Hansen, Silva), Hellerman regularly offers his own original contributions to the interpretation of the text. For instance, see his insight that the order of Paul's sentence in 3:10 (resurrection, then suffering) "parallels Paul's own experience . . . where he first encountered the risen Christ and subsequently learned that suffering would be his lot as Christ's apostle (Acts 9:16)" (p. 190).

Another contribution of the commentary is Hellerman's consistent attention to the honor/shame dynamics within the discourse (recognized by others, but often not sufficiently brought to bear on interpretation). This perspective produces particularly meaningful results in his comments on the Christ-hymn overall, but especially on 2:10 ("the name above all names"). Hellerman approaches this phrase from the perspective of both Roman history (referencing J. E. Lendon's *Empire of Honour* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997]) and the OT (the linguistic freight of the Hebrew term *šēm*) to argue that "the emphasis falls decidedly upon the public status associated with that name" (p. 120), from which he concludes that "what Jesus receives is not a new name but, rather, a new reputation" (p. 121). More examples could be given, such as his discussion on 2:17 of the "'aura of high status' that Paul's audience associated with λειτουργία and its cognates" (p. 140).

When it comes to debated aspects within the study of Philippians, Hellerman does not diverge greatly from the majority of conservative scholars. He holds to the integrity of the letter (p. 3). He argues for the traditional view of the letter's Roman provenance (pp. 3, 276), which also determines his dating of the letter (ca. 60–62), recognizing, however, the difficulties in accepting such a position (pp. 3–4). Hellerman's approach to the Christ-hymn is unapologetic in interpreting the hymn as primarily focused on sociology/ecclesiology rather than specifically on the doctrinal content about Christ's nature: "Paul has leveraged Christology—conceived in terms of status and prestige—in the service of ecclesiology. . . . Paul's agenda is primarily sociological, not ontological" (p. 105). He offers a lengthy introduction to the hymn in which he defends his position, allowing for ontological assumptions to stand behind and legitimate Paul's argument. Within the argument of the text, however, as Hellerman sees it, "Paul appropriates Christ . . . as a model for relationships"; it is "Christology in the service of ecclesiology" (p. 106). When discuss-

ing justification in 3:9, Hellerman, after a lengthy discussion of the issues, opts for an objective genitive for the righteousness that comes διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ (pp. 186–88), going on to describe the two occurrences of δικαιοσύνη in this passage as both referring to status, only differing in their source (either arising out of human effort or being granted by God [p. 188]).

Hellerman's furthering of the scholarly discussion of Philippians is matched by his ability to make such discussion accessible for the church, especially for pastors seeking to exposit the text of the epistle. Each section concludes with his own "Homiletical Suggestions," in which he consolidates the theological insights of the text into short bullet-point outlines to be used in preaching or teaching the passage. Often a section contains two or three separate suggested outlines, either corresponding with the entire passage or focusing more narrowly on just one or two verses. These suggestions are not merely a hypothetical task, since as a full-time pastor in a local congregation, in addition to teaching at Biola/Talbot, Hellerman regularly preaches from his study of the NT. Hence, his insights into how the church might be helped by the ideas of the text emerge from a close interaction with the needs of his own local congregation.

Along with its place as an excellent resource for those specifically engaged in the task of understanding the meaning and significance of Philippians both historically and pastorally, the commentary also serves as an exemplar for students of the Greek NT more broadly. Hellerman models a rigorous engagement with the Greek text, puzzling over the reason why the author chose particular constructions or vocabulary, etc., and then describing this decision-making process clearly. Thus, students attempting to learn how to make their own decisions about semantic categories and syntactical structures, as well as their implications for exegesis, will find in Hellerman's analysis a paradigm from which they can take their cue in studying the NT.

Hellerman has given us a highly significant addition to the study of Paul's letter to the Philippians, useful for scholars, pastors, and students. His commentary is a masterful compendium of scholarship on Philippians to date and a model of a historically-formed exegesis, with an eye to its theological implications.

Isaac D. Blois
University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Scotland

1–2 Thessalonians. By Jeffrey A. D. Weima. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014, xxii + 711 pp., $49.99.

Jeffrey Weima, a longtime NT Professor at Calvin Theological Seminary, has produced a superb, scholarly commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians that (1) is detailed in its presentation of exegetical options; (2) emphasizes letter-writing practices over rhetorical criticism as an aid to exegesis; and (3) has mostly traditional conclusions.

This is a large, detailed commentary that includes 577 pages of exegetical material (not counting the introduction and appendices) for the eight chapters of 1

and 2 Thessalonians. The level of detail and mastery of sources in this commentary are no surprise as Weima has spent a large portion of his academic pursuits in the study of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. He tells the reader that in essence this project started almost 20 years ago. In that time, explicitly related to 1 and 2 Thessalonians, he has written numerous academic articles, completed a popular commentary (included within *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002]), co-authored with Stanley Porter *An Annotated Bibliography of 1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), and participated in and chaired the five-year seminar "The Thessalonian Correspondence" at SNTS.

Weima's discussion of each clause includes significant Greek semantic and grammatical analysis. In addition, especially impressive is his presentation of various scholars' rationales and counter-rationales for numerous clause-level exegetical decisions, not to mention higher-level conclusions. As someone who has written a semi-popular commentary of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, I was impressed with how often he accurately and even-handedly described the factors related to the exegetical decisions that I had to make—even when I disagreed with him as to whether an ἐν was locative or instrumental. To repeat, the level of exegetical detail and presentation of scholarly options in this commentary is significant. It reminds me of Cranfield's two-volume Romans commentary in the ICC series. Of course, given the detail, I can imagine that a few of my students and pastor friends will complain that they cannot distinguish the forest from the trees.

With regard to one issue of hermeneutical methodology, Weima prefers letter-writing practices over the more recent emphasis on rhetorical criticism. Rhetorical criticism is here defined as allowing Greco-Roman discussions of oral presentations to have a significant influence on the interpretation of Paul's letters. Weima's preference for using Greco-Roman letter-writing practices especially shows in his exegesis of the openings and closings (following his *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings* [Sheffield: JSOT, 1994]) and his understanding of the "appeal formula" (e.g. 1 Thess 4:1; 2 Thess 2:1; 3:6). I agree with Weima on this issue, although I believe his discussions of the "appeal formula" are overdone. I also note that Weima rarely mentions another recent trend—the implications of the patron-client relationship. Here again, Weima and I agree.

Weima's interpretative conclusions are mostly traditional and fit well within an evangelical and Reformed framework. As I present his conclusions below I will not bother noting the few places where we disagree.

As to introductory matters, Paul wrote both 1 and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth in AD 50–51. First Thessalonians was written first and 1 Thess 2:13–16 is not an interpolation. The "we" of the letters is to be taken "literarily rather than literally" (p. 66). Weima's introductory arguments assume a high view of the historical accuracy of Acts.

Weima has a few tweaks to the standard outlines of these two books. First Thessalonians 2:1–16 is a unit as opposed to the more traditional split of 2:1–12 and 2:13–16. Weima emphasizes that aspects of Paul's visit are in both pericopes. He also sees 2 Thess 2:1–17 as a literary unit, not just 2:1–12. This has the effect of showing better that the Thessalonians' comfort is the main theme of the eschato-

logical discussion. Both of these tweaks contribute to downplaying the oddity of Paul's double thanksgivings in both 1 and 2 Thessalonians because the second thanksgivings (1 Thess 2:13–16, 2 Thess 2:13–15) are subsumed into larger units. Weima emphasizes that 2 Thess 3:1–5 should be seen as closely connected to 3:6–15—closer than traditionally thought. Paul's commending of the Thessalonians in 3:4 prepares them for his later commands concerning the idle.

Exegetical conclusions of interest include that 1 Thess 1:9b–10 is not pre-Pauline material ("you turned to God from idols"). First Thessalonians 2 is a real defense against real opponents. The opponents are those outside the church who are harassing the Thessalonian Christians for not participating in civic/cultic activities and questioning Paul's integrity.

The close association of God the Father and Christ in the openings (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2) and mid-book prayers (1 Thess 3:11; 2 Thess 2:16; 3:5) shows Christ's divinity, although "God" in 2 Thess 1:12 is not referring to Christ. The word πορνεία in 1 Thess 4:3 refers "in a general way to all kinds of sexual misconduct, including both premarital and extramarital sex as well as homosexual activity" (p. 266).

Concerning 1 Thess 4:13–18, Weima concludes that some Thessalonian Christians were grieving because they feared that dead Christians would be at a disadvantage at the second coming, not that they feared the dead Christians would not be resurrected. Paul's use of παρουσία and ἀπάντησις relate to a royal Roman visit where the city inhabitants meet with the dignitary outside the city, and then they all proceed into the city. Hence, upon meeting with believers in the clouds, Christ will descend victoriously with them to earth. Weima sees this pericope as not supporting soul sleep or the dispensational rapture.

In 1 Thess 5:10, that Christ "died for us" is understood as substitutionary for believers' sins. "Eternal destruction" in 2 Thess 1:9 refers to the unending punishment of the non-believer, not annihilation.

For Weima, in 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul notes that some believe that the second coming has already occurred. Paul's answer is straightforward; no, the second coming has not occurred as can be deduced by the fact that certain eschatological events have not taken place. The difficulty for us comes in understanding the details of these events. Weima concludes that the "man of lawlessness" is an "eschatological individual" who is, colloquially stated, "Satan's superman" (p. 513). The "temple" does refer to the Jerusalem temple, but it is being used metaphorically for the "well-known theme of its desecration as a graphic description of the lawless one's usurpation of God and his divine authority" (p. 522). Weima has an extended discussion concerning the "restrainer." He concludes based on Daniel 10–12 that the restrainer is the archangel Michael. The neuter participle is explained by Michael's restraining activity and the masculine participle by Michael's person.

Those termed ἄτακτος and cognates are best translated as "rebellious idlers" (pp. 393, 600). These Thessalonian brothers refused to work. Why did they refuse to work? Weima gives a weak vote to the eschatological explanation—the assumption of Christ's imminent return discouraged people from working. This problem is

discussed briefly in 1 Thess 5:14 and had grown worse, so that 2 Thessalonians includes a fuller discussion (2 Thess 3:1–15).

As to broader themes in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Weima interprets the election/calling passages as compatible with a traditional Reformed understanding. He often comments on the high view of grace that Paul has for the believer's full-orbed salvation (justification, sanctification, glorification). Finally, Weima notes the numerous times that Paul uses OT words/concepts and applies them to Gentile believers, showing that the church is in continuity with OT Israel.

In sum, for detailed exegesis and presentation of various scholarly views, Weima's *1–2 Thessalonians* will be the evangelical "standard" for many years to come.

Robert J. Cara
Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC

Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul. By Simon Gathercole. Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015, 128 pp., $19.99 paper.

The doctrine of the atonement has been a perennial subject of debate and discussion throughout the history of the church. Pelagius infamously defended the moral example theory, where Christ's death serves merely as an ethical exemplar, a view later adopted by Peter Abelard in the Middle Ages. Various church fathers promoted the *Christus Victor* model of the atonement, where Christ defeats the forces of Satan and evil through his crucifixion. Other patristic theologians taught the ransom theory, which maintained that Christ's atonement rescued sinners from Satan. St. Anselm contributed to the discussion with the satisfaction theory of the atonement, where Christ repairs the breech of man's failure to render due honor to God. The Protestant Reformers defended penal-substitutionary atonement where Christ takes the place of sinners and suffers the wrath of God on their behalf. After the Reformation, Hugo Grotius promoted the governmental theory, which teaches that Christ's atonement is an example of what happens to sinners if they refuse to repent. Within the NT guild debate has continued regarding the precise nature and role of Christ's atonement and is a continuation of this age-old discussion. Simon Gathercole, Senior Lecturer in NT Studies in the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, has written a brief but nonetheless stimulating engagement with these most recent debates.

Gathercole divides his book into five sections, including an introduction and conclusion and then chapters on challenges to substitution, an analysis of 1 Cor 15:3, and another analysis of Rom 5:6–8. The main focus of Gathercole's book is to discuss and explain the concept of substitution as it relates to Paul's theology and current debate in the NT guild. In other words, what is the precise manner of the believer's participation in Christ's atonement? Gathercole's thesis is that "Christ's death for our sins *in our place*, *instead of us*, is in fact a vital ingredient in the biblical . . . understanding of the atonement" (pp. 13–14, also p. 17). For many evangelical Christians, substitutionary atonement may seem like a biblical given, but

in light of the doctrine's history and present debate within the NT guild Gathercole's book is a most welcome contribution. Gathercole believes that a doctrine of substitutionary atonement means that "Jesus . . . did something, underwent something, so that we did not and would never have to do so" (p. 15).

Gathercole engages a number of different recent criticisms of substitutionary atonement such as its alleged immorality, a charged leveled by Steve Chalke with his accusations that it is an example of "cosmic child abuse" (p. 24). On a more technical level, Gathercole examines more recent discussions in the German NT guild where scholars have debated the merits of *inclusive* vs. *exclusive place-taking*. In Enlightenment-influenced scholarship, Kant has challenged the idea that guilt can be transferred from one person to another (p. 35). In place-taking theory, Christ is not a substitute, but instead he identifies with sinners (p. 31). According to German scholars, therefore, inclusive place-taking is Christ's identification with sinners whereas exclusive place-taking is substitution (p. 35). Gathercole engages two other theories: Morna Hooker's interchange theory and apocalyptic deliverance by J. Louis Martyn. Gathercole rightly notes that, while there are some superficial similarities between substitution and interchange, the concepts are actually different (p. 41). Interchange has greater similarities to inclusive place-taking where Christ merely identifies with sinful humanity (p. 39). Apocalyptic deliverance views stand in opposition to so-called *forensic* views, or justification-by-faith models, and argue that Christ's atonement wages an end-time war against the powers of evil to deliver God's people (p. 42). For each of these three views, Gathercole appropriately critiques and rejects them: inclusive place-taking suffers from Kantian aversions to transferred guilt and has no place for how Christ's atonement deals with the sins of individuals. Place-taking deals with the concept of sin, but not *sins* (plural; pp. 37–38); this is the same deficiency with Hooker's interchange view (p. 42). Apocalyptic deliverance accounts for the cosmic dimension of deliverance but fails to deal with elements of personal guilt so prominently expounded in Romans 1–3, for example (p. 46). In Gathercole's analysis of this approach, sin seems to be little more than an abstract and palpable problem but hardly something that individuals commit and therefore something that requires forgiveness.

In the positive exposition of his case Gathercole treats his two chief texts, 1 Cor 15:3 and Rom 5:6–8. The first text is relevant given Paul's statement, "Christ died for our sins." Gathercole drills down into the OT bedrock of this Pauline text, namely, Isaiah 53. He points out that Isaiah 53 offers *prima facie* evidence that Isaiah's suffering servant dies a vicarious death on behalf of sinners (p. 64). He then carefully exegetes Isa 53:4–12 and connects it to 1 Cor 15:3 as well as two other key texts, Rom 4:25 and Gal 1:4a (p. 65). Noteworthy in Isaiah's text is the prophet's use of personal pronouns (p. 68). Gathercole draws special attention to the passage's pronouns to argue that the servant, "he," suffers vicariously for the "we" in the passage (see, e.g., Isa 53:4–5). Isaiah's language, and hence Paul's language, refers to vicarious suffering, and thus substitution (p. 71). "The default Old Testament position," writes Gathercole, "would be '*he* died for *his* sins' or '*we* died for *our* sins.' The miracle of the gospel, however, is that *he* died for *our* sins" (p. 73).

In the second passage Gathercole examines Rom 5:6–8, "For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die." Gathercole's analysis is interesting because he contrasts Paul's statement with pagan literature of the period (pp. 89–103). In these pagan texts there is a positive preexisting relationship that acts as the stage for the hero's vicarious death. Paul turns this concept on its head in Rom 5:6–8, according to Gathercole. Christ vicariously dies for the ungodly—there is no preexisting friendship. Rather, Christ's vicarious death creates the friendship (pp. 105–6). Christ "dies for us," and the ensuing friendship is one of the fruits of this selfless action. In this particular case, Gathercole persuasively argues that the immediate backdrop is not Isaiah 53, as with Paul's Corinthians text, but rather this pagan literature. In addition, this pagan literature clearly presents instances of vicarious suffering, not place-taking or identification with a person. Hence, Paul's point is to highlight the unique nature of Christ's vicarious death for sinners (p. 107).

On the whole, Gathercole's book has a number of strengths, chief of which is its brevity. The book was originally a series of lectures; so its lean 128 pages offer an excellent overview of recent atonement debates. His concise examination of the latest NT guild discussions offers an easy entry-point for students or interested laymen to explore these issues. His careful exegetical treatment of the two Pauline texts usefully showcases the substitutionary nature of Paul's doctrine of the atonement. I think identifying Paul's subtexts, Isaiah 53 and contemporaneous pagan literature, is an especially helpful aspect of Gathercole's work. In my judgment, Gathercole makes his case and presents convincing argumentation to prove the substitutionary nature of Christ's death. Another strength is that he does not dismissively reject the insights of other deficient views. He notes, for example, that other views offer insights that can happily coexist with Paul's concept of substitution (p. 112).

Given the brief nature of the book and its specific aim as a series of three lectures, it does not seem fair to register any weaknesses of the book. Nevertheless, one minor consideration would add to the book's strengths. Gathercole does not mention much regarding the history of the doctrine. A few sentences here and there with a few strategically placed footnotes would alert readers to the historic debates and discussions. I find, for example, great similarity between apocalyptic deliverance formulations and *Christus Victor* views. In other words, greater connectivity with the historic conversations would enrich this little book. Aside from this minor observation, Gathercole has written an eminently readable and important contribution to the ongoing debates regarding Christ's substitutionary atonement. Anyone interested in the debate would do well to read and digest this book.

J. V. Fesko
Westminster Seminary California, Escondido, CA

Psalm 110 and the Logic of Hebrews. By Jared Compton. Library of NT Studies 537. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015, xiv + 226 pp., $112.00.

This book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School under D. A. Carson. In this study, Jared Compton analyzes the use of Psalm 110 in the expository parts of Hebrews in order to shed light on the structure of Hebrews and its use of the OT. According to Compton, the author of Hebrews develops his argument by using Ps 110:1 and 4 to affirm the enthronement, priesthood, permanence, heavenly location, and session of the Son as Messiah.

After describing and justifying his purpose and approach in the opening chapter, Compton dedicates the next three chapters to the parts of Hebrews that he identifies as expository (1:5–14, 2:4–18, 5:1–10, 7:1–10:18). Each of these chapters concludes with a summary showing how Psalm 110 is related to the "embedded idea" of each passage studied. In a final chapter, Compton summarizes the way in which Ps 110:1 and 4 shape the argument of Hebrews and proposes a hypothesis concerning the situation of Hebrews' recipients and the concern of its author. The book concludes with an appendix describing some significant contributors to the study of Hebrews' use of the OT.

In chapter 2, Compton contends that Heb 1:5–14 and 2:5–18 focus on the enthronement announced in Ps 110:1. The OT quotations in Heb 1:5–14 (climaxing in Ps 110:1) establish the Son's enthronement as Messiah. Hebrews 2:5–18, on the other hand, describes the means of his enthronement. By attaining this enthronement through his incarnation and death, the Messiah/Son brings humanity to its God-intended destiny promised in Psalm 8 (Heb 2:5–9). Furthermore, this enthronement through incarnation/death is appropriately understood in terms of the Messiah's priesthood (Heb 2:10–18).

Chapter 3 focuses on Hebrews' use of Ps 110:4 in 5:1–10, 7:1–10, and 7:11–28 to confirm both the priesthood (5:1–10) and permanence (7:1–10) of the enthroned Messiah of 1:5–2:18. Because he is a priest of Melchizedek's order and thus permanent, he is able to "perfect," that is provide "eternal salvation," for human beings (7:11–18) and thus restore them to the glory for which they were made (2:5–18).

Chapter 4 explores the use of Ps 110:1 and 4 in Heb 8:1–13, 9:1–10, 9:11–28, and 10:1–18 to establish the heavenly nature/location and session of this enthroned, permanent, perfecting priest who brings "eternal salvation." Both the sacrifice of this permanent priest and the covenant he establishes must be appropriate for his entrance into and ministry in heaven (8:1–13). The earth-bound nature of the old sacrificial system was a confession of its inadequacy (9:1–10). The self-offering of the Messiah, however, was effective in removing sin and thus of granting entrance to heaven itself (9:11–28). The heavenly nature of the Son's priesthood and his Ps 110:1 announced *session* at God's right hand provide additional evidence of the old sacrificial system's inadequacy (10:1–18). Chapter 5 summarizes the analysis found in chapters 2 through 4. Compton then suggests that the author of Hebrews may have been concerned about the recipients' rejection of a suffering Messiah in the face of their own imminent suffering.

Compton has provided a useful study of the way Ps 110:1 and 4 undergird the argument and rhetoric of Hebrews. He is correct in his insistence on the pervasive influence of this psalm and on its use to assert the enthronement, priesthood, permanence, heavenly location, and session of the Son as Messiah. At times his exegesis is insightful. For instance, I find the way he handles Psalm 8 in Heb 2:5–9 particularly worthy of attention, though it differs somewhat from my own published comments. Heb 10:1–18, on the other hand, is a description of the new order's superiority rather than the admission of the old cult's inadequacy that Compton would make it.

In my judgment, it would have been better to have focused on the occurrences of Ps 110:1, 4 than to have limited this study to the so-called "expository" parts of Hebrews. The author wrote and the recipients heard Hebrews as a whole. By choosing these "expository" passages, Compton omits both the first (Heb 1:3) and last (Heb 12:3) allusions to Psalm 110:1. A thorough analysis of the prologue (Heb 1:1–4) should have been foundational to this study. The allusion to Ps 110:1 in 12:3 comes at the heart of the final exhortation that spans 11:1 to 12:29 and is crucial in showing the importance of the enthroned priestly Messiah of Ps 110:1, 4 for the perseverance of God's people.

Occasionally in his enthusiasm Compton overemphasizes the role of Psalm 110 and minimizes or denies features of a passage that do not seem to contribute to what he is saying about the role of this psalm. The most serious example of this tendency is his exegesis of Heb 1:5–14. Compton denies this text's teaching on the deity of the Son in order to focus everything on its central idea—the Son's enthronement as Messiah according to Ps 110:1. This interpretation suffers from two types of reductionism. First, it assumes that expressions used to describe the eternity of the Son can mean no more than similar terms used in various speculations about *sophia* or the *logos*. Second, it oversimplifies the context and isolates Heb 1:5–14 from the rest of Hebrews.

The first of these reductionisms falls before the judgment of exactitude and proportion. The occasional scattered parallels between the descriptions of the Son in Hebrews and *sophia* or *logos* are inexact. Furthermore, the full extended description of the deity of the Son in Heb 1:1–14 using so many varied terms and expressions has *no* parallel anywhere. The text of Hebrews systematically applies the terms "Son," "God," and "Lord" to him. The author uses Ps 102:25–27 to describe the Son as the eternal Creator who is sovereign over his creation and master of its final destiny. Compton's attempt to lessen the force of this description by arguing for a pre-Hebrews messianic reading of Ps 102:25–27 is especially strained.

Compton also argues that affirmation of the Son's deity does not fit the context because everything in chapter 1 is meant to answer the question, "How did the Son become superior to the angels?" How could what the Son already was explain what he became? It was by his enthronement at God's right hand as Messiah in accord with Ps 110:1 that he became superior to the angels.

This argument oversimplifies the context because it ignores both the nature of the Son's achieved superiority over the angels and the full means by which he attained it. First, it is important to examine the nature of the Son's superiority.

Compton admits when commenting on Heb 2:9 that since the Son had to be "made lower than the angels" he must have been "greater" than the angels before his incarnation. The question is not how he became "greater" but how he became "so much greater" as "the source of eternal salvation" able to "perfect" the people of God by cleansing them from sin and bringing them into God's presence. Compton's own exegesis of Heb 7:1–10:18 confirms this understanding. The angels, by contrast, were "ministering spirits sent out to serve those who were inheriting salvation" through the work of the Son (Heb 1:14). Before the incarnation the Son was superior, but not yet superior as Savior.

In addition, when dealing with Heb 1:5–12, Compton writes as if the exaltation affirmed in Psalm 110:1 alone and in isolation was what made the Son "so much superior" to the angels. His exposition of Heb 2:5–18, however, shows that this is not true. It is the Son's exaltation through his incarnation and death by which he has "become" so much superior to the angels as the source of eternal salvation. What Compton does not grasp is that Christ became the all-sufficient Savior superior to angels because he was the eternal Son who became incarnate and was then exalted. The eternal deity of the Son, so fully affirmed in Heb 1:1–14, is, indeed, the foundation of his superiority as the only sufficient "source of eternal salvation." This failure to grasp the significance of the Son's eternal deity detracts from Compton's interpretation of Heb 7:1–28. That passage is not merely about the "permanence" but the "eternity" of the new high priest. Thus diminishing the deity of the Savior detracts from Hebrews' teaching on salvation.

I am grateful that Compton has given us a thorough analysis of most of the occurrences of Psalm 110:1, 4 in Hebrews, but regret that his study denies this important foundational dimension of Hebrews' Christology.

Gareth Lee Cockerill
Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson, MS

1, 2, and 3 John. By Karen H. Jobes. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the NT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014, 358 pp., $34.99.

Karen Jobes has written an excellent commentary on John's epistles, both in terms of its exegetical care and its theological insight. Like other volumes in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the NT series, this one deals directly with the Greek text and with the main interpretive issues raised in explaining the meaning of the Greek text, while also summarizing the theological message of each passage in a way that clarifies its relevance for Christians today. In fact, the sections on "Theology in Application" that finish the discussion on each passage constitute a significant strength of the commentary. Both the careful exegesis and the thoughtful reflections on application make Jobes's commentary a useful tool for those preaching or teaching through John's letters.

One of the guiding principle of Jobes's exegetical work in the commentary is that John's letters cannot be properly understood without reference to John's Gospel (p. 14). Jobes assumes that the same author likely wrote all three letters and that

he was either the author of John's Gospel or a close associate of the Gospel writer (pp. 14, 23). Based on that assumption, she proceeds through her exegetical work in John's letters, often using John's Gospel as an interpretive framework for the terms, themes, metaphors, and theology common to both (p. 14, 28). The letters and the Gospel were written for different purposes and therefore the letters must be allowed their own voice, but with due caution John's Gospel can serve as an important part of the context for understanding John's letters. The use of John's Gospel in Jobes's interpretive work abounds in her comments, for example even in her work on the short initial chapter of 1 John. She draws on data from the Gospel in order to clarify the meaning of "the beginning" in v. 1 (pp. 45–46), the referents for the pronoun "we" in vv. 1–3, that is, the people who are reporting their experience with the Word of Life (pp. 49–51), the use of the genitive in the phrase "Word of Life" (p. 51), the author's role as a witness (pp. 52–53), the theme of joy as found in v. 4 (pp. 56–57), the duality of light and darkness in v. 5 (pp. 63–65), the nature of truth in v. 6 (p. 69), and the presence of sin in the believer's life according to v. 8 and its relation to the light-darkness duality (p. 71). Such examples are clearly not isolated to just Jobes's comments on 1 John 1. Instead, throughout the commentary, Jobes helpfully employs John's Gospel to interpret John's letters, while also paying close attention to the unique contributions of the letters.

Another guiding principle of Jobes's work is that John's letters provide insufficient evidence for reconstructing the false teaching that was causing a division within the Johannine churches and that therefore a specific detailed reconstruction of the historical situation should not be assumed in interpreting John's letters. Jobes recognizes, of course, that the Johannine letters were written during a time of schism and confusion in the Johannine churches. However, a variety of Christological heresies may or may not have contributed to the difficulties. There simply is not sufficient evidence to reconstruct the false teaching with any specificity (p. 14). In her discussion of 1 John 2:19 ("They have gone out from us, but they were not of us; for if they were of us, they would have remained with us"), Jobes provides an extensive discussion of the various possibilities as to the identity and beliefs of the secessionists (pp. 124–27). Suggestions include: (1) Gnostic Christians who believed that matter was evil; (2) Docetic Christians who argued that Jesus only appeared to be fully human; (3) Christians associated with Cerinthus who believed that the man Jesus was a completely different being than the Christ-spirit that descended on him at his baptism and left him prior to his crucifixion; (4) Christians who exalted the role of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual knowledge he provides to the point of devaluing Jesus's human ministry and atoning death; and (5) Jewish Christians who renounced their faith in Jesus in order to return to the synagogue. As Jobes points out, scholars have placed a significant amount of interpretive weight on these hypothetical reconstructions based on the slim evidence found in John's letters. Yet, for Jobes, such theories overreach the available data and do not provide sound interpretive assumptions for making sense of Johannine literature or determining the history of the Johannine community (p. 126). Jobes instead wants to focus on what she believes is the main concern of the author of these letters, which was to shepherd those within his spiritual care to remain within the bounds

of orthodoxy by embracing the apostolic witness rather than to address directly the heresy disrupting the churches under his care. She believes that by focusing on this main concern it is possible to show how John's letters speak to the problem of false teaching more broadly, not only with regard to the past but in our time as well (p. 24). A variety of false views can strike at the heart of the truth about Jesus Christ, and therefore can be identified as being from the spirit of antichrist rather than from the Spirit of Christ (p. 179). Therefore, Jobes in general avoids mirror-reading, refusing to use the statements and commands of John's letters to reconstruct a plausible situation that gave rise to them (p. 126). So, for example, the repeated "if we say" clauses in 1 John 1:6–10 ("if we say, 'We have fellowship with him,' and walk in darkness . . ."; "if we say, 'We have no sin' . . ."; "if we say, 'We have not sinned' . . .") need not be taken as direct quotes from the secessionists, since they may be understood as ideas that needed correction regardless of their origin (p. 68).

In the sections on "Theology in Application" throughout the commentary, a recurring theme is that, in light of the message of John's letters, believers must remain faithful to the apostolic message in the midst of our present-day pluralistic culture that denies any real distinction between light and darkness and thus any claim to a true knowledge of God (e.g., pp. 58–59, 90, 133–34, 136, 226–27, 267, 273–74). John's letters were written during a spiritually confusing time when there were conflicting ideas about Jesus Christ and about what it means to know God. We also live in a spiritually confusing time, a time with diverse and conflicting views about God, so much so that the pervading thought is that it does not really matter what someone believes. Yet in the midst of such confusion, believers should know that they do indeed have eternal life, because they know God through his self-revelation in Jesus Christ (p. 21). Even today Christians must maintain the truth about Jesus Christ by holding fast to the apostolic witness, which according to Jobes is preserved for us in the NT (pp. 59, 224, 267, 296, 323–24). Of course, Jobes also recognizes the balancing idea in John's letters that Christians must be able to recognize and love those who belong to their own spiritual family and not so narrow the boundaries of orthodoxy as to exclude those who are genuine believers in Jesus Christ. The reoccurring pattern among Christians of polemicizing all kinds of non-essential issues and demonizing opponents within the church fails to treat brothers and sisters in Christ as chosen members of the family of God (pp. 279–80).

The emphasis throughout the commentary on calling Christians to faithfulness to the truth in the midst of a world that rejects it seems to raise one question that Jobes does not directly address. How do Christians effectively communicate the truth to the world around them so that others might come to know God through Jesus Christ? Jobes is certainly correct to stress the need for believers to remain faithful to the apostolic witness in light of the rejection of that truth all around them, since that is where the emphasis lies in John's letters. However, even according to John's letters, Jesus was sent by the Father to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14; cf. 4:9), with the result that he came to give himself for the whole world (1 John 2:2). Moreover, believers have received God's love so that

they might express that love in the world (1 John 4:17). Such statements raise hope for at least some in the world. John's letters repeatedly call on believers to love one another, and that repeated command may point to an answer. For John, love within the community may not only serve believers but may also have an outreach purpose. Perhaps the loving fellowship of God with his people and the loving fellowship among his people may so confuse and disarm the seemingly truth-deaf people of the world that they might listen to the witness concerning Jesus and enter into the light.

Joel F. Williams
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

Soteriology as Motivation in the Apocalypse of John. By Alexander E. Stewart. Gorgias Biblical Studies 61. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2015, xiii + 273 pp., $95.00.

This monograph explores how the author of the Apocalypse sought to motivate hearers to heed his prophetic-apocalyptic message. The book's unique contribution is the application of modern theories of argumentation to Revelation, in particular Stephen Toulmin's model (*The Uses of Argument* [Cambridge: University Press, 1958]). The conclusion is that soteriology is the primary motivating factor of the book: only hearers who overcome—which entails complete faithfulness to Jesus in the present—will be saved in the future, a future that culminates decisively and apocalyptically in the final day of salvation and judgment. (Though not noted anywhere in the book, the monograph—under the same title—was a Ph.D. dissertation completed at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2012.)

Stewart's particular focus is the rhetoric of persuasion/argumentation, terms that he chooses to use synonymously (p. 53). He recognizes that persuasion has traditionally (and he says, simplistically) been associated more with motivation via emotional appeal, while argumentation seeks to convince with more logical reasoning. He avers, "Decision making, both on the cognitive and volitional level, involves a complex interaction of factors within a human being, and requires a holistic as opposed to dichotomized approach" (p. 52). Fair enough, but ancient rhetoricians clearly understood the distinct and essential role of both *pathos* and *logos*. For the Apocalypse, the evocative nature of much of the imagery (*pathos*) needs to be stressed, lest it be misread as strictly propositional. It seems that not keeping some measure of distinction in the foreground risks more than it gains.

Underlying Stewart's research are several assumptions. John is the author of the Apocalypse, and possibly, if not probably, the same person who authored the Gospel and the three letters (p. 56). The persecution mentioned in the Apocalypse was more than just perceived; it entailed social ostracization, outright persecution, and even martyrdom (p. 67). In response, John sought to elicit obedience, repentance, faithfulness, perseverance, witness, worship, and good works from his hearers (p. 74). "The entire motivational structure of the Apocalypse depends upon the premise that there was still time for believers, and, by extension, unbelievers to repent and overcome" (p. 144). In a footnote, Stewart acknowledges, "This book

roughly follows a symbolic progressive recapitulation interpretation of the seven seals, trumpets, and bowls" (p. 104 n. 45).

Following a short chapter of introduction, the second chapter is the longest and covers a variety of topics, loosely held together by their connection to argumentation. Stewart situates his thesis among various discussions of classical rhetorical models for understanding the Apocalypse's rhetoric, with preference for David deSilva's approach in *Seeing Things John's Way* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), which should be read alongside Stewart, if not before. He then offers a few "alternative" approaches, such as Hebrew rhetoric, relevance theory, and rational choice theory. While acknowledging the possibility of the OT prophets' rhetorical devices playing a role in the composition of the Apocalypse, Stewart concludes that the evidence demands a mediating position, allowing John to stand in continuity with the prophets yet also to be more significantly influenced by classical rhetoric. This is followed by a discussion of modern theories of argumentation analysis, including the approach of Chaim Perelman and the new rhetoric; Stephen Toulmin's seminal work, which, though from the mid-20th century, continues to influence diverse disciplines (but rarely biblical studies); and the most comprehensive theory of argumentation to date known as pragma-dialectics, which focuses especially on the evaluation of arguments (and therefore is less suitable for understanding the Apocalypse).

According to Toulmin, six major building blocks comprise argumentation: the claim (which could be a command), the grounds that support the claim, the warrants that support the grounds, the backing that supports the warrants, the qualifiers (such as "likely" or "certainly"), and the rebuttals, in other words, the admission of (and perhaps response to) possible exceptions (pp. 39–43). While Stewart admits some limitations and criticism of Toulmin's model, he finds it particularly suited for analyzing the Apocalypse.

The rest of chapter 2 defines terms, considers the rhetorical situation and possible exigencies of the rhetoric of the Apocalypse, and highlights various scholars' views of John's rhetorical goals, ending with Stewart's own view: "John's primary rhetorical goal . . . is to motivate his hearers to overcome" (p. 74). At various points in this chapter the views of others are dismissed rather quickly. For example: "John's denunciation of Roman imperial power and policy is clear, pervasive, and forceful but it does not represent John's primary rhetorical goal" (p. 70). That kind of statement comes close to begging the question, rather than being the result of careful weighing of evidence. Stewart may be right, but Steve Moyise has recently commented in his reply to the essays in *The Book of Revelation: Currents in British Research on the Apocalypse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 285: "Salvation in Revelation is for those who have the moral courage to stand up against the might of the empire."

Chapter 3 lays out two claims. The Apocalypse cannot be understood correctly without reading it in light of the "field of argumentation" (i.e. religious discourse), which was essentially the worldview of early Christians. The second claim is that the foundational narrative (i.e. metanarrative) of Scripture was also foundational to that worldview. Stewart contends, "This preliminary investigation is necessary be-

cause the field of argumentation to which any particular micro-argument belongs determines the effectiveness and persuasiveness of the argumentation, the basis for evaluating the argumentation, and the pool from which to look for implicit warrants and backing" (p. 81). Additionally, the metanarrative provides "the motivational force that often fails to come from the bare recognition of what one ought to do. . . . an emotional response is easier to elicit when the argumentation is situated within a vivid narrative" (p. 116). However, motivation did not rest on emotion alone: "John's argumentation can be seen as fully logical and rationally designed to appeal to the thinking, rational part of his readers and not simply to their emotions" (p. 118).

Chapter 4 is the heart of the book. Applying Toulmin's model, Stewart systematically and graphically works through "the exegetical trees—the micro-argumentation contained in individual sentences and clauses . . . [finding] twelve instances of explicit motivation and seven categories of implicit motivation in the Apocalypse" (p. 122; in a footnote, he explains the differences between explicit and implicit motivation [p. 122 n. 3]). This analysis provides the evidence on which Stewart bases his thesis of soteriological motivation.

As an example of Stewart's reasoning, he declares that the promises to each of the seven churches—for example, that each overcomer will be given a white stone with a new name written on it—explicitly "point forward to the visions of final salvation at the end of the Apocalypse . . . [and that is] one of John's primary motivational strategies: hearers should strive to overcome in order to gain final salvation" (p. 134; cf. p. 190). Yet Stewart's assertion bypasses much discussion about the point of these promises. (Regarding the white stone, at least twelve different suggestions have been offered for its significance.) Furthermore, Stewart does not give due consideration to the *pathos* of the promises and their evocative appeal.

Several conclusions essential to Stewart's thesis arise from this chapter. "There are two primary motivational strategies repeatedly employed throughout the Apocalypse: (1) positive motivation centered on the prospect of the reception of reward (final salvation) for overcoming . . . and (2) negative motivation centered on avoidance of the judgment that accompanies failure to overcome . . . [these] are integrally joined around the gain or loss of future salvation" (p. 175). "Salvation surfaces as the primary explicit and implicit motivating factor in John's argumentation" (p. 176).

If chapter 4 is the heart of Stewart's book, chapter 5 is its soul. Stewart seeks to redress the lack of an adequate and comprehensive theology of salvation for the Apocalypse. Since σωτηρία only occurs three times in the book (all in scenes of worship), Stewart admits that the investigation depends on "various images, symbols, and narrative developments by which soteriological realities are described throughout the book" (p. 178). Of course, with an open door to diverse interpretations of the images and realities, true progress will be the result of proceeding cautiously.

An important part of Stewart's thesis is that salvation, like the eschatology of the Apocalypse, has an "already" and "not yet" dimension. Strikingly, the already

inaugurated dimension of soteriology plays "only a minor role in John's motivation while the not yet possessed dimensions of John's soteriology repeatedly form the grounds for John's motivation" (p. 181). Thus "the need for Christians to overcome in order to be saved in the final day motivates an obedient response to John's explicit and implicit exhortations" (p. 199).

Stewart's conclusions, however, will create a theological problem for some readers, as he admits they do for him. "One will look in vain in the Apocalypse for exhortations to believe in God or Jesus in order to be saved" (p. 200). In addition, "hearers are not exhorted to overcome because they had *been saved* but in order that they *might* be saved" (p. 205, italics his). The solution Stewart offers is rooted in the theology he brings to the text rather than in evidence he finds in the text. He surmises that "saving faith is unstated but assumed to be the basis for one's overcoming behavior" (p. 202; for fuller explanation, see the middle paragraph on p. 203). Not all readers will find this satisfactory. The book ends with a chapter of conclusions, an appendix listing verbal indicators in Greek signaling argumentation, a bibliography, and indices.

It is admittedly difficult not to privilege one's thesis and find support in every jot and tittle. This is both an asset and fault of Stewart's book. It is right to draw upon every piece of evidence, but it is also important for an author to make sure that he acknowledges views different from his own, engages with them respectfully, and carefully makes a case for his contribution. Looking over Stewart's bibliography, a variety of pertinent sources are absent; to name a few, Dan Lioy's *The Book of Revelation in Christological Focus* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003); Mark Bredin's *Jesus, Revolutionary of Peace* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2004); and Lynn Huber's *Like a Bride Adorned* (London: T&T Clark International, 2007).

Nevertheless, Stewart's thesis of soteriological motivation is significant and worthy of careful consideration by commentators and teachers. Understanding ancient rhetoric through the lens of modern argumentation contributes important insights into the authorial intent of the Apocalypse, and that provides the basis for a clearer theology of apocalyptic salvation and for a bold proposal: "inaugurated soteriology."

D. Brent Sandy
Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and Spirit in NT and Early Christian Interpretations of the OT. By Matthew W. Bates. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, xii + 234 pp., $90.00.

"What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" When Jesus asks a group of Jewish leaders this question, he aims not only to test their Scripture memory but also their reading strategy. After they correctly answer that the Christ is the son of David, Jesus proceeds with a textual question about Psalm 110: "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord . . . ? If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?" Jesus's simple question about the identity of the person speak-

ing and the one being spoken about in this text stumps the Pharisees, and this type of interpretive riddle has left plenty of readers silent since that day in Jerusalem (see Matt 22:41–46).

In *The Birth of the Trinity*, Matthew Bates argues that the intertextual question Jesus poses in Matthew 22 relates to an area of study freighted with theological significance. In particular, Bates argues that by grappling with just these types of OT texts, NT writers and theologians in the earliest church gave shape to the basic contours of the doctrine of the Trinity. Bates teaches at Quincy University, and this volume extends and applies some of the broad hermeneutical proposals Bates developed in *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

The path Bates leads readers down involves four significant steps. First, he demonstrates that key theologians of the early church such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus utilized a "person-centered" reading strategy in their attempt to understand the nature of strategic instances of divine discourse in the OT. Accordingly, the second step Bates takes is to show how these early church leaders connected this person-centered reading strategy to the most central developments of the doctrine of the Trinity. Bates's thesis is that "a specific ancient reading technique, best termed *prosopological exegesis*, that is evidenced in the New Testament and other early Christian writings was irreducibly essential to the birth of the Trinity" (p. 2, italics his). Bates surveys several contemporary "models" for constructing Trinitarian theology (chap. 1) and argues that a neglected approach is the one that emerges in "continuity" with this "prosopological exegesis" (p. 26).

The third step Bates makes involves demonstrating the textual and theological payoff of this approach for the conception of the interior life of the Trinity in the earliest church. Bates pursues this ambitious goal in chapters 2–6 of the volume. These five chapters form the heart of the book. Here Bates seeks to provide a "theologically attuned exposition" of OT passages that were understood by later interpreters to be instances of divine dialogue (p. 7). The picture that emerges from these texts is not a "philosophically defined Godhead internally differentiated by procession or subordination" but rather "a Father, Son, and Spirit who are characterized by relentless affection and concern for one another" (p. 7). For Bates, "some of the deepest and richest aspects of the interior life of the persons who would later come to be identified as members of the Trinity" are "expressed in the very pages of the New Testament itself" (p. 5). "Surprisingly," he notes, these instances "have not yet been plumbed" (p. 5).

As Bates outlines, the events spoken of in these bits of divine dialogue span the entire history of redemption. Readers are able to hear "divine dialogues from the dawn of time" (chap. 2) as the Son addresses the Father before the foundations of the world (Psalm 110, Psalm 2). This dialogue also contains "theodramatic strategems" regarding the Son's incarnational mission in redemptive history (chap. 3), as the Son articulates his motives in carrying out the will of the Father (Psalm 40; Isa 42:1–9; 49:1–12). Capturing the climax of redemptive history in the cross of Christ, texts like Psalm 22 allow readers to overhear "cross-shaped conversations" (chap. 4) as the Son cries out to the Father during his suffering on earth. Peering

further into this dialogue, we hear the Son cling to the hope of rescue (chap. 5) and also reflect with the Father about eventual and ultimate triumph at God's right hand (chap. 6). In this way, Bates observes, "divine discourse [frames] the whole, from creation to new creation" (p. 174). For each of these instances of divine discourse, Bates examines the scriptural passages cited, the NT context, and also the hermeneutical assumptions involved in making the connection.

In his fourth and final step, Bates shifts from the relatively descriptive history of interpretation to contemporary hermeneutics and considers the enduring legacy and legitimacy of prosopological interpretation (chap. 7). He asks, when the earliest church interpreted the Scriptures in a theodramatic way and assigned "various divine persons to explain dialogical shifts," was this "a *good* reading of Scripture?" (p. 176; italics his).

To help answer this question, Bates outlines the presuppositions necessary to employ prosopological exegesis. These include the reality of a divine economy, the divine authorship of the Scriptures, the "unity and plot-arrangement" of the Scriptures, and the possibility of "prophetic participation in the divine economy" (pp. 191–92). Bates also provides a series of controls for the art and science of "good theodramatic" readings of OT passages (see pp. 196–202). Among the most important "prudent but critical" controls is that a theodramatic interpretation must be "rooted in genuine sites of dialogical shift, conversation, speech, or address" in an OT passage (p. 196). While Bates does not find every instance of patristic prosopological exegesis equally compelling, he argues that the "character assignments" proposed by those in the earliest church are "plausible if certain presuppositions are granted" (p. 202). Bates concludes his book by urging readers to consider tuning into this theodramatic reading strategy of the earliest Christians and to overhear the dialogue of the "conversational God" that it amplifies (pp. 203–5).

For the field of Trinitarian theology, Bates establishes several new lines of textual and theological inquiry to consider in pursuit of a "biblical" theology of the Trinity. For instance, Bates opens up a text-immanent way of placing the focus on "persons" at the center of the Trinitarian logic of the biblical authors (see pp. 175–76). As he summarizes, "in conjunction with early Christian experiences of Jesus and certain philosophical and mediatorial factors, the idea of separate persons in timeless, intimate communion within the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit—was especially fostered and nurtured *by a specific reading technique* that the earliest Christians utilized as they engaged their ancient Jewish Scripture" (p. 3; italics his). In other words, it was *hermeneutics* rather than *Hellenism* that led to the "consolidation of 'person language' to express the three-in-one mystery" (p. 7).

In this regard, a lingering question for readers familiar with the broader conversation of Christology is the relationship between Bates's "Christology of Divine Persons" and Richard Bauckham's "Christology of Divine Identity." A clear result of Bates's study is a rejection of "the backward movement Christology schema" (p. 2) of scholars such as James Dunn and Bart Ehrman. Agreeing with those who would argue for an "early high Christology" (e.g. Larry Hurtado), Bates contends that the presence of prosopological exegesis within the NT and among the readers of the earliest Christian church rules out this retrospective approach to Christology.

Beyond these distinctions, though, the relationship between Bates and Bauckham seems at once closer and more nuanced. Bates distances himself from Bauckham at a few key points, but he also notes several areas of overlap throughout his exegetical analysis (e.g., pp. 19–26, 91–92, 100, 203–4). Because of the widespread influence of Bauckham's "Christology of Divine Identify" approach and the explanatory power of Bates's "Christology of Divine Persons," further thinking on this particular methodological intersection might be the most challenging and exciting prospect of Bates's book. My initial suspicion is that Bates's and Bauckham's approaches are more like fraternal twins rather than distant cousins.

One further aspect along these lines relates to the role of the Spirit. Most of the divine dialogue in the Hebrew Scriptures that the biblical authors note and that Bates and the early church highlight relate to conversations between the Father and the Son. Though Bates notes that at strategic places, it is possible the Spirit is the "person" that speaks in an OT passage, he also argues that in most cases the Spirit's role is in inspiring the OT author as he provides the "script" of a divine dialogue between the Father and the Son. In these cases, the Spirit "always [supplies] the words" (p. 7). Further reflection on the Spirit's role in the composition or scripting of these divine conversations would be a helpful complement to Bates's work.

In a relatively brief volume, Bates brings an important aspect of historical theology and patristic research to bear on the theological development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Indeed, because Bates labors to coordinate his study of the compositional strategies of the NT writers, the interpretive approach of the earliest church, and the theological logic of Trinitarian discussions, he is able to deliver a refreshing and interdisciplinary work.

Ched Spellman
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits. By Malcolm B. Yarnell III. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016, xi + 260 pp., $29.99.

In *God the Trinity*, Malcolm Yarnell, professor of systematic theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, attempts to address a lacuna in contemporary theology, namely, a lack of works substantially examining the biblical basis for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In this monograph, Yarnell attempts to answer two questions. First, does Scripture teach that the God of the Bible is triune? Second, must Christians embrace the Trinity as a "necessary" doctrine? To answer these questions, Yarnell explores eight biblical texts. Drawing on language from the world of art, he suggests that these texts contain "portraits" of the Trinity. Like great paintings, these biblical portraits must be appreciated on their own terms.

In chapter one, Yarnell insists that God is clearly revealed as Trinity in Scripture. However, many contemporary readers fail to discern the pervasive scriptural revelation of God as Trinity because they employ exegetical methods deleteriously affected by the Enlightenment. The Trinity is not given to us in propositional form

in Scripture. To rightly interpret the portraits of the Trinity woven throughout the pages of Scripture, readers must discover the Bible's "idiom," that is, its unique manner of speaking. This requires a "canonical" approach to Scripture that involves "typological hermeneutics responsibly deployed" (p. 5). One of the most important scriptural portraits of the Trinity is found in Matt 28:16–20. This text focuses on the identity of the God in whose "name" Christians are baptized. On the one hand, Matthew's singular use of "name" indicates that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share a singular identity. At the same time, Father and Son and Holy Spirit are distinguished through "coordinate relations" (signaled grammatically through Matthew's use of the Greek preposition *kai*).

Yarnell's second "portrait" is found in 2 Cor 13:14. This benediction gives us a glimpse into Paul's "economic" Trinitarianism (i.e. his understanding of how the divine persons work together in salvation). In this text, three divine subjects—Jesus Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit—are identified in their redemptive work toward humanity. These three subjects are coordinated by the Greek preposition *kai* (as in Matt 28:19) suggesting their "equality." First, "grace" (so central to Paul's understanding of salvation) is manifested in the ministry of Jesus Christ (v. 14a). While he identifies grace in this text with Christ, Paul links grace to the Father and Holy Spirit elsewhere in 2 Corinthians. That all three divine persons are connected with grace reflects the fact that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work indivisibly. Next, "love" is attributed to "God" (v. 14b). Although the Greek noun *theos* can refer to any divine person, it is used principally in the NT to refer to the Father. As an attribute of God, "love" describes all three divine persons. Nevertheless, this common love has its origin in the Father, who is the source of love. "Fellowship" is associated with the Holy Spirit (v. 14c) because the Spirit is the one who brings humans into communion with the divine persons.

A third portrait, focusing on the oneness of God, can be found in Deut 6:4–5. This text identifies the God Israel worships ("Yahweh") and describes how God's people should respond to him in covenant obedience. The affirmation that Yahweh is "one" probably has more of a moral focus (Yahweh alone as the legitimate object of worship) than a philosophical focus (i.e. the Enlightenment category of "monotheism"). The writers of the NT include Jesus in the identity of Yahweh by applying titles to Jesus that are reserved for God alone. For example, NT authors frequently apply the title *kurios* to Jesus (e.g. Acts 2:36; Rom 10:9; 2 Cor 4:5; 12:3; Phil 2:9–10; Col 2:6). In 1 Cor 8:5–6, Paul reframes the Shema relating "God" (*theos*) and "Lord" (*kurios*) respectively to the Father and the Son. Yarnell approvingly cites Craig Blaising's claim that the NT's reinterpretation of the Shema in 1 Cor 8:6 represented one of the exegetical building blocks for the Nicene Creed.

For his fourth portrait (titled "God Interpreting God"), Yarnell turns to John 1:18. Beginning with an affirmation that humans cannot "see" God, this text teaches that "God" (i.e. the Father) has graciously condescended to reveal himself through the "only begotten God" (*monogenēs theos*) who has "interpreted" (*exēgeomai*) for human beings the mystery of God's life. Yarnell translates the Greek verb *exēgeomai* as "interpreted" to underscore the fact that exegesis, as it pertains to God's identity, depends on divine grace. Whereas the Church Fathers understood that

exegesis was a matter of "theological grace" (p. 86), contemporary Protestants have largely been suspicious of the patristic exegetical methods. Although the roots of this suspicion were sown in the Reformation, the exegetical methods of the Fathers came under the strongest attack during the Enlightenment. Although they rightly rejected Enlightenment approaches to Scripture creating a gulf between "history" and "theology," evangelicals have nonetheless been negatively influenced by Enlightenment assumptions. Contemporary evangelicals need to reclaim the heritage of patristic exegesis with its focus on reading the Bible as a single text inspired by the Holy Spirit, the validity of figural exegesis, the necessity of spiritual maturity for properly interpreting Scripture, the importance of interpreting Scripture according to the "rule of faith," and worship as the goal of exegesis. As it pertains to the scriptural witness concerning the triune God, the Fathers made an important distinction between *theologia* (God's Trinitarian life) and *oikonomia* (God's actions in creation, providence, and redemption). Through God's actions in the economy of salvation (*oikonomia*), we come to know God's life as Trinity (*theologia*).

Having established a distinction between *theologia* and *oikonomia*, Yarnell further explores the teaching of the Gospel of John concerning the Trinity (*theologia*) in chapter five. Patristic theologians, both Greek and Latin, represent his primary conversation partners. As Cyril of Alexandria rightly recognized, John 16:14–15 teaches that the Father and Son possess equality reflecting a shared ontology ("all that the Father has is mine," v. 15a). Father and Son are also distinct in that the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. A unique relationship of "generation" exists between them: the Son is eternally from the Father. Whereas the Synoptic Gospels begin with *oikonomia* and move to *theologia*, the prologue of John (John 1:1–18) begins with a revelation of God's immanent life (*theologia*). Verses 1 and 2 present the Word in distinction from the Father ("the Word was with God," v. 1b) as well as in identity with him ("the Word was God," v. 1c). Patristic theologians used Greek and Latin equivalents of "nature" or "substance" to describe the identity of the Father and Son and language of "person" to express their distinction. After the Word is set in relation to the Father (*theologia*, vv. 1–2), he comes into relationship with humanity (*oikonomia*, vv. 3–14). Reflecting on John's Gospel as a whole, Yarnell explains that John's portrait of God is triadic. It involves the "the Only Begotten God" (i.e. the Son who is eternally generated from the being of the Father), "the Divine Monarch" (i.e. the Father who is the source of the Son and Holy Spirit), and "the Proceeding God" (i.e. the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father through the Son). In his explanation of the identities of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Yarnell engages second-, third-, and fourth-century theologians who contributed to the development of Trinitarian theology.

Yarnell continues his exploration of the Trinitarian theology of John in chapter six. His next portrait comes from the high priestly prayer in which Jesus prays that his followers would be "one" just as (*kathos*) he and the Father are "one" (John 17:21–22). Through this prayer, Jesus teaches his followers about the ontology of the immanent Trinity (the reality that the Father and the Son mutually indwell one another) and affirms that the ecclesial structure of the church should reflect the unity, or mutual indwelling (*perichoresis*), of the divine persons. Commenting on

John's Gospel as a whole, Yarnell explains, "the Trinity is woven into the text like a subtle yet dominant pattern woven into a colorful tapestry" (p. 140). Five themes give shape to this tapestry: (1) God the Trinity is distinct from creation. (2) God the Father is the source and goal of Trinitarian relations. The Son is from the Father and the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son. (3) God is one, and God's unity includes three divine subjects: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (4) Real distinctions exist among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These distinctions are not merely economic but stretch into eternity. (5) Distinctions among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are "relational" (i.e. the divine names "Father" and "Son" indicate a relationship). Moreover, a relational "order" (*taxis*) marks God's immanent life. Yarnell concludes with a discussion of the creedal terms "substance" and "person." Although this language has proved fruitful in the history of the church, contemporary evangelicals are not obligated to use these terms since they "postbiblical."

Having explored scriptural teaching about the immanent Trinity, Yarnell turns to the Trinitarian economy of salvation in Ephesians. His focal text is Eph 1:9–10, which teaches that the divine economy (*oikonomia*) involves a plan to sum up all things in Christ. The economy of divine action is both unified and threefold. It comes from the Father and returns to him; it centers on Jesus Christ; and it is enacted by the Holy Spirit. This economy also teaches us about God. This raises an important question: how much does God's revelation in the economy reveal about God's inner life? Unfortunately, the Enlightenment drove a wedge between God's actions in time and God's being in eternity. Karl Rahner attempted to bridge this gap by emphasizing the "identity" of the economic and the immanent Trinity. After surveying responses to "Rahner's rule" among evangelicals, Yarnell proposes his own rule: "The economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity truly but not exhaustively" (p. 173). Yarnell's rule protects the transcendence of God (a problem many have noted with the second half of Rahner's axiom) while still allowing one to affirm that God gives a "true" revelation of himself in the economy of salvation. With this context in place, Yarnell returns to Ephesians. In his "metaphysical hymn" (1:3–14), Paul teaches that each divine person is involved with "blessedness." The Father is the source of divine blessedness. The Son is the active agent through whom the Father blesses humanity. And the Holy Spirit enables God's people to experience this blessing. In Eph 1:3–14, we learn not only about the actions of the divine persons but also their identity (e.g. "blessedness" as an attribute of the triune God). Ephesians teaches us that humans can have real knowledge of the triune God.

Yarnell's final portrait of the Trinity comes from the visions of John recorded in the Book of Revelation. Revelation begins with a Trinitarian salutation from "him who is and who was and who is to come," from the "seven spirits," and from "Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:4b–5a). The first and third subjects clearly represent the Father and the Son. But what about the "seven spirits?" Yarnell suggests that it is best to understand this phrase as a reference to the Holy Spirit. The central vision of the letter, found in chapters four and five, also possesses a Trinitarian structure. We encounter the "one who sits on the throne" (who is holy, eternal, and powerful), the "Lamb" (who is paradoxically both slain and glorious, and receives worship

along with the Father), and the "seven spirits" (who promote the testimony of the Lamb). Building on his earlier reading, Yarnell argues that the "seven spirits" in these chapters should not be confused with the "seven chief angels" but refer to the Holy Spirit. In support of this claim, Yarnell notes that three divine attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence) are attributed to the "seven spirits." In John's throne-room vision, we see both the mutual indwelling of God, the Lamb, and the sevenfold Spirit (reflecting their "eternal equality"), as well an "eternal subordination" (*taxis*) among them that is reflected in the fact that God sends the Lamb and the Spirit (p. 217). The chapters in Revelation that follow describe the consummation of the triune economy in redemption, judgment, and renewal. Each divine person is involved in all these activities in a way that reflects the respective identity of that person. Moreover, the promise that God will dwell with humanity involves all three.

Yarnell concludes with an epilogue in which he summarizes what his eight portraits teach us about God's immanent life, our knowledge of God as Trinity, and the Trinitarian economy of salvation. In the unity of the one God, there exist "threefold relations" (p. 228). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in "identity" and "distinction." The divine persons mutually indwell one another and work indivisibly. At the same time, an order (*taxis*) marks both their eternal relations and economic actions. To rightly interpret God's Trinitarian revelation in Scripture, we need to recover the "the communicability of eternal truth" (p. 230) and the "correspondence" between God's self-revelation and God's immanent life (p. 232). Finally, our understanding of the Trinity should "reshape" theology, human relationships, and worship.

God the Trinity possesses several strengths. First, Yarnell succeeds in demonstrating that compelling biblical warrant exists for affirming that the God of the Bible eternally exists as three divine subjects—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who are "identical" yet also "distinct." Readers will benefit greatly from rich discussions of Matt 28:16–20; 2 Cor 13:14; Deut 6:4–5; John 1:18; John 16:14–15; John 17:21–22; Eph 1:9–10; and Rev 1:4–5. Not only does he offer a close reading of these texts in their witness to the Trinity but he also synthesizes the Trinitarian teaching of several of the books in which these passages are found. Second, while he may not have a strong attachment to some traditional Trinitarian vocabulary (e.g. "person" and "nature"), Yarnell helps readers recognize that scriptural teaching regarding the Trinity stands in close continuity with historic Christian confession as expressed in the ecumenical creeds. (In an appendix, he provides readers with fresh translations of the Apostles', Nicene-Constantinopolitan, and Athanasian creeds). With the creeds (but contra some contemporary evangelicals), he affirms the eternal generation of the Son. He also affirms the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son (the latter phrase representing a *via media* between Eastern and Western churches). His account of Trinitarian agency (i.e. the inseparable working of distinct subjects who act according to their eternal order of being) also stands in continuity with historic Trinitarian confession. (One puzzling feature is his use of the phrase "eternal subordination" as a way of characterizing Trinitarian relations [cf. p. 217]. Precisely what he wants to affirm and deny by this term—

especially in relation to the contemporary debate—is not clear to me. Interestingly, he does not use the phrase in his final constructive summary of scriptural teaching about the Trinity.) Third, in the process of exploring eight biblical texts, Yarnell substantially engages the Church Fathers. He helps readers see that the Fathers represent an asset in reading Scripture—not merely in their material affirmations of Trinitarian doctrine but also in their exegetical method. Finally, *God the Trinity* is constructive, not polemical. Yarnell engages a wide variety of biblical scholars and theologians. He is appreciative of historic teaching on the Trinity, drawing both on Latin- and Greek-speaking theologians (with perhaps slightly greater sympathy toward the latter group). He does not get bogged down in contemporary points of dispute (e.g. the debate over the "social" Trinity).

I will briefly note three minor limitations of *God the Trinity*. First, Yarnell does not canvas all of Scripture (or even all the NT) in his investigation. He is not attempting to answer the question, "What does the whole Bible teach about the Trinity?" but rather, "Is there sufficient scriptural warrant for affirming the foundational elements of the doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of the texts he has selected to study?" This means that there are other potentially important aspects of the scriptural witness to the Trinity he does not examine. One example might be the Trinitarian significance of the diverse orders in which the divine persons are named when all three are mentioned together (cf. Rodrick Durst's *Reordering the Trinity: Six Movements of God in the NT*).

Second, of the two questions he raises in his introduction, Yarnell is far more successful in addressing the first (whether Scripture teaches God is Trinity) than the second (concerning the "necessity" of belief in the Trinity). If all he means when he asks whether belief in the Trinity is "necessary" is whether Scripture teaches this doctrine, then his second question simply restates the first, rendering it superfluous. When theologians talk about "necessity," they typically are not asking *if* Scripture teaches a doctrine but rather what *kind* of doctrine a particular teaching represents. For example, the Reformers distinguished "fundamental articles" from non-fundamental articles. The difference between the two concerned their relation to Christian salvation. One cannot deny a "fundamental article" and be a Christian. When Yarnell speaks about the "necessity" of belief in the Trinity, it seems clear he wants to make a stronger claim than merely that Scripture teaches the doctrine of the Trinity. He also wants to affirm that belief in the Trinity is closely related to Christian salvation: "it is difficult to comprehend how a Christian could speak of being saved by God while denying the Trinity" (p. 238). Because the "necessity" of this doctrine is questioned by evangelicals who believe in the Trinity (a concern he articulates in his prologue; p. viii), it would have been helpful to discuss it further. Showing Scripture teaches the doctrine of the Trinity is not the same as establishing that belief in the Trinity is a "fundamental article."

Finally, while he is right about the negative impact of the Enlightenment on biblical scholarship, it would be helpful to hear more about the "figural" method evangelicals need to embrace to rightly read Scripture in its witness to the triune God. I could imagine some readers finishing his book and saying, "I'm already committed to reading Scripture theologically as one divine book. I read the text

attending not merely to grammar and syntax but also to the divine referent rendered in the text. What I am missing?" At several points, it seems like the Trinitarian *doctrine* of the Church Fathers plays a greater role in his appropriation of them than their exegetical method(s). These limitations notwithstanding, *God the Trinity* makes an important contribution to contemporary evangelical discussion of the Trinity that will be appreciated both by biblical scholars and theologians.

Keith E. Johnson
Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando, FL

The Crisis of British Protestantism: Church Power in the Puritan Revolution, 1638–44. By Hunter Powell. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2015, viii + 264 pp., $105.00.

For good reason, the debates at the Westminster Assembly (1643–1653) over the subject of church polity have held a fascination for historians of theology equal to that the other great moments in the development of church governance: the growth of church councils in the early centuries of the church, the rise of episcopacy and the papacy, the abrupt resurgence of writings on the church around the year 1300, the popularity of conciliar movements in the late medieval period, and the *ad hoc* church reforms during the Protestant Reformation. What makes mid-seventeenth-century debates so interesting to historians are the contexts in which these contests took place: civil war and coordinate (but not coordinated) political and ecclesiastical revolutions in Scotland, Ireland, and England. What makes them still useful to theologians is that by the 1640s all divines—episcopalians, presbyterians, and congregationalists alike—were finally in a position that required them to defend and promote their views primarily from the text of Scripture. Indeed, for persons interested in the exegetical foundations of church government who are willing to learn from writers in the past, post-Reformation works on ecclesiology remain the best place to start for all three major ecclesial traditions.

The Crisis of British Protestantism takes as its point of departure the late 1630s, a period of time during which the Puritan movement had stalled, and where godly clergy sought protection from politically well-connected gentry and peers of the realm. A small group of clergymen, all of them ministers of the Church of England, were united by their experience of exile to the Netherlands, better than usual connections to wealthy patrons and powerful members of Parliament, and a shared outlook on church governance. It is this group of accommodating, then apologetic, and finally dissenting, brethren that find themselves at the heart of Hunter Powell's study.

Even those encountering the introduction to the book will quickly see that Powell's study offers one of the most innovative and nuanced approaches to the discussion of church governance in the era of Protestant orthodoxy. He argues persuasively that, prior to the outbreak of England's civil war, Philip Nye, Thomas Goodwin, Jeremiah Burroughes, William Bridge, and Sidrach Simpson held a genuine appreciation for the writings of influential presbyterians. These presbyterians, in

turn, enjoyed significant theological overlap with this gang of five congregationalists, especially when it came to their understanding of church power and their commitment to the rights and responsibilities of local congregations. For those familiar with the traditional lines along which the story of the Westminster Assembly is told, this argument alone is enough to signal that Powell's narrative is a work of historical revision—revisionism, as I see it, of the best sort.

Powell argues that it was not only a common enemy in episcopacy but also a significant agreement with respect to conceptions of church power that permitted an early accommodation between those who eventually found themselves on opposing sides in the assembly's debates. The introduction and opening chapters argue that since Gillespie and Rutherford held similar views of church power in common with their English congregationalist counterparts, they had more in common with these brethren than with some of their English presbyterially-inclined friends, or with their fellow Scot, Robert Baillie, who over time became a strident critic of and perpetual plotter against any accommodation with congregationalists.

The Assembly's congregationalists (and Powell himself, relying especially on Thomas Goodwin's later reflections on the Assembly) ascribe great importance to constructions of church power. It is no wonder that they, and he, find it deeply significant that in an early debate about church governance, the Assembly determined to avoid what some considered a foundational issue, others considered a theoretical issue, and everyone considered a divisive issue: the "subject" of the keys of the kingdom, the referent of Christ's famous dictum in Matthew 16, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (v. 19). One's key to understanding the keys, as Powell sees it, "did not dictate whether or not one was a Presbyterian; it did dictate, however, what type of presbyterian one was" (p. 83). Assembly members entertained various conceptions of the phrase, so many that Powell's conclusion to chapter 3 states, "Given the freedom to debate foundations of church power, the Westminster assembly fractured in such a way that makes the current historiographical divide between 'presbyterian and independent' virtually unintelligible" (p. 83).

If chapter 3 argues that the tidiness of the divide between congregationalists and presbyterians has been exaggerated, chapter 4 adds that the timing of the break between the two clusters of theologians has been inaccurately recorded. At fault are those historians who have relied overmuch on Robert Baillie's skewed accounts of Assembly events and on sources outside the gathering itself. Accommodation within the Assembly of differing views on ecclesiology did not fail, as has commonly been thought, by the publication of the congregationalists' *Apologeticall Narration*. On the one hand, Powell argues that unity among the brethren was first, but not fatally, undermined by a presbyterian polemicist and not a congregational one. On the other hand, the *Narration* appeared to be well-received even by sturdy presbyterians and expressed nothing particularly novel when one takes into account earlier, previously overlooked writings that Powell discusses in his opening chapters.

It is in chapter 4, too, that Powell explains the complex relationship between Dutch and English theologians and churchmen. Robert Baillie had relied on his

continental contacts to bolster his case by writing against the *Narration* and its expression of congregationalism. Instead, the Dutch defended a polity which was congregationalist in some of its important elements, and then spoke out instead only against the Erastianism of the *Narration*'s congregationalism, thus inadvertently endearing the English congregationalists to the anti-clerical House of Commons, for the majority of the House favored high levels of state participation (or interference) in disciplinary aspects of church governance. Indirectly, the Dutch writings also exposed the tensions between presbyterian claims that their system of government was fully compatible with parliamentary interests and the reality that once their system of government was established, they wanted minimal or no input from the civil magistrate. Here Powell is at his best, helpfully untangling one of the more puzzling moments in Assembly history by finally explaining the true cause of the offense of the *Narration* to the Dutch, and the offense of the Dutch letter to members of Parliament. Here too, Powell's almost consistently unsympathetic treatment of Robert Baillie offers a rare insight into the Scottish theologian's priorities: if it came down to giving ground either to adversaries in Westminster Abbey or to opponents in Westminster Palace, Baillie would always expose his flank to the Assembly's congregationalists in order to press his attack against parliament's Erastians.

If the opening debate over church governance did not give much hope for an ecclesiological accommodation at the Assembly, neither did the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration* scuttle all hope. Ultimately the *Narration* itself, which Powell dates to the opening weeks of 1644, was overshadowed by the publication of John Cotton's magisterial *Keys of the Kingdom* later in the year by Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye. Cotton offered a nuanced statement of church power and practice that some presbyterians and almost all congregationalists could accept as a compromise between them. In the fifth and sixth chapters, even more than in the third, Powell gets into the high weeds of scholastic distinctions regarding church power in its source and exercise. One or two of these distinctions could be restored with profit to current ecclesiological debate; most of them are astonishingly precise given the paucity of biblical information allegedly at their back. There is no question that this book needed to treat this subject at some level, although this reader is not convinced that the discussion rises to the level of clarity that obtains elsewhere in the volume. Perhaps a chart, and certainly a glossary, would aid readers here (I created my own), and one hopes that if this book runs to a later edition, publication could be paused for one or both of these additions. There is also no question that today's presbyterians and congregationalists reading these chapters would find surprising the extent to which a congregationalist like Cotton would go in affirming synods as a means of visible connection (but not subordination) between churches.

Chapter 7, "Presbyterian Coalitions," is one of the few chapters that sum up the different presbyterian positions Powell sees at points in the Assembly's 1644 debates. Following the congregational apologists, Powell describes "numerous" presbyterian polities (pp. 189–90), although the way in which he describes these parties and steers the narrative appears to be all hat and no cattle: even upon repeated readings I cannot discern more than two distinct positions among the As-

sembly's presbyterians. The chapter also deals in some depth with the Assembly's Third Proposition, "That divers churches may be under one presbyteriall government"—what Powell variously terms the "one vital," the "first and only," the "only affirmative," and the "one vague affirmative" proposition on presbyterianism voted by the assembly (pp. 3, 181, 211, 243, 244). Elsewhere he calls it "the very first proposition on presbyterian government with a measure of ambiguity" (p. 202), the "elegantly vague Third Proposition" (p. 209). The chapter's main point is that the proposition was crafted in such a way that a maximum number of presbyterians could accept it although, precisely because of this ambiguity, the congregationalists would or could not. But Powell, following Goodwin, also appears to be trying to imbue the controversial Third Proposition with a uniqueness or heightened significance fitting for a crisis narrative. And yet in insisting, curiously, that the Third Proposition is the only affirmative proposition regarding Presbyterian church polity, Powell seems not to have considered sufficiently the importance of a distinction between *defining* and *distinguishing* aspects of a given position. The Assembly voted many points of doctrine and practice that they would have considered *defining* elements of their polity even if these points did not *distinguish* their polity from their opposites. For example, voting that congregations are to have church governors in addition to ministers is an important affirmative point in presbyterian polity, even if congregationalists would affirm the same in the construction of their own polity (although episcopalians would not).

Chapter 8, "The Rise of the Dissenting Brethren" is more properly about the rise of the *term* "Dissenting Brethren," for the author narrates final attempts and final defeat of all attempts to discuss questions of church power (a subject dear to the congregationalists) and to find a way to include congregational polity in a newly Reformed church. Powell's analysis of the dynamic between Parliament, a para-parliamentary committee comprised of MPs and assembly members, and the assembly itself, is one of the jewels of the book—a lucid tale of complex events and complicated people.

Powell's narrative ends, appropriately, with the Scottish forces capturing the royalist-held Newcastle and the subsequent Scottish demand that the matter of church government be settled. (It wasn't, but Powell is doubtless correct in seeing the significance of this even in relation to the Assembly's decision to send up to Parliament its existing work on the subject of church governance, including the controversial Third Proposition). The book itself ends with a brief recapitulation of the story and the exposure of three pitfalls into which Powell thinks many previous historians have fallen: First, the insistence that congregationalists were radicals, thus isolating them from the tradition in which they placed themselves and aligning them with the very people they refused to quote in their writings and in their speeches. Second, a tendency to understand ecclesiological debates in terms of events and writings in England, and thus failing to understand the weight of works produced in Scotland and the Netherlands. Third, a fascination with questions of theological continuities and discontinuities, ever slippery, and rarely yielding useful categories that carry forward our understanding of the intellectual conversations that occupied people in the seventeenth century.

The Crisis of British Protestantism is well written (in places beautifully written), marred only slightly by minor grammatical and typographical glitches and a couple of dozen small errors. It is also only fair to note that notation in the volume is uneven and does not keep pace with the sweeping historiographical observations, even announcements, that are frequently made. But the real question that I am left with at the end of this study is whether, as the title suggests, the power of the keys has the capacity to explain the crisis of Protestantism as Powell sees it.

The Crisis belabors the points that select Scots and congregationalists held similar views of church power, but readers cannot help but see that they disagreed about the roles and responsibilities of regional presbyteries. Because one's view of church power did not dictate whether one would end up a congregationalist or presbyterian, Powell suggests that it at least dictates "what type of presbyterian one was." And yet if the different kinds of presbyterians are chiefly delineated by their underlying views of church power and not by significant differences in practice, then this is a petite point indeed. Tracing the theme of church power proved fruitful for Powell's research, but it carries insufficient explanatory power for understanding the crisis as a whole—a crisis that was determined, step by step, by the actual practices that persons at the Assembly were willing to adopt.

The fact that people can share a large measure of agreement in matters of practice and still diverge when it came to theories of church power, and vice versa, is not a new observation. Theologian James Bannerman, cited by Powell, made both points as early as 1869 (and employed members of Powell's cast of characters to illustrate his case) when he noted that some seventeenth-century presbyterians had an understanding of church power similar to that held by their episcopalian contemporaries, while other presbyterians held to a conception of church power almost identical to that held by congregationalists. Sill, these presbyterians shared a common polity with one another and not with their brethren advocating episcopacy or congregationalism. What is more, George Gillespie, whom everyone at the Westminster Assembly recognized as an important presbyterian theorist in his own right, said as much himself. As deeply as Gillespie cared about the keys of the kingdom and theories of church power, he acknowledged as early as 1641 that there were good men on both sides of the debate about whether church power "be originally in the people." Significantly, Gillespie argued that presbyterians "can defend the name of a representative church, without debating the question, whether the people have the power originally or not."

Surely Gillespie's comment sheds light on the disagreement between the men who eventually became the "Dissenting Brethren" and the rest of the Assembly. Goodwin, and now Powell, argue that the presbyterians were avoiding fractious foundational questions in an effort to forge a common practice. This is true. But the reason why they did so—and did so often in the history of the Assembly and not simply on this one occasion—was due to the fact that there were usually more than one means of reaching a shared conclusion. In this case the congregationalists privileged one route to their particular polity; others in the Assembly saw many different roads all leading to a common presbyterian polity. Because many roads led to Rome (a metaphor that would create chaos on the Assembly floor), unity among

Divines during debates was often fleeting and would depend on the particular issue under discussion and whether the debate was about a matter of practice or about the biblical basis underlying that practice.

I more than once wondered whether Powell's argument, with all its levels of surprise, creativity, and freshness, could have been prosecuted just as well, and perhaps with greater clarity, if he had not centered it around the keys and church power, but local and regional church polity instead. The telling of his story in terms of church power greatly helps the reader to understand both the congregationalist perspective on the Assembly's debates over church governance and the reason why the congregationalists at one point thought that unity was possible with Gillespie and like-minded presbyterians, which are no small achievements. Nonetheless the dynamics and alliances in the Assembly were often shaped more by votes on practice than debates on theory, as the papers of the Assembly, even more than its minutes, attest.

Hunter Powell's book intentionally and helpfully complicates our understanding of the tone and intensity of the Assembly's debates and nuances party labels and personal relationships, showing surprising points of continuity where they are least expected. Among other useful services, Powell offers a belated public relations service for the Synod's congregationalists. Presbyterian historians of past generations have tended to be too critical of the Assembly's congregationalists: never, in presbyterian tellings of the story, had so many owed so much trouble to so few. Powell, better than anyone else, exposes not merely the situational but also the exegetical and theological quandaries in which the congregationalists saw themselves in the Assembly's debates, as well as the surprising likeness of their polity to much of the presbyterian practices and attitudes that obtain in many presbyterian bodies today. Powell also serves the academic community well by more precisely identifying the issues about which the congregationalists were most insistent, including the philosophical underpinnings associated with questions of church power.

It is for all these reasons, and more besides, that I heartily commend the careful reading of what is easily one of the most interesting studies in the history of ecclesiology in recent years and the single most significant study of the debates and personalities in the Westminster Assembly in many years.

Chad Van Dixhoorn
Reformed Theological Seminary, McLean, VA

Introduction to Global Missions. By Zane Pratt, M. David Sills, and Jeff K. Walters. Nashville: B&H, 2014, 280 pp., $23.14.

The authors of *Introduction to Global Missions* are current or former professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Each contributor has experience on the mission field outside of the USA working with the International Mission Board and has contributed books and articles in the sphere of missiology.

Following a helpful introductory chapter on the missionary call and knowing God's will, the book's four sections are: (1) "Biblical and Theological Foundations

for Global Missions," (2) "Historical Foundations for Global Missions," (3) "Culture and Global Missions," and (4) "The Practice of Global Missions." From the outset, the authors give helpful definitions of terms relating to missions, culture, people groups, literacy, etc. Of significance, they define "missionary" as "someone who intentionally crosses boundaries for the purpose of communicating the gospel to win people to Christ, discipling new believers, planting churches, training biblically qualified leaders, and ministering to the whole body of Christ in holistic ways" (p. 3). Although it is preferred that the definition would include the role of local church leadership in approving and sending the missionary, the definition sets the tone of the book as being firmly grounded in Scripture, which then produces a theology of missions. Because many people think of missions as solely evangelism and church planting, it is refreshing to see the authors use Matt 28:18–20 and 2 Tim 2:2 to emphasize the critical role of discipleship and training nationals in missionary work. As they write, "The greater tragedy of the world today is not that it is 'unreached' but rather that it is undiscipled" (p. 20).

One of the great strengths of the book is chapter three: "The Missiological Basis of the Bible." The contributors set forth a clear, God-centered exposition of the *missio Dei* that is in agreement with the theology of John Piper in his *Let the Nations Be Glad!* (1993). God's passion for his glory is then explained in terms of his global agenda of calling out people for his name's sake, as unfolded through the pages of the OT and NT. In their treatment of the Gospels, the authors once again give a fitting description of the mission of the church:

> The *basic task* of Christian mission is found in the imperative verb in the Great Commission: make disciples. It is never enough for Christians simply to do works of mercy. It is also never enough simply to seek decisions for Christ. The goal of Christian mission is not decisions but disciples who abide in an intimate relationship with him, who grow progressively in his likeness, and who learn and obey everything he commanded. (p. 57)

In chapter four, "Theological Foundations for Global Missions," the contributors are unabashedly biblically based, confessing, "Missiology is applied theology" and "This approach is deeply biblical" (p. 67). In this section, the Bible is defended in its inerrancy, clarity, and sufficiency; God is confessed as sovereign and worthy of all glory ("Far from discouraging evangelism and missions, the sovereignty of God is the bedrock on which they stand"; p. 73); humanity is described as totally depraved and worthy of eternal hell; and the gospel, as opposed to pluralism, universalism, and inclusivism, is described as being exclusively necessary for salvation, even for those who have never heard. Staying true to their theocentric focus, they draw a clear line from text, to theology, to worship, to missions. Importantly, the authors are careful to distinguish between what is central in theology and what can be appropriately contextualized based upon culture.

Section two on the history of Christian missions is helpful in its defense of the need for the study and its general contents, but the chapter could be strengthened on several fronts. First, given only three pages, the medieval period was essentially ignored. Second, there were minor historical errors, such as the claims that the

Edict of Milan "made Christianity the religion of the empire" (p. 101) and that David Brainerd planned to marry Jonathan Edwards's daughter (p. 111). Third, citing the objections of missiologists and historians to the Reformers' commitment to missions, the authors give three reasons for this claim, but only provide two sentences of evidence to the contrary (although not likely available to the authors, more evidence may be found in Haykin and Robinson's *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin's Missional Vision and Legacy* [2014]). Finally, notable figures (e.g. Augustine of Canterbury, Gregory the Illuminator, Cyril and Methodius, Robert Speer) and events were overlooked (e.g. Azusa Street, Pentecostalism, the charismatic movement, the social gospel movement, the modernist/fundamentalist debate, Vatican Council II, and liberation theology).

Based upon a textual, theological, and historic foundation, the authors then approach practical issues in missions. The definition, explanation, and importance of understanding culture is given appropriate space, as is the role of verbal and non-verbal communication. Contextualization, defined as "taking something from one place and putting it in another while retaining faithfulness and sensitivity to the original intent of the thing" (p. 149) is given in light of helpful and hurtful examples. Chapter eight offers a brief explanation of world religions such as Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and animism, with descriptions of their essential beliefs and their understanding of salvation, and helpful tips in evangelizing their adherents.

Section four deals with issues of disciplemaking, church planting, the individual and global missions, the role of the local church in missions, and the twenty-first-century practice of global missions. Ample space is given to various views on discipleship because it is the essential imperative of Matthew 28:

> It has been said that when church growth outstrips trained leadership, troubles multiply quickly. In the history of the expansion of Christianity, the efforts that resulted in a rate of church growth greater than the rate of discipled leaders also resulted in carnal leadership, strife, and division. Missionaries who are intentional and persistent in producing mature church leadership through discipleship programs may produce fewer numbers of new churches in the beginning. However, discipled members and leaders will endure longer, reproduce other disciples and healthy churches, and be best equipped to faithfully teach the faith once for all delivered to the saints to the next generation of believers (193).

The chapter on church planting has at its heart the definition of "churches" as "bodies of baptized believers in Jesus Christ covenanted together for accountability and ministry, including proclamation of the Word, celebration of the ordinances, discipleship, missions, and having biblical leadership" (p. 212). In this context, models such as traditional, cell, and house churches are discussed as well as stages and strategies of church planting.

One of the most helpful sections deals with advice for leaving one's native culture, enduring culture shock, and learning a new language. The authors write with obvious experience and give invaluable counsel in these areas. For example, "culture shock is not a 'one and done' proposition. . . . It is more helpful to think

of culture shock as endless cycles of culture fatigue and stress" (p. 231). Also, "Learning the language is the key to learning the culture, and learning the culture is the key to learning the language" (p. 233).

The focus in chapter twelve on the local church as essential to missions is a much needed corrective to isolated missionaries and those committed to holistic missions apart from the church's mission to make disciples and nurture believers. The authors also give a seasoned perspective on the pros and cons of short-term missions. Chapter thirteen concludes the book on the twenty-first century context of the secular West and how that context impacts missions. While the "mission of God" is clearly defined as "fill[ing] the earth with the knowledge of his glory as the waters cover the sea and specifically to do so by calling a people for himself out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation" (p. 257), a clear definition of the "mission of the church" is not given, but is implied in the singular imperative of the Great Commission, which naturally involves evangelism, baptizing, and teaching. In the context of the twenty-first century, the authors also discuss advantages of technology and trends such as the insider-movement within the purview of contextualization.

Introduction to Global Missions is an uncommon, well-rounded book on missiology that combines conservative, biblically-based evangelical theology, an up-to-date review of contemporary trends in missiology, and a practical/pastoral approach to the challenges that missionaries face. Despite these strengths, it is not as academically rigorous as texts like *Introducing World Missions* by Moreau, Corwin, and McGee (2015, 2nd ed.), which includes a bibliography, glossary, maps, diagrams for difficult concepts, and a more extensive subject index. It would also be helpful to add room for expansion in the subjects of the history of missions (particularly the medieval period and twentieth century), and to touch on topics such as choosing a missions agency, challenges for missionary families, missionary care, spiritual warfare, deputation, the role of missions in theology, the debate over holistic missions (see *What is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* [DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011]), the need for educated missionaries, the relationship between mission agencies and sending churches, sending churches and their philosophy of missions, financial indigenization, women in missions, and helpful online resources. While entire volumes have been written on such topics, and considering that the authors may have been restricted in their treatment of these subjects because of space limitations, the strengths of this book call for the need (and hope) for some of these changes to be made so that *Introduction to Global Missions* may become the standard introductory textbook for missiology.

Jonathan Moorhead
The Master's Academy International, Brno, Czech Republic